Global Transformative Learning and Its Effects: An Interview with Debbie Kramlich

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This interview was with Debbie Kramlich, a skilled education consultant, educator, and transformative learning/listening force. Kramlich is skilled in global educating and transformative learning practices, and has used these to her own, and others', advantage. She has applied these ideas and practices in all parts of her life, from personal to work-related.

**Augusta:** *What is your professional and academic background?*

Debbie: Where I have lived has both shaped and limited my professional and academic background. I finished my BS in 1986 with a double major in Elementary Education and Biblical Studies. After a rough student teaching experience, I turned down an elementary full-time teaching position and was hired as all-school faculty for the role of Director of Academic Development from the university where I had just graduated. I served as a member of student support services for undergraduate students in all areas of academic support. I ran study groups for major exams, taught numerous seminars on study skills and writing papers, did individual tutoring, TA'd for professors who were gone and co-taught an Introduction to Communication class and a 000 English class while getting my MA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language and Intercultural Studies. It was the best job I ever had, and I planned on starting with my PhD as soon as my MA was done.

During this time, I got married and my husband worked on his master's degree and in the library. After three years there, my husband and I were asked to move to Germany where he would be Dean of Students for an international theological school. I followed my husband overseas but was deeply sad to leave my position at the university as well as my dreams of doing a PhD I taught English at the school as well as at a language school close by. After four years there, we moved to Sweden for 12 years where he was the Principal of another theological school. We moved there with a small baby, and I focused on language learning and connecting with the community through a sewing club and other activities. During this time, I also did some work grading English MA theses for a university in Germany. During a visit to this university in 2007, while I was nursing my 6-week-old baby in their cafeteria, one of the administrators asked me to consider applying for their PhD program in Educational Leadership. Seeing that I had six kids at the time, I was stunned by the invitation but applied to the school as well as for a grant from Sweden and got both! I started my PhD in 2008 and one year later, our family moved to Germany. Due to our large family and numerous medical issues with our children, it took me nine years to finish, but I was thrilled to finally graduate in 2017. Our family had moved on to Thailand in 2015, but I was able to fly back and participate in my graduation. I am currently doing a visiting postdoc research associate position at Payap University in Chiang Mai, Thailand and I am also teaching part-time at a local German school where three of my children attend (to help cover their tuition). I also teach block MA or EdD level classes as I have time.

Augusta: *How do you define transformative learning?*
Debbie: For the student: Encountering new thinking or ideas that are initially disconcerting or disturbing, but require critical reflection for meaning-making that result in changed thinking patterns for the betterment of the person and society.

From my dissertation: I focused on the role of the teacher in transformative learning. I proposed the following:
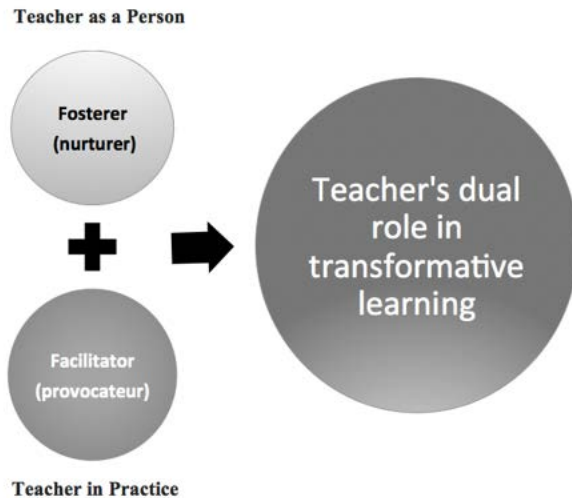
Foster: "To promote the growth or development of someone; provide the care that a parent provides" (2003). The word "foster" has been used by several key writers regarding the role of the teacher in transformative learning theory (Cranton, 2006; Newman, 2012).

Facilitate: Mezirow has used the word "facilitator" or "provocateur" to refer to the role of the teacher in encouraging the student to go through the transformative process by challenging existing thinking patterns, taking responsibility for learning and teaching critical thinking (Mezirow, 1997).

The teacher's role in transformative learning is to be both nurturer and provocateur in the classroom to provide a safe community and setting in which to challenge the students' way of thinking. This can take place through different instructional strategies.

Augusta: *How has your background shaped this definition?*
Debbie: I first stumbled across this theory when I was doing research for my PhD in educational leadership. I resonated deeply with the story of Edee Mezirow returning to school in her 40's (like myself) and this experience transforming her. It was this story that piqued Jack Mezirow's curiosity and led to the development of the transformative learning theory. What I found in transformative learning was a framework that met what I had been missing in much of Higher Education as it addressed both the person and practice of the teacher while focusing on holistic learning. Being a mother and doing a PhD kept me grounded in praxis and the application of this theory. I currently teach first graders through doctoral students which help to keep me rooted in reality and critical needs of today's children. I am a much better teacher of teachers by still remaining in the classroom and experiencing the good, the bad, and the beautiful chaos of elementary school. In addition, I am also both passionate and curious about national school systems and why they teach the way they do. My own children have attended both Swedish and German schools and there is a lot to be learned by seeing and experiencing how education works in multiple cultures. Sweden taught me to be particularly attentive to my student's mental health as well as cooperative and collaborative work. In German school, I appreciate the emphasis on class participation (up to 50% of one's grade is based on this) as well as critical thinking. I dream

about a collaborative conference where each country would have the opportunity to share their educational strengths.

Augusta: *How did you begin using transformative learning theory and/or practice?*

Debbie: There are a few specific ways that I have incorporated transformative learning in my elementary classes. I teach English to a diverse cultural group of students. In order to value the background of each student and the languages they speak, I support "translanguaging" in the classroom to allow students to speak their mother tongue and we do multiple activities where we are translating between multiple languages. For me, showing value to each student means to value both their individual and cultural backgrounds and, as a teacher, to invite the students to teach me things I do not know. I speak German well but still make occasional mistakes and allow the students to correct me. In turn, this lessens the student's fear of making mistakes and contributes to a warm community where they feel freer to speak. Last year, we did a project in class where we focused on learning about Thailand. (I teach at a German school in Thailand, but the curriculum is for the German context). I reached out to the Thai students at the German school and asked them to be the experts and teach us more about their country. They covered topics such as Buddhism, the mythology of Thai islands, Thai classical music, and problems that tourism is causing Thailand. Another positive experience has been to co-teach fourth grade English with the fifth-grade teacher for the last two years. Since our classes are small but the language abilities are very wide, we have more options for group work to be supportive and collaborative. I really enjoy and appreciate co-teaching with someone.

I recently taught an MA course on Intercultural Communication and Conflict Resolution. I started the course with self-reflection exercises to assist the students in seeing where both their personality and cultural framework could impact the material we would be studying in class. In addition, each student brought a specific case study to the class that we used to discuss disruptive incidents and see what the appropriate cultural response was and what it could or should have been. I had four nationalities and several cultural groups in the class. I was also very aware that I am a Westerner teaching in a predominately Asian setting and regularly welcomed input and critique from the class to help contextualize the material. Lastly, I found out that the Dean had recently been involved in a fairly public conflict resolution and invited him to share with the class about this situation. Since he was from the country in which I was teaching, he was able to address issues and understand the context in a way that I could not. Maintaining the posture and interest of a life-long learner is a high value for me as a teacher or lecturer.

Augusta: *What experiences have you had with transformative learning, if any, other than in your own practice?*

Debbie: I did not have any direct connection with transformative learning until after I finished my PhD. My first contact was the International Transformative Learning Committee (explained more in next question below). A meaningful experience for me was to attend an early researchers spring school sponsored by ESREA (European Society for Research on the Education of Adults) in Italy in 2019. This theme was *Learning and social justice: Dilemmas of complexity in researching contemporary adult education*. It was an opportunity to meet with both early and experienced researchers, hear and share current papers and interests, and get direct feedback from one another. The format was welcoming and inclusive and exemplified the community necessary for transformative learning.

Augusta: *What is the most practical advice you would give educators who desire to join your program of research?*

Debbie: In short: My current area of research is more interdisciplinary as I am drawing on my MA in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) and intercultural studies, my PhD in Educational Leadership as well as living and parenting as a migrant in both Europe and Thailand

for over 26 years. I am applying intercultural and psychological studies to the field of education to see how pedagogy needs to shift to accommodate the marginalized students in the classroom in light of globalization.

I think the best advice that I can give is to "connect". I was very isolated while writing my dissertation for a European context while living in Thailand. I found out about the Transformative Learning Association online and joined. A year later, a call was sent out for volunteers to help plan the biannual International Conference at Columbia University in New York in 2018 and I signed up for two committees—the International Committee and the International Day of Listening Committee. Through these two committees, I found friends and also got involved in multiple collaborative projects. I am still doing research with the Listening Committee (now the Transformative Listening Project—Ed Cunliff is on this project with me). Connecting through volunteering, collaborating, and attending conferences is a great way to increase your knowledge, expand your research and find partners for collaboration.

Augusta: *Outside of academia, how do you believe organizations and professionals should practice Transformative Learning? What's the value or benefit to them for doing so?*

Debbie: One area in which I am trying to bring in principles of transformative learning is with the NGO community in Thailand. There are a plethora of missions and humanitarian organizations here. I consult with an organization called Freedom Resource International (FRI) that seeks to bring awareness of the harm that often happens when trafficking work is not done well (often out of ignorance). This organization does not work directly with trafficked peoples, but rather has sought to be an umbrella organization to bring together the 70 plus organizations and individuals working to fight trafficking in Thailand. The co-director of FRI offered seminars on specific topics within trafficking to bring members of all organizations together. Rather than directly address the harm that was happening, a goal in the seminars was to provide space for dialogue and reflection where organizations could learn from each other and hear both positives and negatives about what was or was not working.

Leading people into transformation and change through reflection and dialogue is a transformative learning practice that helped to shape these seminars. It may have been more practical to have a frontal lecture on the practices that cause harm but a collaborative organized dialogue around struggles NGOs face was a start of relationship building so that this anti-trafficking work would not continue in independent silos but rather be supported through collaboration. The benefit of using transformative learning for organizations is that the organization is creating ownership of addressing problems at the basic level, some contribution from all participants is welcomed, answers come as a result of reflection and dialogue, and collaboration emerges to address the issues.

Augusta: *What does the future hold for transformative learning*?

Debbie: Transformative learning continues to generate interest beyond the educational realm into areas of business, medicine, and even language learning, to name a few. I just finished writing a chapter on "The Language Classroom as Transformative Response to the Unique Needs of Migrants and Refugees" for *Transformative Language Learning and Teaching* by Betty Lou Leaver, Dan E. Davidson & Christine Campbell, editors forthcoming 2020 by Cambridge University Press. Transformative learning offers a useful theoretical framework to support holistic teaching and learning. I also think that its attention to the affective domain aids in multidimensional teaching which is also important for current educational trends of social-emotional learning (SEL) as well as trauma-informed teaching. According to research, using SEL will assist students emotionally through improved social behaviors (including sharing, empathy, and kindness), improved students' attitudes regarding school while reducing anxiety and depression while also improving academics by 11% on average (Durlak et al., 2011).

Augusta: *Is there anything else you would like to share and/or add?*

Debbie: It is important to never forget that transformative learning has the capacity to be used for harm. The quantifier that transformative learning should be used "for good" (for the benefit of humanity) is a critical one to hold in place. Research regarding the negative uses of transformative learning could also be important to serve as a warning of its potential negative consequences. I think it is important to consider the question, to what end is *transformation* being sought and is it of benefit to both the individual and society? Who decides if it is beneficial?

Augusta: *These are all the questions I have. I have appreciated this so much. Your experiences are truly amazing, and thank you so much for sharing them with me.*

Author's Note: Augusta Davis is a JoTL editorial research assistant who recently graduated with her BA in English. She is now working as a writing consultant at Tulsa Community College.

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Fighting Ageism through Intergenerational Activities, a Transformative Experience

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Abstract

Older adults are the fastest-growing population in the world. There is already a higher demand for professionals to serve this population. Therefore, it is important to prepare young adults to work with the aging cohort. However, ageism impedes people's ability to be interested and interact with older adults. Ageism is more prevalent among younger generations, but intergenerational relationships may reduce ageist beliefs. This qualitative study explored the perceptions of college students who participated in an intergenerational program. It was found that intergenerational relationships are an opportunity for transformative experiences to occur. Young adults questioned previous ageist beliefs and became more knowledgeable and appreciative of late adulthood. Educators should promote intergenerational relationships so future professionals are better qualified to work with the aging population.

Keywords: Ageism, intergenerational relationships, transformative learning, older adults, college students.

Introduction

The trend in the world population is changing. The proportion of young people has decreased and the older population is increasing. An older person refers to the age of 60 or 65 years, to the end of life, depending on the region and country. Late adulthood is the fastest-growing cohort in the world (Jarrot, 2011; United Nations, 2018). Therefore, there will be a higher demand for services for old people that professionals may not be prepared to meet. There is already an insufficient number of competent caring professionals able to serve the needs of this diverse group (Turner, Brown, & Jarrott, 2017; Zucchero, Iwasaki, Lewis, et al., 2014). Ageist attitudes, or aegism which is the prejudice against people based on age (Butler, 1969) may negatively influence the decision of professionals to work with older adults. Additionally, factors like knowledge about aging and contact with older people also contribute to ageism (Cooney, et al., 2020; Marques et al., 2020).

This article explores how ageism can be questioned and transformed if young adults have the opportunity to interact with older adults. I hope to make some educators reflect on the importance of ageism. Based on this, I also invite educators to incorporate intergenerational practices within their formal and/or informal adult education programs.

Ageism Among Young Adults

Ageism, as are other "isms" (racism, sexism, etc.), is based on the prejudice that some groups are better or deserve more privileges than others, but it primarily refers to age. Regarding older adults, ageism entails the assumption that youth is better than old age (Clark & Griffin, 2008; North & Fiske, 2012; Yon, et al., 2010). Some stereotypes denigrate senior people, categorizing them as dependent, antiquated, asexual, and/or unhappy (Campos, et al., 2012). People fight becoming old because ageism is ingrained in the culture. Movies, songs, literature, and mass media tend to depict older people as something negative.

Old age is associated with death as well as cognitive and physical decline, increasing the negative stereotype of old age. These stereotypes contribute to ageist terms and jokes, lower employment opportunities, and mistreatment in different settings (health care facilities, departmental stores, restaurants, etc.), among others. Society constantly perpetuates a negative image of old age. Age serves as

a social organizing principle that offers different identities and power to people in relation to one another, being condescending with young people and alienating the oldest (Calasanti, 2020). Furthermore, older adults may face the greatest disparities in old age because intersections of other oppressions (sexism, classism, racism) shape their life. Advantages and disadvantages are carried and exacerbated at old age (Calasanti, 2020).

Due to ageism, professionals or family members may treat older adults in a deprecatory way (Smith et al., 2017). Among health care professionals, ageism is linked with reduced access to healthcare services and lower quality service (Schroyen, et al., 2018; Wilson, et al., 2017). Age discrimination is experienced in many countries. In Europe, age discrimination is experienced more often than discrimination based on sex or race (Smith et al., 2017).

Additionally, ageism has been found in all age groups (O'Connor & McFadden, 2012; Smith et al., 2017). People may hold ageist beliefs without noticing it. Implicit prejudices are culturally learned associations that people may not be aware of. The Revera Report on Ageism (2012) stated that age discrimination toward older people comes primarily from the younger population. Moreover, Yon et al. (2010) found that young adults who have ageist views have a higher proclivity to elder abuse than middle-aged adults.

For the majority of undergraduate students, knowledge about the aging population is usually very limited (Chippendale, 2013). Additionally, students pursuing bachelor's degrees are likely to have less cooperative contact with older adults than people of other ages (King & Lauder, 2016). This lack of knowledge and exposure may create distance and students may act based on media, prejudices, or stereotypes without noticing it. Conversely, undergraduates who take courses on aging exhibit fewer ageist behaviors, more positive aging attitudes, and are more likely to be interested in careers in geriatrics (Barnett & Adams, 2018; Chippendale, 2013).

Attitudes significantly influence people's practices, positively and negatively. Ageism, like racism, sexism, or ableism should not be tolerated because it results in discrimination against a group of people (Palmore, 2015). Therefore, it is important to challenge and reduce young adults' negative beliefs about late adulthood and increase awareness of the reality of aging.

Through exposure, young adults increase their ability to work with older adults and are likely to become a competent workforce for the aging population (Caspar, et al., 2019; Lokon, et al., 2012; Zucchero et al., 2014). Consequently, there is a need to prepare college graduates and the younger generations for success in an aging society.

Intergenerational Relationships and the Transformative Learning Theory

This study uses the Transformative Learning Theory as the theoretical framework. A premise from this theory is that there are many predispositions that individuals use to interpret their experiences, which include distortions, prejudices, stereotypes, and unquestioned or unexamined beliefs that can be transformed by learning experiences (Cranton, 2006; Cranton & Roy, 2003; Mezirow, 1996, 2012; Taylor, 2007, 2008). Transformative learning implies a change in a frame of reference. People's frames of reference are defined by their habits of mind and points of view (Merriam, et al., 2007). Transformative learning occurs when a person responds to an alternative habit of mind by reconsidering and revising prior belief systems (Cranton, 2006).

A habit of mind is a way of seeing the world based on our background, experience, culture, and personality, which are determined by our personal stories and are interrelated. Habits of mind start with meaning schemes, which are immediate points of view, attitudes, and judgments, but after time, they become a habit of mind. Every day we assess our schemes or points of view, and when we find them unjustified, we create new ones or transform them (Andersen & Tisdell, 2016). A transformation occurs when an individual encounters an alternative perspective, and prior habits of mind are called into question (Cranton, 2006; Mezirow, 1991).

There are some ideal conditions for transformation: information and arguments, freedom and openness to alternative points of view, empathy, awareness of the context of ideas, the equal opportunity to participate in different roles of discourse, and willingness to validate or accept new perspectives

(Cranton, 2006; Mezirow, 1991; Taylor, 2008). Furthermore, the transformation of frames of reference occurs through critical reflection. It could be while learning, when solving problems, or while reflecting about points of view.

The aforementioned studies show that young adults can have ageist ideas, which may be their habits of mind. Ageism is acquired from the social world, and individuals cannot easily stand outside of it to look at its norms and expectations. People tend to be unaware of the social codes in which power and privilege are distributed (Cranton, 2006; Mezirow, 1991; Taylor, 1997). Intergenerational programs may question ageist beliefs. Intergenerational activities allow both generations, young and older adults, to have direct contact, which has been shown to effectively reduce ageism (Meshel & McGlynn, 2004; Penick, et al., 2014).

Intergenerational activities also teach about social justice. Young adults are confronted with the aging reality and they can observe the hardships and disparities that elders encounter as well as the positive characteristics that they have. Interaction challenges the misconceptions and stereotypes about aging. It is important to include social justice education because it provides opportunities to transform oppressive social structures and creates opportunities for a more egalitarian society (Aguilera-Hermida, 2014).

Based on the Transformative Learning Theory, dialogue is "the essential medium through which transformation is promoted and developed" (Taylor, 2008, p. 9). One may expect that young adults who participate in intergenerational activities have the opportunity to experience a transformative experience, but transformation requires effort and critical thinking. It requires consciousness, it cannot be automatic. Reflection of the experience may question previous beliefs.

This study aims to explore the perceptions and experiences of a group of young adults who participated in an intergenerational program and how this interaction affected their meaning schemes and habits of mind related to aging. This study addresses the following questions:

1. Do young adults hold ageist beliefs?
2. How do intergenerational programs affect young participants' beliefs about aging?
3. Is there any transformation of habits of mind among younger adults?
4. Can intergenerational activities promote more inclusive meaning schemes?

Study Context and Methodology

This qualitative study follows a basic qualitative research design (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) and it is informed by the action research method. The overall objective is to understand how young adults made sense of their intergenerational experience and if they experienced a transformation in their habits of mind (Patton, 2002; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The action research methodology emphasizes to analyze the phenomena through the eyes of the participants, which are involved in the research process to some extent. Participants act as co-researchers with a feeling of ownership that motivates people to participate in the project (Glassman, et al., 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Data were collected through one-on-one semi-structured interviews and journals. Six college students participated in a research class with the primary researcher. They helped to promote the intergenerational program around campus, posting flyers, and inviting other students. In this study, these six students are considered the research team. The research program was called "Fun through the Ages". Students voluntarily visited a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) and participated in intergenerational activities with some of the residents over the course of six weeks. The intergenerational activities that students could join were: transporting an elder to his/her activity and staying with them, sharing a meal, and one on one activities where a resident and a student spent time together (card games, reading, chatting, etc.).

After promotion, 32 students voluntarily visited the retirement community, but only those who participated in at least three intergenerational activities were interviewed. There were four students who visited the facility more than three times. The final interviewees were ten college students (six who were

part of the research team, and four more) and five elders (Table 1). This study mainly presents the students' perceptions.

Even though six students were part of the research class, they were encouraged to go to the retirement community as any other student: voluntarily, when they wanted, if they wanted, and do the activities that they preferred. They knew they were insider observers and were encouraged to write a weekly journal. Reflective writing allows people to capture the experience, record an event, explore feelings, and make sense of what they know (Gardner & Alegre, 2019). After the six weeks of the project, the research team interviewed their peers so they could speak freely without pressure from the authority of a professor. The interviews were between 30 to 60 minutes each. The lead researcher interviewed the older participants. The interview guide had questions like "What did you like least/best about this experience?" "What do you think overall about the activities with the older adult/young adult?" "Would you recommend this type of activities?" "Do you have any other comments that would help us to know what intergenerational activities are good and what are not so good?" as well as additional comments in general (staff, organization, type of people, etc.) among others.

Table 1

Younger and Older Research Participants

Pseudonym	Degree	Sex	Pseudonym	Retirement Community Section	Sex
Tom	Undergraduate HDFS	Male	Tali	Personal Care	Female
Lara	Graduate Clinical Psychology	Female	Robert	Independent Living	Male
Melanie	Undergraduate Cybersecurity	Female	Nancy	Independent living	Female
Natalie	Graduate Community Psychology	Female	Andrea	Personal Care	Male
Rachel	Undergraduate HDFS	Female	Bailey	Personal Care	Female
Stanley	Undergraduate, Engineering	Male			
Cecilia	Undergraduate, Psychology	Female			
Jane	Undergraduate, HDFS	Female			

Ethical approval was given by The Pennsylvania State University and informed consent was obtained for all the participants. Also, they were informed that they could withdraw from the study (intergenerational activities) at any time without any retaliatory action or any implication.

For the data analysis, all the interviews were transcribed using pseudonyms. Materials were given to the lead investigator who listened, read, and reread through the data before the team started coding. After that, the data was coded using Dedoose software, which is a web-based software. The research team had access only during the time they were coding the transcriptions and they did not know the original names of the participants. The coding was done together in a lab room in different sessions, so there was clarity and consistency about the codes. All the excerpts were analyzed in light of the research questions and the findings were categorized into the themes that emerged. Quotes from the elders are included to compare the young adults' beliefs, but it is not the intention of this article to present the residents' experience.

Findings and Discussion

This qualitative study is presenting the results in light of the Transformative Learning Theory and including the themes that emerged from the data. There were four major themes: habits of mind based on

stereotypical beliefs: a barrier between generations; intergenerational activities promote a broader understanding of aging; and transformative experiences and social responsibility.

Habits of Mind based on Stereotypical Beliefs: A Barrier between Generations

As the literature has previously reported, young adults have distorted and negative views of older adults (Clark & Griffin, 2008; Yon et al., 2010), and our results confirm these findings. Participants came to the retirement community with previous misconceptions, and these young adults were not aware of their negative preconceptions. For example, Rachel mentioned, "I visited a senior who very much still had her humor, which you do not really find at that age in a retirement home." The young adult stated her perception thinking that older adults who live in a facility do not have a sense of humor. Ageist habits of mind can originate from lack of knowledge or isolated individual incidents and they can become long-lasting stereotypes (Smith et al., 2017).

In addition, participants assumed that residents were socially isolated. Stanley said, "I know the residents are lonely because they do not have a choice, for the most part, of being there and are not very social." Students thought that older adults are lonely, but none of the elders who were interviewed reported loneliness. In this regard, Andrea, a resident, said, "No, they [her family] don't allow me to be alone. My one son lives in [a nearby town], my daughter lives very close, my other son lives 5 miles from here. I'm never lonely because they visit me too much." In fact, most of the interviewed residents had frequent visits from their families. Even though one older adult did not have family members, she still did not recall feeling lonely. This information does not affirm that all the residents receive visitors. There may be other residents who need visitors or feel lonely, but students expressed assumptions based on their previous stereotypical beliefs about older adults living in facilities, rather than through their interaction.

These stereotypical beliefs, which are the frame of reference of some young adults, may prevent intergenerational interactions or perpetrate distance between generations (Smith et al., 2017). A representation of this is clear in Alyssa's quote: "I know someone in my sorority is afraid of old people because she thinks that they're mean." As the transformative learning theory states, previous assumptions act as a filter for interpreting the meaning of the experience (Merriam, et al., 2007).

These examples of implicit ageism may contribute to avoid seniors, mistreat them, or simply ignoring and making them invisible in society. Furthermore, these ageist beliefs, if not questioned, will accompany young adults through their professional life and will impact the way they treat and serve older adults, no matter their major. Ageism is embedded in the culture (Calasanti, 2020; Barnett & Adams, 2018; Zucchero, et al., 2014). Palmore (2015) called ageism a social disease "which is spread from person to person and from generation to generation" (p. 874). But it is not only learned; it is also influenced by the level of knowledge that we have about older adults and by our developmental experiences, as we will review in the following section.

The Developmental Stage Affects the Mental Schemes About Older Adults

Students formed assumptions based on their developmental stage and saw things through their own lenses. Habits of mind are based on people's backgrounds, experiences, and culture, and through them, people interpret the world (Merriam, et al., 2007). Young adults assumed that elders felt the same way that they would be feeling if they were in the resident's situation. A student expressed sadness about the routine that older adults experience. Cecilia said,

> You see all of them at once and that could be like… well… yeah… like, depressing because they live there, and that's their house, and you see most of them, just, they eat, they watch TV, they go to some activities. Like… it's very like… even if you are not sick, but you live there, it will make you depressed.

For college students, new activities and things to do are exciting. They are discovering the world and finding their way into it. However, young adults may not understand that routine and predictability offer security to elders, especially at this stage where cognitive functions may be compromised.

Older adults expressed contentment and satisfaction with their lives. Bailey mentioned that she was happy with her life in the retirement community. She enjoyed the activities, was properly treated, and said she did not need anything else. Based on this, we can contrast the young adults' point of view and the reality that residents face. There is a prejudice that emerges from the developmental stage from where young adults are interpreting reality. An individuals' developmental stage is part of a person's frame of reference and affects their interpretations, the way they create mental schemes, and consequently, their behaviors.

Intergenerational Activities Promotes a Broader Understanding of Aging

During the intergenerational activities, students developed a new perspective about aging that questioned their previous beliefs. Jane said, "just getting to know someone who you think is so different from you but ends up not being so different is really great." Unlike the stereotype of incapability, young adults observed that many elders may be facing physical difficulties, but have other capabilities. A student said,

> People might have a judgment that seniors do not understand, but they do, they understand …. We think that they're not capable anymore of learning new things. They do learn and some of them have, like, Facebook and email! They might not be as fast anymore, but they're still the same, so I think that was something I realized through talking to them.

The quote shows her reflective process. Now, this young adult will treat elders as capable of learning because she saw it, and she may talk about it with other people. As observed in previous literature (Penick et al., 2014; Turner et al., 2017, Zuchero et al, 2014), through exposure, students increased their understanding of aging and had a new frame of reference that may help to reduce ageism.

It Is Not About Age: Elders Are Like Any Other Cohort

Participants realized that behaviors and attitudes cannot be blamed on age. People have different personalities and based on that, they have different behaviors. Alyssa said, "Some of them really do want your time and attention and some of them don't but... that's how it is with people our age too. Some people want your attention and some people don't… they're just… they're just humans." Young adults observed that elders are like any other cohort and that age should not divide generations.

Participants found the interaction with older adults enjoyable enough to consider them as friends. Natalie said, "As the project comes to a close, it is wonderful to recognize the new connections and friendships that have been made throughout the process." Also, in one of her journals, Elizabeth said, "I can't wait to do that again next week and find my friend!"

Young adults saw older couples kissing and changed their perception about the aging stage, realizing that elders love and express their feelings. Rachel said, "I am in a relationship now, and I feel like the older couples are more affectionate than my boyfriend and I even are!" Young adults were surprised, as their expectations were different from what they saw. Participants developed a different view of seniors, as loving beings, who express their level of commitment and affection to their significant other. This is a new mental scheme that young adults gained through the intergenerational activities.

Elders as Role Models and Informal Teachers

Students perceived residents as role models that they can learn from. The conversations went into different topics and were informative for young adults. Some participants saw elders as people full of qualities. Natalie said, "Nancy is the kind of person I hope to be as I age. Her security, independence, and the way she carries herself is a real example of someone I would like to see myself grow into." Indirectly, elders were teaching young adults that being old can be beautiful and positive. Because the student saw those qualities directly, she was clear that she wanted to follow that path.

Even though young adults did not verbally express the experience as transformative, they were questioning their thoughts. A resident told a student that he may die at the facility, and so he always

makes his days worth of living. The student, reflecting about any circumstances or challenges she enjoyed, said "that stayed with me a lot."

Furthermore, many students were impressed that residents handle their challenges with humor. In this regard Lara said,

> She [a resident] is quite inspiring …. She always tells me that the key to life is to have fun, which is why she is always joking around and never takes anything seriously …. I do believe this does make a big difference in life because some things are really not worth stressing over. Attitude is everything.

Through dialogue and meaningful interactions, young adults were acquiring new meaning schemes (Taylor, 2008). As previous literature has stated, young adults were inspired by the levels of knowledge demonstrated by their older counterparts (Borrero, 2015). Some students developed an increased appreciation of older adults and a more positive mindset towards aging.

Reflections About Future

The intergenerational interaction taught students to relate to the aging process, not only as a distant concept but also as something they may experience in their own life. This relatable experience may help young adults to think and act in a friendlier way toward the aging cohort. Cecilia explained that before this experience, she had a strong relationship with her grandparents, but she used to see them just as family members without realizing their age and their needs. For her, other older adults were people that did not have many things in common with her. After visiting the retirement community, she said her perception of older people changed. She said, "Now I don't see them as seniors, I see them all as grandparents." It seems that the student can relate better to the senior population than before. She created an alternative meaning scheme that she can use to relate to them.

The intergenerational experiences promoted empathy towards their own family, translating what they are feeling and thinking into their personal reality. Rachel said,

> There was that one senior who said … her grandkids don't come see her and it makes her sad. So, it made me reflect on my home life because I am 3 hours away from my grandparents and of course they're not older yet, they are low 60s, but still, I am their grandchild and I should be talking to them…. It forced me to realize that there is no excuse for not reaching out every once in a while, and having a conversation with them.

She also said,

> The one senior who couldn't go to the bathroom made me think about if that's going to happen to me when I get older…. So, it's something that no matter what, if I liked it or not, I'm going to be there eventually. I'm going to have to go through those things that they did, because you are always going to reach a point where your body can't do what you can do now, and it's going to deteriorate.

This new mindset can lead to endless positive pathways for the future. Students may show more empathy and be more inclusive of older adults. As Zucchero et al. (2014) mentioned, "self-reflection is an important aspect of increasing student awareness of cultural issues and the potential development of empathy toward clients and their situations" (p. 956). Through the study, we cannot guarantee a transformation of habits of mind, but students were able to observe and point out a new view, not only for residents in the retirement community but also for their own families. Are they going to act upon it? We do not know. But it is worth it to try. As adult educators, we can include opportunities for students to interact with older adults. It is about social justice, inclusion, and transformation (Holst, 2010).

Social Responsibility and Transformative Experiences

Through the intergenerational experience, some students reflected on the aging population and how it is perceived in society. The following quote shows how a student was creating an alternative perspective. She said,

> People act like they [older adults] are just this whole other species that don't have anything in common, and they were once our age too, so it was nice going and talking to them and it made me feel better knowing and going out and having a conversation with someone who's not my age…. I think that this is something that our society needs and I think that as our generation, we need to focus more on the older population because soon they are going to outnumber us, and people need to stop thinking that this is such a weird topic.

Young adults recognized that people may have a distorted vision of older adults. Students created a new mental concept about older adults and may experience a change in their frame of reference based on the exchange of information and arguments, openness to express thoughts, equal opportunity to participate in a dialogue, and disposition to observe and hear new perspectives.

Moreover, through intergenerational activities, young adults learned about professionalism and the proper way to treat the aging population. While observing some of the retirement community employees, they set standards that they would like to achieve as professionals. Regarding the activities coordinator, Rachel said,

> She was just so comfortable with [the residents] and you could tell that they enjoyed talking to her too. Their faces would light up when they would see her, so I would start thinking "oh maybe I'll get to that level."

Through her involvement, a student reflected on social responsibilities and her level of civic engagement increased. By understanding the needs and challenges that older adults face, she wanted to give back to the community, not only for older adults but also for those who are vulnerable. Cecilia said,

> It made me realize a lot of things, because talking with them and actually learning about them and caring about them, it made me want to contribute more to society, like there are people who struggle, so to be maybe nicer, to connect more, to give more and different things. Just to be more aware and I'm not being like in my own bubble.

Intergenerational activities not only help to overcome ageist ideas, but it can also be a venue to create a more knowledgeable and integrated society. Lara stated, "I think it's something everyone should do once just because it will give you a different view on seniors."

The intergenerational experience transformed the way that students think about aging. Natalie said, "Overall one of the greatest lessons from this is that I think too often we forget to think about aging." To talk about aging and ageism is to talk about oppression, regardless of the setting (Calasanti, 2020).

Educators should include intergenerational projects and/or experiences as part of their programs, and educate for critical, nondogmatic students who pursue the idea that unity is necessary to build a just social order. These experiences promote a more democratic, participatory, inclusive, and cooperative society. Adult education should remain relevant and committed to advancing social justice (Holst, 2010). Young adults can transform their ageist perspectives through being exposed to a new and more accurate reality of the aging population. Ageism is especially important because the population is aging and because it is the only "ism" that the majority of us may experience, just by getting old.

Conclusion

This study explored the perceptions and experiences of college students who participated in an intergenerational program at a retirement community. As mentioned in the previous literature (Yon et al., 2010), young adults presented ageist thoughts and attitudes that could be a barrier for interaction between older and younger populations. People are not always willing to interact with those who are different from themselves (Chan & Lai, 2015). Usually, the health industry and the media portray late adulthood as an undesirable state marked by physical and cognitive decline, which favor youth over aging (Calasanti, 2020; Gullette, 2011; Marques et al., 2020). However, during intergenerational activities, young adults questioned their previous schemes and transformed their thoughts into a more inclusive and comprehensive point of view of the older generation. This happened once the participants took the time to get to know each other and broke the barrier between their beliefs and reality.

Through interaction and constant visits, students had the opportunity to experience transformations. Intergenerational activities allowed young adults to bring attention to an overlooked minority via one's own reflection. Once individuals hear or experience something, they cannot "unhear" it and this could be a transformation.

Moreover, the intergenerational interaction allowed young adults to see the aging stage as something positive and acceptable. Students saw elders as loving beings, with a good sense of humor and a content life. Moreover, young adults reflected on their aging process and thought about the future for them and their family members. Those reflections could lead to a transformation.

As observed in the findings of this study, mental schemes are shaped by the developmental stage an individual is in and affects the way older adults are viewed, and consequently treated. Young adults will become professionals who will decide activities, programs, policies, and even laws within their fields. If they are not exposed to the aging population, they may not understand late adulthood and proceed based on biases and stereotypes. Young professionals may make decisions about older adults without taking into consideration the elders' needs and perspectives.

The aging population is growing (Jarrot, 2011; United Nations, 2018) and it is likely that no matter the profession, most young adults will interact and/ or work with older adults in their future. A better image of seniors can help young adults to be more inclusive. Furthermore, early exposure to the aging population as undergraduate students may increase the number of professionals working with older adults. Higher education institutions and educators in formal and informal settings should look for intergenerational opportunities for their students.

Education offers the opportunity to influence those who receive it. We should use this privilege to promote social justice, especially for those who are segregated and/or discriminated against based on race, age, sex, or any other characteristic. It is a challenging endeavor, not easy to achieve, but following humanistic models, we contribute to a better world by pointing out social inequality and reducing social injustices (Aguilera-Hermida, 2014). Whether explicit or not, the values of an adult educator influence what is taught (Boyadjieve & Ilieva-Trichkova, 2017; Holst, 2010). Educators should develop, promote, and expand opportunities within a multigenerational context through service learning or volunteer community-based programs. Through intergenerational experiences, the younger population increases their understanding of late adulthood and decreases ageist ideas.

Implications for Practice

This study reaffirms that intergenerational activities are beneficial for young adults, but also shows that it can promote a more inclusive and respectful view of the aging population. It is imperative for educators to infuse aging-related information and experiences into academic and non-academic settings. Especially, considering that there is a lack of a sufficient number of professionals to attend the growing older adult population (Turner, et al, 2017; Zucchero et al., 2014). Through intergenerational activities, older adults have the opportunity to offer their skills and talents to the community, transforming them into active visible citizens (Aguilera-Hermida, 2014; Orte et al., 2018). As formational institutions,

universities and colleges should address the need for intergenerational interactions and aging courses as part of students' general education.

Anticipated discomfort may prevent students from interacting with older adults, so while planning intergenerational projects or class activities is important to offer a brief overview of the older population, so the benefits form the experience can be expanded. A positive experience may open up a new less ageist generation of emerging professionals.

Educators who decide to work with both generations, young and older adults, should be careful that intergenerational programs are properly planned, so young learners have a positive experience. If not, the transformation of the young adults' habits of mind may not be experienced and they may reinforce negative ideas of older adults or be discouraged to work with the older population. Providing physical assistance without meaningful involvement, or having just one-time encounters may serve to maintain stereotypes (Penick et al., 2014). Finally, institutional structures and practices are tied to the professionals' values, so it is imperative to include aging as a positive value among young professionals, so older adults do not face the consequences of ageism.

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Authentic Professional Learning: Creating Faculty Development Experiences through an Assessment Institute

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Abstract

This case study analyzes experiences of participants in an Assessment Institute (AI) for faculty development on ePortfolio. In earlier research on the AI, findings showed that focused faculty development increased instructor confidence in teaching and learning with ePortfolio. The present study expanded the initial research by including participant data from a second session of the AI, and exploring the research through a qualitative lens using transformative learning as the framework. Strong support for the use of dialogue and critical reflection in faculty development were found during the research. Our findings suggest that professional development environments that encourage transformative learning by means of discussion, sharing of different perspectives, and reflections on implementation and best practices yield positive results. These factors can inform researchers and practitioners interested in structuring similar faculty development initiatives in the higher education environment.

Keywords: authentic learning, faculty development, ePortfolio, reflective practices, perspective transformation

Introduction

In the 21st century, the need for professional development is perhaps greater than ever before. Anyone who enters today's job market needs to learn constantly in order to stay relevant amid rapid changes in technology and knowledge. Constant transformation is expected of modern professionals in any workplace (Vey et al., 2017). Therefore, learning environments need to prepare future professionals for transformation, no matter their workplace, discipline, occupation, or age (Merriam & Brockett, 2011; Tomlinson & Holmes, 2017). In order to lay the foundation for successful learning and foster competent future workers, professional development of higher education faculty is crucial (Weller Swanson & Kayler, 2010). Despite this, research has primarily focused on the individual faculty participant and has produced little generalizable knowledge to guide programs or improve student-learning outcomes (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013; Felder & Brent, 2010). In reviewing the literature, we observed that most studies have focused on practitioners at the primary education level, rather than higher education (Avalos, 2011; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). In practice, professional development of faculty in higher education is common, but many sessions and workshops still focus on basic learning theory and technology skills, rather than on enhancing authentic or inquiry-based learning experiences (Webster-Wright, 2009). More recently, critical research investigating higher education faculty development also noted a need to focus on reflection and inquiry practices rather than content (Amundsen & Wilson, 2012). These authentic learning experiences enable opportunities for both reflection and integration of skills through practice, which are central components of lifelong and transformative learning strategies (Merriam & Bierema, 2013). Reflection is key to learning from experience, especially in the context of teacher experiences, and the development of faculty skills and aptitudes (Clayton & Ash, 2005; Hubball et

al., 2005). Therefore, reflective practices that support transformative learning in faculty development programs may directly translate to a deepened level of learning for students.

ePortfolio

One instructional strategy used by faculty to deepen learning is the ePortfolio. ePortfolios (or electronic portfolios) are digital platforms that allow learners to document, curate, and highlight their learning experiences (Chau & Cheng, 2010). Part of what makes ePortfolios compelling is their ability to help students develop reflective writing, as well as technical and digital literacy skills. For this reason, ePortfolios have been recognized as a High Impact Practice (HIP)—an evidence-based practice that greatly contributes to student learning (Watson et al., 2016). ePortfolios enable students to construct a synthesized document of their professional selves that provides a robust example of lifelong learning (Cambridge, 2010; Chen, 2009).

Institutional Context

At our large, southeastern, research university, the ePortfolio Project (hence called "the project") is a campus-wide initiative that supports both students and faculty as they create ePortfolios or integrate them into their curricula (Marshall et al., 2017). Because curricular changes take time and needs vary across departments, the project works with cohorts, which are faculty learning communities (FLCs) comprised of faculty and staff. Supported by the project, FLCs implement ePortfolios, develop sustainable curricula structures, and allow for professional development of best practices (Shulman et al., 2004).

Since its inception, the project chose to support outward-facing, professional ePortfolios to foster digital and ethical literacy skills (Marshall et al., 2017). The project uses free, intuitive web platforms to allow for creative development by students, and ensure they keep their ePortfolios even after graduation. These variations in choice and implementation, both by faculty and students, posed challenges for the project, especially with regards to assessment. To address these challenges, the project established an Assessment Institute (AI), with the intent of evaluating student performance, contributing to faculty development, and enabling research on best practices for higher education ePortfolios (Marshall et al., 2017).

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Background Literature

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In the introduction, we outlined the connections between transformative learning, faculty professional development, and critical reflection. In the following literature review, we provide an overview of these four concepts.

Transformative Learning

The research literature is robust in the area of transformative learning, and acts as an agent of change for the professional adult learner (Berger, 2004; Brock, 2010; Cranton, 1996; Cranton & King, 2003; Cranton & Carusetta, 2004; Dix, 2016; Gatt, 2009; Glisczinski, 2007; Kitchenham, 2008; King, 2004; Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Taylor, 2007; Taylor & Cranton, 2013; Trede et al., 2011). Mezirow's (1991) theory of transformative learning is based on disorientating dilemmas that challenge the way the learner thinks. Adult learners are encouraged to critically think and reflect on beliefs and assumptions they have acquired and challenge whether they are accurate. Mezirow (1997) believed that this process allowed adults to reflect on the experience and change or transform their individual view. Through this transformative process, the learner becomes open to other points of view and allows new ideas to be included in their frame of reference. This openness is especially important to the professional adult learner and promotes an appreciation for lifelong learning (Cranton & King, 2003).

Discourse or dialogue is a critical component of the transformative learning process. Adults learn together by discussing related experiences, critically examining alternative points of view, and

developing a common understanding (Mezirow, 1997). Snyder (2008) suggested that the transformative learning process informed curriculum decision making and instruction in higher education, and recommended that future research on transformative learning be longitudinal in nature, rather than one-time studies. This approach would allow investigators to explore the importance of time in the process. In addition, Snyder (2008) recommended that data from transformative learning studies be triangulated with additional documents to confirm self-reported learners' experiences.

In another study, Brock (2010) analyzed the steps in Mezirow's transformative learning theory and investigated the importance of critical reflection. This study found that comparison of personal thoughts and ideas to an external reference group was significant in creating an environment for change during the learning process. Brock (2010) recommended that educators' values change gradually in the learning environment, as meaningful reflection requires time. In addition, the author recommended sharing of lessons learned in order to elicit new perspectives or alternative points of view to enhance the collaborative learning process.

Kitchenham (2015) also supported the need for critical reflection and problem solving in higher education. He noted a lack of evidence for transformation of learning in teaching and instruction, especially in the area of assessment. To improve student-learning outcomes and deepen learning, faculty were encouraged to create more authentic learning experiences, rather than utilizing the traditional testing methods of assessment (Kitchenham, 2015).

One longitudinal case study looked for transformative learning experiences during a 5-year professional development program related to instruction with technology (Whitelaw et al., 2004). Although this longitudinal study did not confirm transformative learning experiences by the participants, several recommendations were made for future studies. The researchers' main recommendation was for creation of authentic learning experiences in faculty development (Whitelaw et al., 2004). In addition, the researchers recommended collection of self-reported data, both pre- and post-intervention, to provide additional data sources to document occurrences of transformative learning.

Faculty Professional Development

Although most faculty today have interacted with some form of instructional technology, not all have received actual training on instructional pedagogy (Herman, 2012; Robinson & Hope, 2013). Indeed, some faculty may have never attended any professional development activities related to instruction; thus, leaving them to model their teaching after how they themselves were taught. To change behaviors and enhance instructional skills, it is important for faculty members to engage in professional development focused on teaching and learning (Cranton & King, 2003). Although content knowledge is critical to make one proficient in a discipline, it may be even more important to understand the process of how learning occurs. This, along with a recognition of the learner's unique characteristics, may be especially true when working with the adult (Knowles et al., 2012).

Faculty development in higher education can take many forms, including self-directed learning experiences, formal professional development programs, and organizational initiatives (Amundsen & Wilson, 2012; Herman, 2012). This diversity of methods makes the generalization of best practices difficult. Chism et al. (2012) provided a comprehensive review of 138 studies on educational development practices and found that, although the study methods varied widely, the majority reported effective results, showing improvement in faculty knowledge and skills. Institutes and workshops that focused on a theme and delivered information over the course of one day or more were shown to have positive effects on teaching attitudes and changes in instructional practices for faculty (Chism et al., 2012).

Critical Reflection Activities

Transformation of teaching practices in higher education is an experiential, iterative process that requires both time and quality reflective activities to improve understanding, and sustain success (Clayton & Ash, 2005). Thus, a major challenge for faculty development is to create reflective events and activities that allow the faculty not only to learn but also "integrate reflective methods into their courses for student learning" (Clayton & Ash, 2005, p. 161). This requires an understanding that learning is a lifelong process for both faculty and students, and that time for reflection is critical to the process (Brookfield, 2017).

Brookfield (1992) discussed the reflective practitioner and supported the need for checking assumptions and lifelong learning in educators of adults. More recently, Brookfield (2017) continued to challenge educators to check the accuracy and validity of their assumptions with other educators. By reviewing and reflecting on their teaching practices with other faculty, they become more aware, challenge their assumptions, and integrate new ways of thinking—a transformation. Therefore, although critical reflection often begins alone, it is only effective or transformative when it becomes collaborative.

Methods

To prepare to assess student ePortfolios, the project established an Assessment Institute (AI). The project facilitated two sessions of the AI, with one in 2016 and another in 2018. Both sessions included two days of professional development and training on the use of a summative rubric for ePortfolios (Marshall et al., 2017).

Case Study Approach

This study examined the AI sessions offered by the Office of University Writing (OUW) at a large, southeastern research university. The AI was the case unit, with both the 2016 and the 2018 sessions included as subunits of a single case, using an embedded design (Yin, 2018). It was possible to consider these two sessions as subunits of the same case as there were no significant differences in their design, schedule, structure, or content. Only minor adjustments were made to participant selection in 2018. Namely, staff members who were cohorts of the project were also included as participants (only faculty participated in 2016), and the project grouped faculty into pairs for group scoring (the participants themselves selected their pairs in 2016). Otherwise, the workshop format, schedule, and processes remained the same for the participants in both sessions of the AI.

The descriptive case study approach was an appropriate strategy for this research as it allowed for an in-depth exploration on the use of ePortfolio as a HIP by higher education professionals. Multiple sources of evidence supported the case study approach, including qualitative survey feedback, field notes, and interview data. According to Yin (2018), the case study can be used to explain, describe, or explore events or phenomena in the contexts in which they occur. Thus, the case design was utilized to develop a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences during the AI.

Participants

This case study analyzed the experiences of 34 participants, which included faculty and staff from across campus in different disciplines, from a variety of age groups, ranks, and experience. Both sessions of AI included a mixture of those actively and less actively involvement in the university ePortfolio initiative. All of the participants were from colleges or programs that had cohorts involved in the project.

Data Collection

The AI was designed to collect research data and publish the results, thus an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was sought and received through the university process (Marshall et al., 2017).

Survey

Participant data was collected via a post-session survey instrument, which contained both open and closed-ended questions. The survey format remained the same for both sessions and was distributed during the sessions by project staff. This case analysis focused only on the two open-ended questions in the post-session survey.

Other Evidence

Other sources of data were collected to support a thorough understanding of the case, provide for triangulation of the data, and increase the internal validity of the case (Yin, 2018). An interview was held with both the Director and Assistant Director of the project who had developed the AI concept, created the surveys, and conducted both sessions. Both researchers conducted the open-ended interview, which produced several sources of data, including transcripts from the interview, debriefing notes from the sessions, and the original AI research article that was published (Marshall et al., 2017).

Data Analysis

The primary analysis for this case study was inductive and comparative, using the method based on Glaser (1965) and further developed with an adult education approach by Merriam (2009). The two main questions that guided our analysis of the data were the open-ended questions from the AI post-session surveys:

- Research Question 1 – What changes in understanding/thinking, if any, happened during the AI and how they occurred?
- Research Question 2 – What improvements can be made to future instances of the AI?

Trustworthiness

The researchers were not part of the AI staff and were not involved in the survey distribution or collection of data. The AI staff provided the researchers access to the de-identified responses, with no access to the original survey documents. Therefore, participant anonymity was preserved.

The inductive analysis (Merriam, 2009) began by the two researchers working independently. Each researcher immersed themself in the data collected (survey responses, field notes, journal article, interview transcripts) and highlighted areas that appeared to be meaningful, recurring, and reflective. Once data sources were reviewed, the researchers coded a sample of participant responses from the 2016 session post survey. This process was undertaken to test for significant differences regarding how the researchers coded the data. No significant disagreements were found; therefore, each researcher proceeded to code the entire data set of post survey responses. In addition, the researchers reviewed and triangulated the other sources of data as part of the analysis process (Merriam, 2009). Finally, the researchers then compared their codes, adjudicating differences and merging similar entries to jointly devise a final set of codes after reaching saturation (Merriam, 2009).

Analysis Framework

The post-session surveys' open-ended questions provided in-depth information as to the experiences of faculty participating in the AI. Thus, the researchers performed an inductive analysis of the open-ended responses to the surveys using Mezirow's (1991) transformative learning theory

as a framework to understand the reflection process and any changes in thinking by the participants. For instance, during both the sessions, the scoring process on ePortfolios was undertaken in pairs or teams, requiring faculty to reach a common understanding of the rubric and adjudicate scores on the ePortfolios (Marshall et al., 2017). This process emphasized both discussion and reflection to provide a format that allowed for critical thinking. The self-reported data from the post surveys represented participants' reflections on changes and/or transformation from the AI. Therefore, we suggest that the data provided indications of the occurrence of transformative learning by the participants.

In the end, four themes were produced through the coding process, analysis and triangulation of the data to ensure validity and reliability (Merriam, 2009). The theme "contact with different perspectives," related only to the first open-ended question, and thus provided data for the first research question. Another theme, "training," was comprised of suggestions for improving the AI or future workshops, and was specific to the second open-ended question. The remaining two themes, "discussion" and "best practices" related to both research questions (see Figure 1).
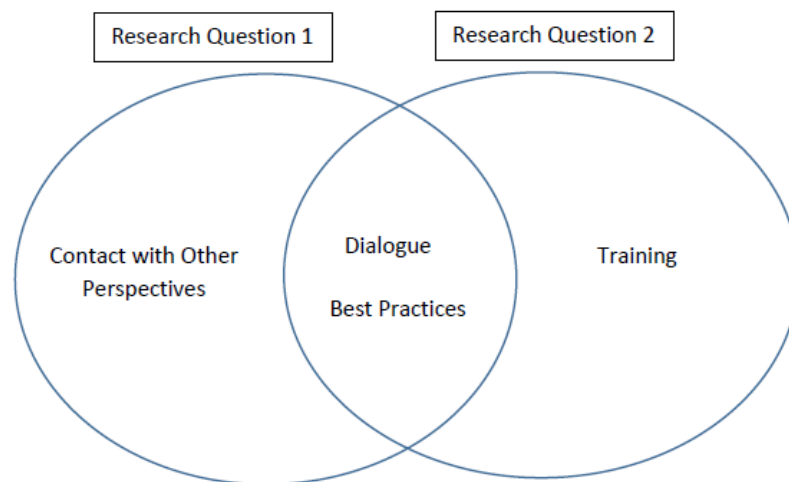

Figure 1: Conceptual grouping of themes from analysis by research questions.

THEME 1 – Dialogue, Discussion, and Collaboration

The design of the AI provided many opportunities for purposeful dialogic activity. For instance, general discussion was undertaken to clarify the rubric throughout the sessions. In addition, participants were asked to mediate differences in ratings as part of the scoring process. Lastly, the AI concluded with a group-wide debrief discourse. All these activities presented diverse avenues for discussion, with distinctive contexts and ways to negotiate meaning through reflection (Mezirow, 1991). In line with this, many participants highlighted dialogue as the most helpful aspect of the AI.

During the adjudication process on scoring ePortfolios, participants resolved discrepancies, discussed matters of assessment and learning outcomes, and compared how their partners would rate the exact same ePortfolio. For instance, one participant related how discussion with their partner allowed for a better understanding of how to assess ePortfolios: "it really helps having someone else to bounce ideas off of in scoring the ePortfolios" (Participant 9B). Another participant, 26A, detailed discussion as a means of becoming aware of what they did not know:

> As a two-year member of the cohort, I feel fairly confident in my understanding, but these two days have helped me to really unpack student ePortfolios, the rubric, and my own beliefs/biases. Having adjudication discussions helped me to see areas where I had less

understanding than I thought and allowed me to look at these areas from another perspective.

Participant 6B also noted the role of dialogue in addressing biases and clearing misconceptions:

I particularly liked how we talked through our biases ahead of time, as I think we all learned a lot about ourselves and each other through that process. I also feel that I know my colleagues from across the campus better than I typically would from the OUW or other smaller informal sessions.

Mezirow (1995) recognized this process of talking through biases as an essential part of discourse, which he described as, "a special kind of dialogue learners undertake to review, assess, and validate newly transformed habits of mind or points of view" (p. 53). Through discourse, learners make sense of new information and reach consensus by critically examining and comparing their assumptions with their peers. Mezirow (1995) suggested that discourse usually occurs during one-on-one interactions. As such, discussions with the scoring partner were a suitable place for fostering this significant part of transformative learning.

Some participants considered that engaging in informal dialogue during sessions was helpful. Participant 27B related the value of informal discussion during lunch break: "Lunch was a nice time to hear what others are doing and how they have used it in their programs and/or courses." Another participant (25A) noted, "Informal discussions have spurred some new ideas on effectively implementing ePortfolio in the future." While what is meant precisely by informal dialogue was not specifically detailed, it is possible to make a distinction between conversations that happened during the scheduled dialogic activities, such as rubric training, score adjudication, and debrief time, from conversations that occurred outside of the formal session structure. This may be important to note when creating different types of reflective discussions.

As noted above, dialogue is essential to the transformative learning process. It is how learners validate newly transformed points of view—and sometimes how they encounter what prompts transformation in the first place (Mezirow, 1991). These findings suggest that dialogue contributed to transformative learning during the AI, helping participants examine and expand upon set ways of thinking.

THEME 2 – Contact with Other Perspectives

The AI was a cross-disciplinary event, featuring participants from disciplines such as nursing, veterinary medicine, and engineering, each with its own unique institutional contexts, goals, and challenges. Throughout the AI, discussions among participants across this wide range of disciplines created an environment in which they were organically introduced to different perspectives and viewpoints.

Many participants reported that, through the AI, they were able to see how the ePortfolio was used in other departmental or disciplinary contexts. By comparing the experiences of others with their own, participants were able to reflect upon how they conceived of and used ePortfolios. This contact with other perspectives was described in various ways, such as having "a glimpse into how others have scaffolded ePortfolio creation" (3B*);* "a better understanding of how ePortfolios are used in various departments across campus" (9B*);* and learning "that there are certainly a wide range of experiences across campus with ePortfolio" (1B).

In the case of participant 10B, understanding of how ePortfolios were used in other contexts was closely related to their own and their department's use of the ePortfolio:

Seeing judgment and evaluation of rubric aspects from colleagues across various disciplines other than my own. I gained more awareness of common issues as they relate to the outcomes to try to teach students to avoid. I hope to begin working on how to assess

ePortfolios within our department in the future, so this experience provides a strong foundation from the project wide perspective.

The themes of dialogue and contact with different perspectives appear to be closely related. Most of the responses make a connection between the two, either explicitly (through terms such as "discussions" or "hearing from [others]" or implicitly (see Figure 1 for interaction of themes). This reveals the importance of dialogic practices in which participants have access to discourse from different points of view. By comparing their experiences with others', they can imagine how things could be otherwise, which, according to Mezirow (2009), "is central to the initiation of the transformative process" (p. 95).

In two different comments, Participant 15A explicitly pinpointed of contact with other perspectives as cause for a transformation in perspective. First, when asked about potential improvements for the AI, they said:

I would have liked to have heard more about why normalizing is necessary early in the first day. My discipline uses objective measurements of things like length, mass, and chemistry. So the data are the data. Now I think I understand that normalizing is necessary because the assessment is very subjective. I especially enjoyed the group comparison of scores and the adjudication process.

For this participant, the change in perspective was facilitated not necessarily through discussion, but through reflecting on the norming process. This led to a disorienting dilemma in which the participant reexamined their previous comprehension of assessment (Mezirow, 1991). Ultimately, they gained an understanding of how to reliably assess subjective, imprecise material such as an ePortfolio.

In the second comment, participant 15A described overcoming apprehensions about the project itself:

When the concept of ePortfolios was first introduced at [the university], I was skeptical that it would be useful for the students in my department. Now I see how effective the ePortfolio project can be in helping students market themselves and also develop technical website development skills. A student could use an ePortfolio to market themselves to such employers.

This participant placed the student's perspective at the center of his arguments: it influenced both their initial skepticism and the perceived value of ePortfolios. The data suggests that contact with another the perspective of students is valuable to transformation in thinking and ultimately in teaching (Mezirow, 1991). Other participants described imagining the task of developing ePortfolios from the point of view of a student, often reflecting on the challenges it entailed. For example, participant 2A commented, "It brought home what a complicated and demanding task we are asking our students to complete. It has increased my interest in the project as an essential vehicle for the contemplation and integration of the students' college experience." Additionally, participant 10A noted, "I believe I have a greater understanding of the overall goals of the ePortfolio from the student perspective. I had not realized that telling a story/creating an identity was stressed as an overarching goal for students and that reflection was so integral."

THEME 3 – Training (Rubric and ePortfolio Examples)

In order to enable faculty to effectively assess ePortfolios, significant time in both AI sessions was dedicated to ePortfolio training (Marshal et al., 2017). Training topics included an overview of ePortfolios as a HIP, examples of student ePortfolios, and guidance on the rubric that was developed by the project. When asked for suggestions for the next AI, additional training was

the most common area mentioned. Responses related a lack of understanding with both the instrument of evaluation (the rubric) and its object (the ePortfolio). Thus, training emerged as a theme during our analysis. Individual development and the theory of self-directed learning supports this theme in the data (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991; Brookfield, 1985; Knowles, 1975). Although this was a university-wide initiative, participants were responsible for their own learning before, during, and after the session. As such, each participant had their own level of self-direction, which allowed for varied learning experiences (Brockett & Hiemstra, 2018).

During the sessions, a rubric was reviewed and shared in order to provide foundational knowledge to the participants, even though they all were involved in the project. The content of the rubric appeared to provide the most comments from the participants. Several remarks from the participants related to problems on reaching consensus on the terminology, as there were different interpretations on meanings and definitions. For example, comments expressed that the rubric was a "little tricky to discern between categories" (participant 3A), or that there was "necessary overlap between outcomes" (participant 10B). These difficulties with the rubric are more significant when considering that, since participants were scoring in pairs, they needed a solid common understanding: significant differences could delay the adjudication process while the pair discussed to reach consensus, and built their individual levels of knowledge (Brockett & Hiemstra, 2018). Participant 25A described this process as taking "a fare (sic) amount of time for everyone to come to same agreement on what it meant."

During training, participants were provided ample access to example ePortfolios. Yet, when giving suggestions on the AI, participants expressed that they wish they had access "to a wider range of ePortfolios during the training session" (participant 3A), from outstanding to underwhelming ePortfolios: "I would have liked to see what is considered a 'bad' ePortfolio along with what is considering a really good one so I can see the extremes and know where I can expect students to fall" (participant 30A).

Participants also mentioned a desire to hear from the AI staff about how they would rate ePortfolios. Participant 16B noted,

> I would like to have seen a few more practice ePortfolios of very poor quality. I would like to have read a couple before coming to the institute to get an idea of what the experts rank as Professional versus Beginner.

In addition, Participant 3A commented:

> I would have the "experts" provide more detail in the discussion to quicken the norming process. … having the experts speak to the ratings would have helped the raters get to the "true" score faster, which I believe is the aim of the rubric.

These comments highlight the tension that occurs in authentic learning experiences, in which facilitators have roles as both content experts and directors of participatory, learner-centered sessions. Facilitators need to balance the amount of lecture content with the opportunity for self-direction and discovery (Brockett & Hiemstra, 2018). Authentic instruction includes teaching strategies with plenty of discussions and is present in many faculty development initiatives (Weller Swanson & Kayler, 2010). The learner needs to become more self-directed during the experience, which can cause tensions (Brockett & Hiemstra, 2018). Institutions interested in running these types of authentic learning experiences must face the challenge of pacifying the desire to reach a "true" score. The desired instructional approach is for the participant to realize that a "true" score does not exist, and that the individual is accountable for their own learning and understanding (Mundy et al., 2012). Comfort in using the rubric and scoring should come from developing one's own knowledge and self-direction and understanding of the reflective process, itself (Brockett & Hiemstra, 2018).

Theme 4 – Best Practices

One of the most valuable parts of the AI seemed to come from sharing best practices (sometimes called lessons learned) in teaching and learning from the wide variety of participants and disciplines. A valuable faculty development program is one that should follow the adult learning principles of being relevant, current, engaging, and applicable (Knowles et al., 2012).

Several comments from the AI dealt with sharing diverse teaching strategies in relation to ePortfolio, as well as how the ePortfolio improved the participants' understanding and provided them with exposure to alternative instructional practices. To be effective in modern higher education, faculty must be able to support the diverse learning needs of students, and implement relevant and flexible learning curricula (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013). Participant comments shared recognition of the value for best practices in teaching ePortfolio. For instance, Participant 16A noted, "I have a clearer and more nuanced understanding of the different ways we can envision, talk about, teach, and assess ePortfolios." Participant 12B stated, "I now see a wider application of the project in our curriculum," and Participant 7A supported the thoughts with, "The event gave me many ideas as how I can implement items into my course." Participant 1B concluded, "I gained an understanding of the variety of ways to develop ePortfolios and have a better idea of how to coach students … I also learned that there are certainly a wide range of experiences across campus."

The AI furnished a basic understanding for implementation of reflection and critical thinking strategies in the classroom and curriculum. Reflection practices modeled in the AI provided participants with an understanding of how to better foster critical thinking and provide relevance to the learner in almost any curricula and classroom (Brookfield, 2017). For instance, comments that supported best practices included, "I feel this mode of learning really rooted in me the values of the ePortfolio and the ways in which I will teach and assess it in my class. Looking forward to using some great new tips" (Participant 35B).

Through the AI, faculty not only deepened their knowledge about teaching and learning: they were able to apply the knowledge in a safe and supported environment. The sessions encouraged experimentation to enhance the curriculum with ePortfolios. The 21st century higher education environment will continue to change rapidly. Developing collaborative faculty development programs that support a diverse set of needs might be a best practice for dealing with such change. Offering programs that evolve along with the higher education landscape and incorporate faculty input into their design may deliver the most successful results (Diaz et al., 2009). The AI modeled best practices, as session participants were able to interact with colleagues across disciplines and learn from others whose academic work and teaching strategies were distinctly different. These interdisciplinary skills will be vital in the future for higher education faculty in order to meet changes in the learning environment and differences in student populations from across the globe (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013).

Further Research

One area that this study was not able to fully explore was how informal dialogue happens during faculty development initiatives such as the AI. Our data provided some indication as to the potential benefits of informal dialogue, yet did not precisely describe how and when it happens. A deeper examination on informal dialogue and its value might be beneficial to faculty and administrators who wish to understand how to incorporate opportunities for organic, meaningful informal interaction into their programs.

Another insight from this study comes from the difficulties and roadblocks to faculty learning during the AI. We identified issues with training, especially in regards to the implementation of best practices. Studies that solely focus on these challenges and the theory of self-directed learning might yield deeper, interesting results for faculty development.

Conclusion

This article discussed how transformative learning takes place in an AI designed to train faculty to assess ePortfolios. By analyzing post-participation survey responses, we found indications of changes in thinking by participants. For some, a complete perspective transformation took place, while others suggested more of an ongoing process of change in thinking. The AI described in this article contributed to the transformative learning research in three main ways. First, it allowed for ample discussion and dialogue among participants. Second, it created a diverse, multi-disciplinary environment that exposed participants to a wide range of different points of view. Lastly, the AI served as a showcase of best practices and evidence-based teaching.

Regarding our second research question, the AI described in this article could be improved in two ways. First, by improving training on the scoring instrument (rubric), especially regarding clarification of the terminology and how to score the final assessment. In addition, perhaps providing more examples of ePortfolios and scoring activities would be another way to improve the training. The value and form of concrete examples seems to be another area for research on evidenced-based practices in faculty or professional development.

This case study showed that the AI was much more than content-focused training. Rather than just teaching faculty how to evaluate ePortfolios, the AI introduced participants to colleagues from other programs and highlighted the diversity in ePortfolio implementation. The AI served multiple purposes, including: (1) introducing participants to the concept of ePortfolios in general; (2) enhancing the understanding of the project initiative at the university, and; (3) supporting the use of HIPs in higher education. This institutional dimension of the AI allowed for more in-depth conversations and dialogue about the project than individual, unrelated faculty workshops. The AI enhanced the outcomes of professional development beyond proficiency in evaluation by supporting authentic learning experiences. By exploring the data using the framework of transformative learning theory, our findings suggest that professional development environments that encourage transformative learning by means of discussion, sharing of different perspectives, and reflections on implementation and best practices, yield positive results. These factors can inform researchers and practitioners interested in structuring similar faculty development initiatives.

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Evaluating the Professional Transformation from a Doctoral Capstone Experience

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Abstract

Mezirow's transformational learning is a framework that is used to guide student learning and development, but is not frequently studied in allied health education programs. The scholarly capstone, a common academic requirement among various allied health doctoral-level programs, is traditionally defined as an immersive learning experience, along with completion of a scholarly project under mentorship. Due to the inherent nature of the capstone process, the student is required to engage in self-reflection, self-examination, and exhibit self-directedness. Faculty in allied health programs can benefit from using transformative learning as a theoretical framework for designing and evaluating these experiential learning endeavors.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to measure the personal and professional transformation of occupational therapy students following a doctoral capstone experience (DCE), a required 14-week experience in entry-level occupational therapy doctorate programs. Data was collected via pre- and post-DCE interviews and journal entries which mirrored Mezirow's stages of transformational learning.

This study provides insight to faculty regarding the importance of self-reflection to impact both personal and professional growth in allied health doctoral students.

Keywords: doctoral capstone, transformative learning, occupational therapy

Introduction

A capstone (or comprehensive project) is a requirement within many professional degree programs. A capstone traditionally represents a culmination of one's doctoral studies with an evidenced-based, scholarly project. It is an opportunity for the doctoral student to translate their acquired knowledge (usually reflecting a specialization or area of interest) into practice and potentially lay the groundwork for future scholarship. Although specific requirements will vary across institutions, a capstone typically requires the doctoral student to engage in a self-directed practice experience, with the support of faculty and/or external advisors/mentors, as appropriate. Differing from a dissertation, which tends to require a doctoral candidate to produce new knowledge, and is heavily research and scientific focused, a capstone is more focused on the application of knowledge and dissemination of evidence into practice (DeIuliis & Bednarski, 2019).

In occupational therapy education, the accreditation council defines the doctoral capstone as consisting of two distinct parts: the capstone project and the capstone experience. The capstone project is directly aligned with the capstone experience and should be designed to help the doctoral student synthesize and apply knowledge gained through a 14-week capstone experience (Accreditation Council

for Occupational Therapy Education [ACOTE], 2018). While the first occupational therapy doctoral program was established in 1999 and ACOTE has been regulating entry-level occupational therapy doctoral education since 2006, there is limited data being generated by the profession to support the value of the doctoral capstone. Currently, 82 occupational therapy programs in the United States offer an entry-level doctoral degree with data suggesting that nearly 33% of existing masters level OT programs have begun the transition to the doctoral level (ACOTE, 2019). With increasing numbers of students completing the doctoral capstone, it is important for the profession to explore the impact of this experience on student growth. Having a broader understanding of how the doctoral capstone influences individual students, will help contribute to the advancement of occupational therapy education and the profession as a whole (Molitor & Nissen, 2018).

The purpose of this study was to measure the personal and professional transformation of occupational therapy students following a doctoral capstone experience. This research intends to expand the discussion around transformational learning to include the allied health professions, where literature is less abundant than in other fields. Faculty in allied health programs can benefit from using transformative learning as a theoretical framework for designing and evaluating students' experiential learning. Understanding the impact of the doctoral capstone on the development of the student is vital for students and faculty alike, as doctoral programs prepare future occupational therapy practitioners to meet the American Occupational Therapy Association's Vision 2025 (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2016).

Literature Review

Experiential learning is a crucial component of many allied health professional programs, as well other programs such as education and music. In occupational therapy literature, the most well-documented transformations for students occur through experiential learning, particularly during placements where self-regulation and role-emerging practice are emphasized (Clarke, de Visser, Martin, & Sadlo, 2014; Lyons & Ziviani, 1995; Santalucia & Johnson, 2010). In entry-level occupational therapy doctoral (OTD) curricula, a 14-week doctoral capstone experience (DCE) is the core experiential learning opportunity during the final year of studies. The DCE is an integral part of entry-level occupational therapy (OT) clinical doctorate curricula as it affords OT students the opportunity to positively impact themselves, their profession, and their communities while gaining in-depth skills in a particular focus area. The transformative learning model provides a valuable theoretical framework for the DCE, in guiding how each student interprets the meaning of their experience (Mezirow, 2000).

The DCE differs from prior experiential learning in occupational therapy in that the goal is to provide in-depth exposure in a concentrated area of focus, such as clinical practice skills, research skills, administration, leadership, program and policy development, advocacy, education, or theory development (ACOTE, 2018). The DCE is a student-driven experience, which occurs after the completion of traditional level II fieldwork (FW). Level II FW traditionally occurs within an apprenticeship model of supervision, with more direct contact and feedback from the supervising preceptor (Hanson & DeIuliis, 2015); however, an essential difference from the level II FW expectations is that the DCE is to be a mentored experience, rather than a supervised one. Furthermore, OT doctoral students must complete preparatory activities such as a needs assessment, literature review, and devising an evaluation plan to drive the capstone project prior to the onset of the DCE (ACOTE, 2018). These expectations require that the students possess both a strong personal and professional identity (Recigno et al., 2020), which often challenges much of what they have previously experienced during FW and other experiential learning opportunities. All of these changes and advancing requirements often predispose students to face a disorienting dilemma as they prepare for their capstone experience. By understanding doctoral students' experiences in the DCE, capstone coordinators and occupational therapy faculty can learn to better prepare and place students in settings that meet the increasing demands of the profession. Currently, there is little research on understanding the potential benefits of the DCE, particularly as it continues to grow as the point of entry for the profession.

Transformative learning includes self-reflection (Dubouloz, 2014), which is also an essential tool in doctoral-level education (Brookfield, 2015). Educators working with adult learners can foster autonomous thinking and learning through critical reflection of real-life experiences. In order to facilitate transformative learning, educators must help learners become aware and critical of their own and others' assumptions. "Transformative learning develops autonomous thinking" (Mezirow, 1997, p. 5). This type of thinking supports the individual in self-regulating their learning or controlling their own actions to optimize their learning. Due to the increased rigor and self-regulation required for this advanced experiential learning, students often undergo an initial distinct disorienting dilemma as they transition into the role of a capstone student. As the capstone experience progresses, they engage in reflection and exploration of the role of occupational therapy in their setting, and this results in altered and expanded personal and professional world views. The research question guiding this study was: *What personal and professional transformation, if any, do students identify over a 14-week doctoral capstone experience?*

Methodology

Following approval from the Institutional Review Board, participants were purposively sampled from a cohort of nine OTD students during the first semester of their final year in the curriculum. Students were included in the study if they agreed to participate after being informed of their rights as research participants. Students were informed that participation in the study had no effect on the students' grade or standing in any course. Recruitment and enrollment were conducted without regard for race or ethnic background and the researchers maintained confidentiality of participant information and limited coercion. Participants in the study were assigned to both traditional occupational therapy practice settings and community-based settings that do not offer occupational therapy as part of their service repertoire for their capstone experiences. The traditional settings included, an inpatient rehabilitation hospital, a children's hospital, a pediatric institute for children with developmental disabilities and an orthotic/prosthetic clinic. Community-based settings or those without occupational therapy services included a center for individuals' experiencing homelessness, a university psychiatric clinic, an inclusive education program within higher education, and a day program for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The overall data collected consisted of pre- and post-close-ended interviews and journal reflections. The interview questions were aimed at understanding the participants' assumptions about their capstone site, intended population, their perceived level of preparation for the experience, and perception of their own level of confidence, creativity, and adaptability. The researchers completed 19 interviews, as one of the nine participants did not complete the post-interview. All interviews were audio recorded with permission from the participant and transcribed by an individual outside of the research team to de-identify the data. The audio transcriptions were stored in a password protected, secure designated research file on the academic institution's secure, password protected network. The researchers' audited each interview transcript for accuracy. All participants completed a total of four journal reflections over the duration of the 14-week experience, which was a course requirement for the doctoral capstone experience, resulting in a total of 40 journal reflections. The participants' confidentiality and anonymity were maintained through the data collection and analysis process. Participants' names were correlated to a number during the distribution of the close-ended interviews and journal reflections were assigned a pseudonym to ensure the names would not be releveled during the data analysis process. Each artifact provided the researchers with detailed information that assisted with further understanding of the research questions and overall student experience.

This study occurred between January and September of 2019 in multiple phases. An overview of the timeline of this study is represented in Figure 1.
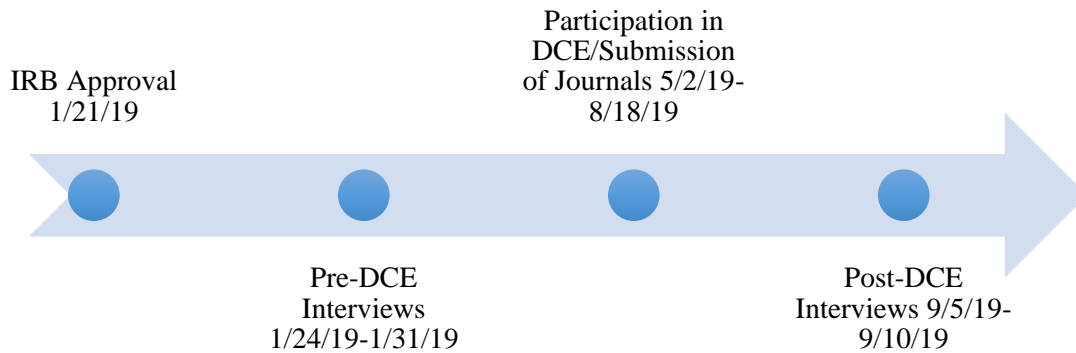
Participation in
DCE/Submission
of Journals 5/2/19-
8/18/19

IRB Approval
1/21/19

Pre-DCE
Interviews
1/24/19-1/31/19

Post-DCE
Interviews 9/5/19-
9/10/19

Figure 1. Timeline of Data Collection. Timeline of data collection events over the course of the doctoral year.

   This study utilized a qualitative approach to understand the lived experience of the OTD student while completing a doctoral capstone experience, either in community-based practice or a traditional practice site. The researchers completed a qualitative analysis of pre- and post-DCE semi-structured interviews, as well as reflective journals. Following the process of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), the three researchers became immersed in the data by reading the reflections multiple times and member checking any content. From there, the codes and themes were developed a priori, drawn from the literature and underlying frameworks of transformative learning and "Doing-Being-Becoming" (Mezirow, 1997; Wilcock, 1998a). The researchers individually generated initial codes and themes, then came together to finalize the themes. Once the three researchers reached consensus, the themes were defined and supporting quotes were selected.

   Rigor and trustworthiness in this research study were essential in determining the researchers' positions in acquiring the data and ensuring that each researcher's viewpoints were credible. According to Krefting (1991), researchers need alternative models to fit qualitative designs that ensure rigor without forfeiting the relevance of the qualitative research. While there are a variety of models that address trustworthiness and rigor, Guba's (1981) model was further explored, as it has been used particularly in the healthcare setting for many years. Guba's (1981) model is based on the identification of four aspects of trustworthiness that are relevant to this study: (a) truth value, (b) applicability, (c) consistency, and (d) neutrality. The researchers ensured truth value by designing the qualitative instruments grounded in the literature and ensuring that when the questions were asked, the participant responses were considered as accurate interpretations. The second piece in making certain truth value and credibility were achieved was through the process of member checking, to include peer review amongst researchers. To confirm applicability in the implementation, qualitative researchers need to assess the degree to which the findings can be practical to other contexts or with other groups. This allows for the ability to generalize the findings to larger populations (Sandelowski, 1986). In this study, the researchers have explained the demographics of the university and the description of the participants in the study. Thirdly, this study's consistency was achieved through the procedures taken by the researchers to replicate future studies. Finally, neutrality was addressed through minimizing bias of the researchers. Neutrality and reflexivity were ensured through the researchers' ongoing assessment of each individual's own background, perceptions, and interests during the study (Aamodt, 1982).

Results & Discussion

The results of the qualitative analysis of the OTD students' interviews and reflections were synthesized to address the research question that guided this study. As described above, deductive analysis of the research led to the themes as they align with the steps of the transformative learning model and a fundamental occupational framework of "Doing-Being-Becoming" (Mezirow, 1997; Wilcock, 1998a). The research question guiding this study was crafted to allow the researchers to determine if personal and professional transformation had occurred because of this capstone experience. To fully understand this process, Mezirow's (2000) stages of transformative learning were used to organize the analysis. Themes that emerged included an understanding of the unknown or unfamiliar, and facing those challenges. This was often the students' "disorienting dilemma" or "self-examination," which are phases one and two of the transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 2000). From there, students described the increased nature of flexibility and creativity, and a personal redefining of what success meant to the individual student, allowing them to explore and plan for this new role.

In addition to the framework of transformative learning, the researchers wanted to further understand the students' transformation in terms of an occupation-based model, Doing-Being-Becoming (Wilcock, 1998a). There are clear connections in these two frameworks. "Doing" refers to the occupational performance of an individual, which is essential for the individual to interact with others and develop one's own identity, and to create and shape the society (similar to stages 2-4 of Mezirow, 1997). "Being" refers to being true to self. This assumes that people are required to spend time thinking and reflecting, and that this reflection helps an individual to sustain their roles (self-reflection is critical in the transformative learning model and aligns with stages 5-7). "Becoming" means how people redefine their values and rethink their priorities to prepare transformation of their new roles (aligning with stages 8-10 of Mezirow, 1997). Similar to transformative learning, all aspects of this framework hold the potential for growth and self-actualization of the individual.

Results and discussion are aligned in this way to convey both transformation of the learners as well as the importance of student's identity as "occupational beings" (Wilcock, 1998a, p. 253).

Disorienting Dilemma

Santalucia and Johnson (2010) suggest that occupational therapy students begin experiential learning with a "disorienting dilemma," in which they have many assumptions, including those about "occupational therapy, patients and clients, groups of people, supervision, the environment, and themselves" (p. CE3). In the case of the DCE, this disorienting dilemma was present in each of the students. In one example, participant 1 stated, "I think just with my limited knowledge about how to implement a program, I know we've had the classes, but I think actually doing it, it's going to be a little bit more challenging than I'm anticipating." Another student, participant 7, stated:

> [A]s we get more into the coursework this semester, it'll help me feel more prepared going in [to the DCE] ... We have, you know, basic ideas, but we all have ideas that aren't super expanded yet. So, it just kind of seems uncertain.

Often, the students were not only faced with their assumptions of practice, based on prior fieldwork experiences, but also an entirely new way of understanding experiential learning through a more self-directed path. In this study, a key finding related to personal transformation was the students' discussion of *apprehension*, *uncertainty*, *fear of failure*, and how they faced those challenges.

Self-Examination

As students reflected during the pre-interview process, they also shared aspects of self-examination. Students referenced their perceptions of preparedness, their supports, and of key importance, their assessment of their ability to be self-directed in their learning.

The shift from heavy group work in the pre-doctoral phase of the curriculum to self-directed, independent learning throughout the capstone was discussed as a potential challenge for some students. Participant 8 stated:

> I think what I'm most worried about is really having to be in charge of it myself, making sure that I stay on track and like, there wouldn't be like one person making sure I meet my deadlines and goals. For the most part, it would have to be me to do that.

Another student (Participant 3) stated:

> I'm a little bit nervous, just because it is so self-directed and figuring out exactly [what to do]. I'm kind of nervous that I'm going to make a wrong move and not know exactly what to do. But it is comforting to know that I have, like, my capstone team behind me…

In terms of positive perceptions of readiness, in many cases, the awareness of available supports from both the faculty and the site mentor made an impact. Participant 3 also stated, "It's very comforting to know that I have my capstone team behind me. I have [my advisor] and three other people that he suggested be on my team. So it's good to have a wide base of support." This self-examination is an essential aspect of the transformative learning process. Marsick and Mezirow (2002) concluded that critical reflection on the disorienting dilemma or problematic belief is a necessary step in the transformative learning process, to move toward exploration.

Exploring and Planning for a New Role

While students prepared for their capstone experience, they were required to consider what the DCE might entail in terms of site preparation, their role as an OTD student and subject matter expert, and how this experience would differ from past learning. For some students, who completed their DCE in a nontraditional setting and were required to create a new role for OT, they found themselves faltering in their confidence. Participant 2 stated:

> The site that I am at is a physical therapy place and they don't have any OTs so I will definitely be the expert in my field … I'm not sure of myself just because I am kind of at that entry level knowledge and skill set, but I have to represent a whole profession. And also just making sure that everything that I do is kind of occupation-based and stays true to the tenets of occupational therapy…

As a result of this exploration, the learners (students) often experience a paradigm shift and, as a result, they consider different options and plan a new course of action. Roberts (2006) found that those who experience a positive change in their understanding of a new role are stimulated to learn more. They see it as a challenge which increases their determination and their level of persistence, which was reflected by many of the students as they prepared and embarked on their DCE. In both the pre-interviews and journals, students reflected on their ability to be an initiator in this process, to plan for both the expected and unexpected, and to build connections based on prior experiences. For example, participant 4 shared in a journal during the experience:

> When I came across something that I didn't quite understand or didn't feel comfortable carrying out independently, I reached out to the therapy staff on my unit (who have all been very willing to answer my questions). While this hasn't kept me from coming across situations where I don't quite know how to respond, it has allowed me to be more confident with not always knowing the answer and reaching out for help when I need it.

Similarly, participant 4 stated later in their post-interview:

> I feel like this experience sort of forced me to be more self-directed … when I was on fieldwork, while I learned a lot, I think I also had a habit of relying too much on my fieldwork educators. I would second guess myself, and I would want their validation, but with the mentoring for my DCE, I didn't get that all the time. I had to learn how to cope with that and be okay with that.

A key component of this experiential learning was the difference between supervision and mentoring at the doctoral level. The shift in this role allowed many of the students to fully engage in the final phase of transformative learning. Many students discussed that not having the same level of "supervision" allowed them to be more comfortable, to take risks or try new ideas, and to effectively advocate for themselves and/or the profession. Participant 1 stated:

> She gave me a lot of independence to work with my program and do what I needed to do to make my program work. So, it was nice to have the independence compared to what I had during fieldwork, so I felt like that was a good transition to now being a new grad.

In addition to developing these professional skills, students spoke of their new ability to see the application of occupational therapy in all settings of practice, which is essential in a profession that is so diverse.

Acquisition of Knowledge: "Doing"

Wilcock (1998a) describes the concept of "doing" as the way people "spend their lives almost constantly engaged in purposeful 'doing' even when free of obligation or necessity … it provides the mechanism for social interaction, and societal development and growth, forming the foundation stone of identity" (p. 22). In this instance, students used the occupation of doing to acquire their knowledge and move forward in their learning and ultimately, their new personal and professional identity. In this study, students described the ways in which they acquired knowledge through active learning, feedback, creativity, and problem solving. When discussing the particular skills learned, participant 3 shared:

> I think the two biggest skills that I have developed through this process is flexibility and self-directedness. I think flexibility was one of my strengths going into this process. I would say that I have always been pretty good about taking what other people have to say into consideration. But, I have really learned to actively take feedback and use it to guide my future work. I understand that the feedback I have received is not to be taken personally and that it was all given as a way to provide the best program that I could. In the hustle and bustle of the outpatient setting, I learned very quickly how to do things on my own and how to find the people in the organization that I need to reach out to or meet with to get things done.

A change in how students define the skill of creativity was a common theme among many of the participants. For example, participant 9 shared:

> I think my lens of "creativity" is broadening as well. People think of creative as coloring … but being creative in a sense of figuring out if you're in a pinch or being creative with "I planned this entire intervention and it's not working." Sometimes you just have to let your clients use the supports that you give them, but in their own way.

In regard to problem solving, participant 4 shared, "I think the most valuable resource I gained in terms of that is just figuring out where I can look to and the resources I can reference to help me find the answers that I need."

Reflecting and Internalizing: "Being"

As the students progressed in the DCE, there was a clear sense of their ability to reflect and internalize what they were learning and how it had an impact. For example, participant 8 stated:

> I now take more calculated risks. I look more at the evidence that's there. So, the risks I'm taking don't feel like wildness, they feel like more research risks, so I'm more confident in how the outcome might be and how a person might benefit.

This stage of transformative learning aligns well with the occupational concept of "being." Wilcock (1998b) described this as, "'being within self', whereby the doer experiences an enhanced sense of self manifested, perhaps, in a sense of inner peace or in self-discovery" (p. 249). In the provisional trying of new roles and building of competence and self-confidence, the students in this study had a new self-awareness of their skills. They each spoke of a clear professional growth, from start to finish of the DCE, which occurred as a result of this experience. In relationship to understanding their new roles, one student commented on the importance of education in the profession. Participant 3 stated, "I've gained a better appreciation for the role that OT has in teaching and educating their clients and the family members that they work with, because I think it often gets really overlooked." Students were able to manifest this new sense of self through seeking out opportunities, using education to enlighten others, utilizing evidence to support their learning, and ultimately, trusting the process.

Reintegration: "Becoming"

The final stage in the student's transformation was the reintegration into their role, or "becoming" an occupational therapy practitioner. Mezirow and colleagues (2000) described this stage as "reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective" (p. 22). Wilcock (1998b) described the idea of "becoming" in the same light, as "the transformative element whereby the doer strives to develop, change, grow, and be better" (p. 253). In some capacity, all of the students described either their new perspective on the profession, the site's new perspective of OT, or both. For example, participant 1 stated:

> I feel like this experience where I was more independent in my work, I felt like I could better grasp OT's role and what we do as an OT, and I felt way more confident in my abilities to administer interventions and work with clients one-on-one.

To move into this new role and identity, students described concepts such as confidence, independence, and intrinsic motivation. At the post-interview, participant 9 commented on their overall increase in confidence as a result of the DCE:

> I have had a great experience and I've gotten some really great opportunities out of it. This time has let me grow and see my possibilities. Academically, I'm not a very confident person, so I think being on my own and planning things on our own has definitely given me more confidence.

Limitations and Future Directions of Research

This study provided results of the perspectives of a limited number of students from one university's entry-level OTD program, and therefore may not be generalizable to other programs. Variations in capstone focus and curriculum may further restrict the generalizability of this research to other entry-level OTD programs.

Additionally, students were prompted to reflect on their experience during the capstone both within the context of coursework and the semi-structured interviews. While it fell on the students to be able to critically reflect in these areas, they may have felt influenced in some way by the context of the prompts or the instructors who carried out the interviews. To counter this as much as possible, there were

no grades associated with these activities and students were reminded frequently that their participation had no bearing on their status in the program.

Future studies could also include a larger sample size from a variety of entry-level OTD programs across the country. It may also be interesting to complete a comparative study between students experience in traditional practice settings versus those in role-emerging or community-based practice sites.

Conclusion

According to Mezirow, transformative learning manifests when beliefs, values, and perspectives are changed, customarily from engaging in questioning and critical self-reflection on the experience. Wilcox (1998b) adds to this understanding by an occupation-based framework that pushes the practitioner towards self-actualization and growth. This study outlined findings of the personal and professional transformation that occurs for entry-level OTD students through the completion of the doctoral capstone experience, as aligned with these frameworks. The doctoral capstone not only brought value to the individual development of the doctoral students, but will enhance the profession as a whole. The educational research priorities of the occupational therapy profession include theory building and the identification of signature pedagogies (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2014). The results of this study provide information to drive curriculum planning in entry-level occupational therapy doctorate programs, provide resources for faculty who facilitate doctoral capstones, and align academic experience to current practice. The findings suggest that self-reflection prior to, during and at completion of the doctoral capstone experience can help the development of occupational therapy doctoral students. Findings have also added to the literature in the inherent benefits of critical reflection and transformative learning, particularly in fields that implement an experiential learning placement in a variety of settings. With a growing need for relevant, supportive capstone placements, models of personal and professional growth must be identified so that preceptors and educators can ensure a successful student learning experience.

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The Technology Fast: Transformational Learning as Changes in Behavior and Perception Beyond the Classroom

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Abstract

Digital technology has become an integral, if not overwhelming, part of many people's lives. As the use and pervasiveness of technology has increased, the popularity of taking a sabbath from it has also increased. In this paper we ask if and how a technology fast assignment influences students' lives beyond the classroom. Transformative learning, supported by active and experiential learning, suggests that in order for students to reap the greatest benefits of education, learning must influence perceptions and behavior outside of the class environment. In two semesters of "Human-Computer Interaction" classes, students were assigned a technology fast in which they recorded their experiences in reflective writings. We analyze all twenty-three students' responses identifying recurring themes including transformations in preparing for, within, and due to the influence of the technology fast. These themes revealed that the technology fast assignment influenced both perceptions of and behavior related to technology within and beyond the classroom.

Keywords: human-computer interaction, transformative learning, technology fast

Introduction

"[The technology fast] helped kick start my process of not using social media, my greatest downfall with regard to problematic technology use. As I am on a quest to be the best version of myself, the insight I have gained about myself during the fast will be invaluable."
–A Student's Reflection on the Technology Fast Assignment

Jean Twenge in her top-selling book *iGen: Why today's super-connected kids are growing up less rebellious, more tolerant, less happy—and completely unprepared for adulthood—and what that means for the rest of us* (2017) argues using demographic data that a definitive shift has occurred for the generation after millennials due to the smartphone. While some of her findings highlight positive potentials such as the younger generation being less risky and more accepting of others, other findings strongly tie the heavy use of technology to depression, emotional distress, lack of sleep, and many other negative outcomes (Twenge, 2017). Additional studies, using other datasets and methods, have provided evidence to the contrary—that the association between technology use and well-being is fairly small (e.g., Orben & Przybylski, 2019). However, technology-use is not a monolithic concept, and like any large conceptual category, technology varies by type of use, domain of technology or media, personality variables, and the changing technology itself.

In our technology-saturated culture, many people may benefit from taking a structured break from technology and/or media, and indeed technology sabbaths have become popular in recent years (Dholakia, 2016). Many claim that these sorts of technology fasts allow someone to regain "wasted" time, improve emotional and psychological outcomes, critically reflect on their use of technology, and focus on themselves and their own mental health (Hamblin, 2017). Essentially, the claim is that they will lead to transformative outcomes, outcomes of changed behavior, perception, health, and relationships in the rest of one's life. Our purpose herein is to better understand how technology sabbaths implemented in a pedagogical setting influence transformative learning within that course and into one's life as well. Examining them as a classroom activity also has the advantage of engaging students in a technology fast who would not normally do one.

In this paper, we overview transformative, active, and experiential learning, review the extant pedagogical work on technology fast assignments, and then report a thematic content analysis of a technology fast from two sections of a university course. That data shows important transformative outcomes that occur in preparing for the fast, within the fast, and due to the influence of the fast.

Transformational, Active, and Experiential Learning

Not a singular concept, transformative learning, as originated by Jack Mezirow, forks into particular orientations of the central theory components (Taylor, 2008, pp. 5-15). Two orientations relate to our purposes here, the first being one of Mezirow's most cogent definitions of transformative learning: "Transformative learning . . . transforms problematic frames of reference—sets of fixed assumptions and expectations (habits of mind, meaning perspectives, mindsets)—to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change." (Mezirow, 2003, p. 58). This approach to pedagogy changes mindsets not by imposing top-down information, a flaw of some traditional models of education, but by presenting students with the environment and selective experiences that encourage broadening of—and even revolution of—paradigms. The second orientation of transformative learning is what Taylor (2008) calls the "cultural-spiritual view of transformative learning," which is concerned with the relation between individuals and social structures under the domain of transformative learning experiences that emphasize perspective. Ann Davis's (2009) focus on the social construction of the self as a path to transformative learning further circumscribes transformative learning as happening by questioning the default views of one's self and one's world. As our study of the technology fast *vis-à-vis* transformative learning accounts for not just a course-mandated set of actions but for a student's own personal reflections and changed worldview in relation to technology, so does the cultural-spiritual view of transformative learning present a narrowed framework in which to record that interaction.

Moreover, transformative learning develops in response to the frustrations with typical pedagogies that ineffectively provide learning conditions to students (McWhinney & Markos, 2003). Such a new conception must see students as both rich, autonomous selves and as having a capacity for caring about knowledge, not just retaining it. Mezirow (2003) attests to such self-awareness when describing transformative learning as "metacognitive reasoning involving these same understandings but [which], in addition, emphasizes insight into the source, structure, and history of a frame of reference, as well as judging its relevance, appropriateness, and consequences" (p. 61). As a result of demanding inclusion of so many mental and experiential elements, transformative learning may not be as precisely assessable as some more narrow measures of pedagogy (Alhadeff-Jones, 2012), but the potential payoff for students is greater because it takes into account personally-observed spiritual and academic qualities and then strategically intervenes.

Related to, but distinct from transformative learning, active and experiential learning suggest the need for classroom pedagogy to go beyond lecture. In a limited capacity, these methods mean use of discussions and group projects, while in more developed conceptions, active learning takes risks in trying out innovative, theoretically-grounded practices to engage students. Drawing on a large body of research, Harris, Harris, & Fondren (2015) explain that "experiential and active learning" foreground an array of "exercises and activities" that are intended to both be "authentic" and "deepen learning." They go on to

bolster their high value, saying that "Students who are exposed to experiential and active learning exercises, including simulations and role-playing, have reported higher levels of information retention, enjoyment of courses, course evaluations, and desire to change majors" (Harris et al., 2015, pp. 115-116).

Harris et al.'s contention, while expressing a set of results that are difficult to measure, emphasizes the importance of pedagogy and its payoff of learning, going beyond the material of the course, a point that recalls transformative learning, in that active learning is inseparable from its impact beyond course learning outcomes—that it affects the person's self-understanding, belief systems, and lifestyle.

John Bean wrote the bible on active learning for writing in his far-reaching and widely-applied text *Engaging Ideas*, a work that intervenes effectively in pedagogy by seeing students' beliefs as central to their capacity for learning (2011). While driven toward exercises which have a stronger pedagogical impact—the kind that many researchers go on to measure but lies outside the purview of this study—Bean persuasively clarifies that successful writing assignments engage the student, by which he means, "To grow as critical thinkers, students must develop the mental habits that allow them to experience problems phenomenologically, to dwell with them—to understand, in short, what makes a problem problematic" (p. 3). Drawing on Meyers (1986), Bean (2011) goes on to admit that students must reflect on their own beliefs by feeling cognitive dissonance which then "undermine[s] students' confidence in their own settled beliefs" (p. 27). Such "decentering" tasks provoke students into awareness of what they think, engaging them actively with the material rather than, to Paolo Freire's well-known critical pedagogy critique, being passive vessels in which information is deposited (1996).

However, not all studies have valorized active learning. J. A. Linneman's comparison of group discussions and lectures left the following conclusion, "Despite recent attention on the importance of adding active learning components to lecture-based courses, these data failed to demonstrate consistent positive impact across various student performance outcomes" (p. 29). Admittedly, active learning provides no guarantees of improved student learning. And while improved student learning is a valid line of study to pursue, our intent is different: we seek to discover if the technology fast qua active learning and transformative learning can improve a student's life more broadly, by challenging and defamiliarizing her beliefs, a problem with a fundamentally different orientation from most studies of active learning.

While this assignment's main use of active learning that precipitates transformative learning was the use of a technology fast, the methodology also included reflective writing. Although less flashy, reflective writing occupies a well-defended position within the fields of composition pedagogy and writing studies. Defined from the well-trodden work by Flavell, Wellman, Kail, and Hagen (1977), metacognition encompasses a student's knowledge of the writing assignment and the monitoring of thinking on that writing. Students with strong metacognitive skills are aware of both the processual steps they are working through to do the writing and the knowledge of the writing product itself (Sitko, 1998). Developing cognitive awareness of something through the umbrella process of metacognition means engaging in rhetorical and cognitive acts which draw attention to the process, including use of instructional strategies such as "dialogue … scaffolded instruction, graduated questions, and procedural facilitation" (Sitko, 1998, p. 101). In other words, reflective practices are linked with the development of metacognition.

Extending this point as they apply it to writing center tutors, Michele Eodice, Anne Ellen Geller, and Neal Lerner argue for educators to engage in "an incremental theory of learning" by "slow[ing] down their cognitive process a bit whenever [they] can, subject them to scrutiny, and disrupt the commodification of knowledge that can follow from perceived expertise" (2017, chapter 4). Developing metacognition through reflection helps disrupt the engrained and often institutionalized assumptions students have of the learning process. Armed with one of the few longitudinal projects in Writing Studies, Eodice et al. believe that such disruptive, engaging practices *can* create meaning for students; indeed, the payoff is potentially significant, as "students' sense of meaningfulness *was* a particular kind of agency rooted in 'new ideas, practices, or discourses learned through their participation in a learning activity,' namely their meaningful writing projects" (p. 35). Reflection that stirs metacognition, following the

theories of active and experiential learning, suggests the right conditions for transformative learning and consequently for students to further their own selves and beliefs.

Technology Fasts and Related Research

Technology fasts, also known as technology sabbaths, may occur in the higher education classroom but are perhaps more prevalent in popular culture (Dholakia, 2016; Hamblin, 2017). The idea that technology overwhelms people's lives and so needs limiting or eliminating is well-rehearsed, but it is described often in the workplace with the spiritual, holistic terms that the name suggests and that align with the cultural-spiritual view of transformative learning discussed above. As Bryan Brooks (2011) points out on his book on the topic, "It was time to unplug my mind, restore my spirit, and transform my technology lifestyle" (p. 19). The reason for doing technology fasts relates to the shared implications in its two names (technology fast and technology sabbath), both of which signal deprivation for a loftier purpose. Whether that purpose be relief from anxiety, a religious self-dedication, a need for holistic calm, or something else, technology fasts ought to be studied with this broader use in mind. Our analysis below reflects that abstaining from the use of technology is for more than pedagogical learning outcomes alone. That is to say, technology fasts develop more than knowledge in the academic context; they give the student distance from their technology in order to reflect on their lives with an improved, more objective social and historical perspective.

The value of this kind of perspective is asserted by Katrina C. Hoop (2012) in her article analyzing an academic technology fast. She asked her sociology class to refrain from checking social media or using cell or smart phones for any reason except for emergencies for 72 hours. Unlike some technology fasts, Hoop's study still allowed for computer use, but not for social communication. Responses from students, taken up via a date-entry journal they were required to keep, indicate both frustrations with the project, as they wished they could use these devices, and appreciation for not having to be distracted by them. Hoop saw the project as a success for her goals of developing a more objective sociological perspective by acting outside the typical habits students had become used to following (p. 163). She affirms the project as both "engaging students" (p. 163) and "a powerful learning activity" (p. 164). The technology fast's disruptive feature stands out as being its most provoking element, aligning well with Eodice et al.'s theory that meaningfulness comes from putting students in moderately cognitively dissonant situations (2017), as well as accounting for the complexity of the cultural-spiritual view of transformative learning. In sum, we find that while technology fasts have been suggested and promoted as a way to transform one's life (Dholakia, 2016; Hamblin, 2017) and can sometimes be implemented in the classroom (Hoop, 2012), they have not previously been studied as a classroom assignment that could produce transformative learning.

Methods

Overview of the Assignment

In order for students to better understand how individuals interact with technology, they were asked to take part in a technology fast. For this fast, students were asked to give up most, if not all, personal technology for two to four days as part of a class assignment (see Appendix for full assignment wording). While participants were urged to give up as much technology as possible, each student set his or her own restrictions and goals for the project. Commonly avoided technology included computers, phones, TVs, and video games. Students were asked to document before the fast began what technology they would be giving up, how they planned on restricting their use of said technology, and if they had any exceptions for work or personal responsibilities. After the completion of the fast, students were asked to write a reflection between 750-1,000 words detailing the following: a summary of their initial plan, how well they believed they met their goals, what they did with the extra time they had, what their challenges were, what they learned overall, and to relate the fast to material discussed in class (See Appendix).

Classes and Responses

All participants in this study were students in Daniel Shank's "Human-Computer Interaction" course, a 4,000-level psychology elective, offered in either spring 2017 or 2019 semesters at Missouri University of Science and Technology. Because this is an engineering and technology university, knowledge and engagement with all types of technology on the campus is generally high. The technology fast followed requirements outlined in each class syllabi. In 2017 the fast was included as one of five options students could choose for a required project. Thirty students took the course in 2017 and ten out of the thirty chose to take part in the fast. Because of its success, in 2019, Daniel Shank made the technology fast a requirement for the course and thirteen out of fifteen completed the project (one student failed to complete the fast and one student completed alternate assignment due to extenuating circumstances). Between both classes twenty-three responses were analyzed. The twenty-three responses were compiled in one document that was 16,978 words total, or 29 pages single spaced in Times New Roman 12-point font. There were 16 males and 7 females that took part in the fast with responses that ranged from 208-1,003 words.

Analysis

We analyzed the responses in several steps adapted from thematic content analysis (Anderson, 2007). First, we read through the set of responses and identified potential themes that stood out as being most important and salient to the students. Second, based on these summaries, we iteratively created a list of recurring themes—both adding new themes and combining existing ones until we reached consensus about the most prominent ones (Anderson, 2007). Third, we returned to the data and identified which responses included each theme. Fourth, we searched within the responses that included each theme to find quotes that best exemplified how the themes represent the student's experiences.

Results

We identified eight major themes which we grouped into three larger categories of transformation based on their temporal relationship to the fast: transformations in preparing for the technology fast, transformations within the technology fast, and transformations influenced by the technology fast (Table 1). Each of the eight themes were included by at least a third of the subjects; the most prominent theme was found in over two-thirds of the participants' answers (Table 1).

Table 1

Eight emergent themes grouped into three categories of transformation.

Category of Transformation and Themes	Percent of Sample
Transformations in Preparing for the Technology Fast	
Obligations in Preparing for the Fast	48
Inaccurate Expectations of the Fast	61
Transformations within the Technology Fast	
Increased Productivity	70
Increased Socialization	52
Increased Relaxation	43
Increased Anxiety	52
Transformations Influenced by the Technology Fast	
Realization of Dependency on Technology	44
Plans to Limit Technology in the Future	34

Transformations in Preparing for the Technology Fast

   Obligations in preparing for the fast. While the goal of the technology fast was to reduce the use of technology for a period of time, some students (48%) described the necessity of making preparations for the fast. Some of the preparations mentioned were expected as part of the assignment, such as notifying friends and family (see Appendix). Other responses reveal a more interesting phenomenon of spending additional time using technology to prepare, and sometimes compensate, for the fast. One student who took on the fast during a hiking trip during spring break refrained from all forms of technology besides a GPS and a few phone calls to update his family that he was safe. Yet in order to do so he spent more time beforehand to prepare:

   I knew I would enjoy some time away from technology, but since I have a lot of obligations (i.e. internship, school, and research) that have to be done on a computer, I had to spend a lot of time beforehand getting extra work done to make up for me taking a week off. (Male, 2017 class)

   This student's experience shows that in order to justify time without technology, he increased his time online related to his obligations. The next quote is from a computer science major who discussed that because of his major he would be spending a significant amount of time on the computer, but he wanted to be more conscientious of his use. In order to make sure that he adhered to the fast, this student spent time beforehand researching and installing an extension that would keep him off nonproductive websites.

   Recognizing before the fast that I would likely get distracted during my homework and want to turn on Netflix or music, I installed a website whitelisting extension for my web browser. With this extension, I blocked all sites excluding Canvas, Joe'SS, and MyMathLab (for the homework). I proved myself right with this assumption and felt a very real urge to go on Reddit just for a while, or open Netflix just for the duration of my work. (Male, 2017 class)

This student's reflection shows that he knew his habit of using technology would be difficult for him to resist. Ironically, he employed technology in the form of a browser extension to stop himself from giving into the temptation brought about by technology.

   Inaccurate expectations of the fast. Some of the students reported specific expectations going into this experience that were not fulfilled (61%). Nine students (39%) mention initial expectations that the fast would be easy but upon reflection note that it was much more difficult than they expected.

   Looking back on it now, I can honestly say I was shocked to find how difficult it was to follow through on the fast. The struggling began on Tuesday, the first full day of fasting. When I got home from classes, it was unbelievably tempting to listen to music while doing homework, or take a break and play a game for a while. At that point I knew it was going to be rough moving forward. (Male, 2017 class)

This student explains it as "unbelievably tempting" for him to use technology, suggesting it had become his primary activity during downtimes. The temptation this student feels could be explained by the allure of technology, compared to a less exciting activity like studying or homework.

   Other students experienced the reverse: five students (22%) actually found the technology fast was easier than they had expected.

   At first, I thought it was going to be challenging because I was always on my phone when studying (multitasking), but when I actually started it, it wasn't too bad at all. I thoroughly enjoyed not being on my phone constantly because it lets me be in the "real world" (engaging

with family, not just staying home all the time, going out and helping where I'm needed). (Female, 2019 class)

The time away from technology was easier and more enjoyable for this student, as she was more present with the people in her life. While students misjudged the difficulty in both directions, this misjudgment may be due to how they spend the time away from it. In the former quote, the student desired to default to his typical routines, whereas in the latter, the student was pleasantly distracted by other opportunities. In this next section, we explore how this time away from technology was used.

Transformations within the Technology Fast

    Increased productivity. While abstaining from technology use, students found that they had a large amount of unused time. Sixteen students (70%) mentioned being more productive in their downtime during the fast. The following student actually found his newfound productiveness so enjoyable that he reported extending the fast past his originally planned four days:

> While away from video games I discovered that I was able to manage time much more efficiently. I was not procrastinating as much and made sure to finish my homework earlier rather than later. I also felt like I had more time in the day as I was knocking out my gym workouts and run sooner thus giving me longer evenings. (Male, 2019 class)

This participant's quote shows just how productive he was able to be without the distraction from technology. Another student was able to use her time away from technology to complete tasks around the house. "My time away from technology meant a lot of quiet activities. I primarily focused on doing housework like dishes, meal prep, and laundry that had gotten out of hand in recent weeks due to exams" (Female, 2019 class). Several students, like this one, were able to catch up on activities that are often postponed due to the distractions that technology can provide.

    Increased socialization. Several participants found that even after completing their required tasks they still had free time, and so many of them filled that time by being more social. Twelve participants (52%) described being more social during the fast, either with friends, family, or both.

> My interactions were changed without always being on technology and as an example: I actually got to sit down and eat dinner with my mom while having a conversation with her about my day. I never get to do that but during the fast I did, and I thoroughly enjoyed sitting down and talking with her. (Female, 2019 class)

The student clearly enjoys and values having a sit-down meal and conversation with her mother. While the student's sentiment is that she "never [gets] to do that" might be an exaggeration, it illustrates how profound a difference using and not using technology makes to her relationships.

    Increased relaxation. Along with better communication skills, some participants found that they had time to rest and relax without technology. Ten students (43%) realized that without the distractions of technology they were able to spend more time relaxing; one participant described how the fast meant she had time to read: "I had more time and energy to spend reading. I love to read, so it is a shame that I often trade reading for time wasted on Instagram" (Female, 2019 class).

    Increased anxiety. While many students felt that the fast created positive changes in their lives, several experienced anxiety as a result of giving up their technology during various stages of this journey. 12 students (52%) mentioned anxiety or a related feeling in their reflection; 11 experienced anxiety themselves and 1 declared that their abstinence caused their family to feel anxious. "What this fast told me was that I don't like silence or solitude. Even though I chose to live alone for that reason, being

completely cut off from any noise and socialization made it deafeningly quiet" (Female, 2019 class). This student's quote illustrates how ingrained technology has become in her day-to-day life such that she felt extremely isolated when it was not available.

Another student mentioned that she felt disconnected without technology and that she had not realized how many aspects of her routine require technology. "I felt like I was always rushing more because I was more uncertain on the time and felt like I was late constantly" (Female, 2017 class). This student experienced mild anxiety without her phone when she realized that that was her primary way of telling time and keeping her on schedule.

Transformations Influenced by the Technology Fast

Based on these changes during the assignment, students reflected on transformations that occurred due to and potentially beyond the technology fast assignment. Two themes emerged dealing with new realizations about their own lives and behaviors changed based on those realizations.

Realization of dependency on technology. Many students found the assignment to be eye-opening with ten students (44%) describing a realization of their dependency on technology throughout this process.

> Overall, from this fast I learned that I use a lot of technology in my day to day life even if I do not actively realize how much I use technology. Even by trying to limit myself from large, obvious forms of technology use I noticed just how often I turn to my phone for entertainment without even thinking about it and how difficult it is to not use it all for an extended period of time. (Male, 2017 class)

By describing how difficult it was for him to give up technology, this student admits metacognitively how he realized that often he reaches for his phone or other technology without even thinking about it, and how he depends on his technology throughout the day. Other students found value in understanding their dependence:

> I learned just how reliant I am on technology. From doing schoolwork, to hanging out with friends, to blowing away free time, technology is an important part of my life. It was difficult to find ways to spend all of the free time I had and, in the end, I think it was a positive experience. (Male, 2017 class)

This participant's quote shows that while he underestimated the difficulty of the fast, he found it to be worthwhile to see that he could live without using technology, even if the fast was temporary.

Plans to limit technology in the future. The technology fast also gave students the opportunity to see what their lives would be like without constant use of technology. Eight students (34%) enjoyed or saw the benefit of the experience so much that they expressed desire to limit their future use of technology:

> Moving forward, I will use the experience gained here to "live in the moment" and find other outlets to channel my thoughts, actions, and time. I still love technology and the seemingly unlimited potential it offers, and I will probably still use social media despite its flaws and potential to suck away my free time. (Male, 2019 class)

> With dedication to my new routine, I can get on track and get ahead with everything in my life giving me more freedom to be with friends and family ultimately making me happier in general. This will increase my quality of life as I will be able to accomplish more and have more confidence to do so. (Female, 2019 class)

Both of these students see a potential for improving their lives through the limiting of technology. The first realized that technology keeps him away from living in the moment and redeeming his time. The second, following her discussion of her time on video games, decided that in order to become the person she wants to be, she needs to attempt to monitor and potentially limit the time she spends.

Another student captures this strong interpersonal and identity-creating sentiment by mentioning the idea of a *better me* when abstaining from technology use:

> Overall, this is a great project and it helped kick start my process of not using social media, my greatest downfall with regard to problematic technology use. As I am on a quest to be the best version of myself, the insight I have gained about myself during the fast will be invaluable. (Female, 2019 class)

While not every student expressed these sentiments and not everyone who did will follow through, the invaluable insights that can be applied to becoming the best version of oneself is what transformation—and as a result, transformative learning—is all about.

Conclusion

Classroom assignments play multiple roles, each with its own importance. Fundamentally, they serve to train students and provide assessments of the achievement of that learning. However, in the spirit of transformative learning, active learning, and experiential learning, one would hope that material in the classroom is not only the domain of academic subspecialties and thus remains locked in the ivory tower. After all, Taylor (2008) cautions us against using transformative learning as simply "implementing a series of instructional strategies." Instead, as students reflect through metacognitive writing on experiential learning assignments, they become aware of the pedagogical reasons of the assignments they have been tasked with and so can judge how the purpose of those assignments will affect their thinking and behavior, thereby implementing the goals of "a particular educational philosophy" (Taylor, 2008, p. 13). Metacognitive reflection, too, encourages student buy-in to the project and lessens the autocratic divide between instructor and student, replacing it with a critical thinking-driven democratic engagement with course material. When students are allowed to respond to a class assignment, as our technology fast reflections stipulated, they become the kind of learners that John Dewey imagined across his *oeuvre*: learners who become their own educators.

Technology is widely studied and taught in academia; it also creates significant social, cultural, political, environmental, and personal changes. As a result, the use of a technology fast in the higher education classroom provides students with the chance to take learning beyond their career-specific use and determine its role in their lives. In the students we studied, the technology fast precipitated not only, through its role as one of the course assignments, successful completion of course goals but attention focused on the role of technology in students' lives. That awareness developed in the context of their cultural identities and the actions that make up those identities in the sense of students' work habits, social communication styles, media consumption, and familial relations, to name a few. Although not many people would doubt the influence of technology on American culture, the technology fast provides a hiatus and interregnum in which its influence can be studied and seen in its specifics. The results, therefore, remind us of the significant role technology plays and the withdrawal symptoms occurring in its absence.

Herein, using thematic content analysis and illustrative quotes, we examined how a technology fast assignment have transformation influences in students' lives, furthering the practices and goals of transformative learning. We did not analyze how the student made connection with the course content (e.g., theories, definitions, concepts, and processes in human-computer interaction), but instead how the fast interacted with their own lives, routines, cognitions, and outcomes. Clearly, our sample is limited in its generalizability, as it studies only two semesters of one course at a single university. Additionally, other ways to implement technology fast and other types of students (e.g., graduate, high school) might

lead to different and additional insights. Given the lack of research in the area of pedagogical technology fasts, we see those limitations as suggestive of future research in this area.

Transformations occurred while preparing for the fast, within it, and because of it, showing that taking a sabbath from technology has influence beyond the activity itself. In fact, such types of active learning teaching strategies play a vital role in the university, a place where, despite continual influence of career-training styles of curriculum, the importance of developing minds through belief systems remains crucial. To teach a course with assignments that cannot only accomplish curricular goals but can provoke students into thinking about their beliefs moves toward an ideal of college education as developing the whole person. Our results suggest the power of a technology fast to be one step in that direction and so be a model for future studies with these same objectives.

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Appendix

Wording of Technology Fast Assignments

Technology Fast Assignment in the course Human-Computer Interaction in 2017
Choose a number of days (2-4) to fast from (give up) all personal technology. Decide ahead of time when you are going to do this, how you will accomplish it, and if there will be any exceptions. For example, if you are on call for work you should not turn your phone off or if you have an assignment due you should use your computer for that schoolwork. However, some people might have specific devices they can turn off completely. You may also need to let others (family and friends) know about it so you don't offend them or so they could reach you in case of an emergency. Document ahead of time when you will do this, what you will turn off, what you will restrict, and what you have told your contacts. You must (1) turn in this documentation ahead of time here on Canvas. After the fast, write a self-reflection paper which (2) summarizes your initial commitment that you documented and turned in on Canvas, (3) discusses how you did and felt in relation to staying off the technology and if any challenges or problems arose, and (4) discusses how you used the time away from technology, if that was challenging, and what you learned about your own interaction with or reliance on technology.

Technology Fast Assignment in the course Human-Computer Interaction in 2019
For this assignment each student will choose a number of days (3-5) to fast from (give up) all personal technology use and write a reflection on the experience. Part 1 involves turning in a technology fast plan. This plan should be a word document less than 200 words and include (1) when you are going to fast, (2) what specifically you will fast from, (3) if there will be any exceptions, (4) how you will implement those exceptions, and (5) who you will need to inform. For example, if you are on call for work you should not turn your phone off or if you have a computer assignment due you should use your computer for that schoolwork. You should consider if you can turn off a device completely, disable apps, not use websites, or if you simply should restrict time on those. The goal is to maximize the fasting. You may also have to let some family, friends, or bosses know so you do not offend them and so they could reach you in case of an emergency. Part 2 involves writing a self-reflection paper of 500-1,000 words which (6) summarizes your initial plan, (7) discusses how well you met that plan, and (8) discusses how you used the time away from technology, (9) if and how it was challenging. Then in at least a substantive paragraph each should you discuss (10) what you learned about your own interaction with or reliance on technology and (11) how that and the fast relate to content from class. Grades are in 5 point increments based on clearly documenting and discussing the fast according to the 11 criteria. Technology fast grades lose 10% per day that the plan is late and per day that the reflection is late.

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Women Living History:
An Exploration of Transformational Learning in a Living History Group

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Abstract

Although transformational learning (TL) has been studied in numerous contexts (English & Peters, 2012; Foote, 2015; Mezirow, 1990; Mezirow, 1997; Nohl, 2015), one area worth further exploration is the activity of living history. Living history, as defined by Anderson (1982), is essentially the simulation of life in another time. The present study focuses on a group of women in a small living history organization and how their participation in this group has changed them. Participant observation and interviews were used to determine what the women gain from their participation and to uncover some of the reasons they continue with the group. Specific findings include the importance of education and instances of transformational experiences that come from being a part of the organization. Future research should continue to explore education and transformational experiences in living history groups, especially for women, and how these types of organizations facilitate this process.

Keywords: women, transformative learning, gender, history

Introduction

In an effort to merge the study of living history, first identified by Anderson (1982) as "an attempt by people to simulate life in another time" (p. 291), and transformative learning (TL), the present research combines case study and ethnographic techniques to detail the experience of women in a predominantly male living history organization. Consistent with case study and ethnography methods, the primary means of data collection were observations and interviews, because the goal of the study was to detail a specific group of individuals, find out more about their behavior in the context of the organization, and better understand their experience (Yin, 2014; Sangasubana, 2009; Wolcott, 1987). The question of what women gain from their involvement is answered, in part, through the analytical lens of TL and a dominant theme of the importance of education. Since the living history experience, though varied, offers potentially endless opportunities for personal transformation, it would follow that this is an area open to those interested in furthering the study of TL, especially as it applies to women.

There is a degree of ambiguity surrounding the phrase "living history" (Coles & Armstrong, 2008) and it is often grouped with the term "reenactment" because they both describe the popular hobby connected to the American Civil War (Turner, 1990). Distinctions between the two are not great, but it may be said that reenactment represents a broader range of activity, covering everything from living history museums to Hollywood and television programs (Agnew, 2007; Cook, 2004). Living history, on the other hand, represents a specific period in time where the actors are portraying individuals who lived

during that time under certain conditions (Hunt, 2004) in either the first or third person (Magelssen, 2006). Participation is often tied to a group, the qualities and characteristics of which vary greatly.

While reenactment is generally a male hobby, owed to the misconception that women were not involved in battle during the Civil War, living history often affords more flexibility because of the variety of representations that are open. Some women prefer living history as it offers opportunities for direct interaction with the public as well as role-playing a specific individual. In groups studied by Hunt (2004) and Turner (1990), women's involvement was minimal and often downplayed as "marginal" (Turner, 1990, p. 131), which underscores many of the overall feelings surrounding female participation. In spite of this, these groups offer social outlets for individuals and families with camaraderie being a primary finding of Hunt's (2004) study.

In reenactment and living history organizations, much attention is devoted to authenticity to the point where those who do not adhere to the standards of the group are referred to as "farbs," which stands for "far be it for me to tell them what they are doing wrong" (Agnew, 2004; Farmer, 2005; Gapps, 2009; Hall, 1994; Turner, 1990). These are individuals who have either just started participating in the hobby or who do not appear to care about an authentic performance. Authenticity is often used as an argument against women's participation in battles, although those who "do not appear obviously female" (Turner, 1990, p. 64) are more accepted on the battlefield. In reenactment groups, individuals do not always take on a specific persona, but instead portray a generic soldier; with living history, where the primary aim is to educate the public about the life of a specific person, this is not always the case. Regardless of whether one has a persona or not, authenticity is taken very seriously in groups of this nature and it is through a desire to portray a more authentic individual of the past that learning, and transformation, takes place.

Literature Review

Much of Mezirow's (1978; Mezirow & Marsick, 1978) work revolved around the transformational experiences of women, but areas specifically studying women, gender, feminism, and learning still have room for exploration. Gender has not yet been recognized as an area of emphasis for those researching TL (English & Peters, 2012), and the living history literature, too, does not typically focus on the experience of women, but rather the "marginal roles" (Turner, 1990, p. 131) they hold as camp followers or the controversy over them participating in battle reenactments (Hunt, 2004). Still, there are many in the living history literature who emphasize the educational nature of the hobby (Coles & Armstrong, 2008), stress that it is easier to learn by doing than reading secondhand (Hall, 1994; Pahl, 1994), and underscore the importance of the activity as a multisensory experience, adding a uniquely enriching element to further one's learning (Anderson, 1982; Gapps, 2009; Pahl, 1994; Turner, 1990). Any woman who is involved, regardless of the extent of her involvement, will be in an ideal position to learn from her experience and possibly be transformed by the information to which she is exposed.

As reenactment and living history are generally considered to be male hobbies, women are usually expected to engage in roles behind the scenes (Hall, 1994; Hunt, 2007). While many women enjoy demonstrating crafting or cooking techniques (Coles and Armstrong, 2008), many others have an interest in battle reenactment. In order to present an authentic picture, those women on the battlefield may bind their breasts and walk around with a perpetual squint (Agnew, 2004), but this is often not enough for those who do not believe they should be there. Some women are met with a great deal of resistance from other group members when they express a desire to take on more "masculine" roles and this resistance does not only come from men (Farmer, 2005).

The level of dedication that women have to this hobby is no different from men, as they too feel personally connected to the time period and work to fuse their own identities with that of the individual they portray (Gapps, 2009; Lamb, 2008). In many instances, the learning that takes place for women, as for men, would not have occurred otherwise if it were not for their involvement in a historical hobby (Coles and Armstrong, 2008). And, as is commonly understood, transformational learning theory's focus is on how we learn to negotiate and act on our own purposes, values, feelings and meanings-rather than those that have been uncritically assimilated from others—in order to gain greater control over our lives

as socially responsible, clear thinking decision makers (Mezirow, 2000). By whichever means the women have come to be involved in living history, they render a choice through their participation that not only changes their perception, but enhances their perspective on their own lives in personally meaningful ways.

When it comes to adult education, TL can be seen in a variety of contexts. Foote (2015) described "Aha" moments while Nohl's (2015) interviews revealed a "nondetermining start" where the participant knew that something had changed in his/her life, but was largely unaware of it for quite some time. Similarly, participants of living history often undergo various unexpected changes as they gradually fuse their identities with the personas they portray (Handler & Saxton 1988; Lamb, 2008). Because learning is part of everyday life and common social interactions (Fenwick, 2008), many types of experiences can spark a transformation. Fenwick's (2008) study of women laborers in the garment industry showed how learning gave way to solidarity which produced networks and collective identities that were integral to the women's existence. Since women's learning very often happens through connection (Cooley, 2007), the hobby of living history provides multiple levels of opportunities for learning with connections not only to adopted personas, but also fellow living historians. Both Cooley (2007) and Fenwick (2008) emphasize the potentially transformative power of the group connection among women, but unlike the present study, their research focused on women-only environments.

In the realm of living history, Mezirow's (1978) idea of "perspective taking" takes on a whole new meaning as the individual is not simply taking on the perspective of another person in his/her life, but rather has adopted the views of someone from a different time period entirely. Mezirow (1978) found that transformation involved a critical re-thinking of the individual, his/her relationships, and all that is required for attitude formation; judgment and learning through living history is no different. Each living historian must engage in considerable research to portray his/her character (Coles & Armstrong, 2008), which can inevitably introduce new information into that person's knowledge base. This is similarly seen in museum education where the visitors are "influenced by what they already know and who they believe themselves to be at the time of the visit (Garner, Kaplan, & Pugh, 2016, p. 341)." The learning that happens for living historians, just like visitors of museums, is a collaborative experience between the material, the history or the exhibit, and the individual. The goal is not just for the individual to learn something, but to use what he/she has learned in everyday life. When the information is personally relevant, making meaning is natural and there is tremendous value in how an experience changes a person's perspectives and perceptions (Garner, Kaplan, & Pugh, 2016). Invariably, TL has the possibility to effect change on an individual and organizational level (English & Peters, 2012) as does the learning one engages in as part of a living history organization.

Just as the term "living history" is seen as ambiguous, the idea of authenticity is also difficult to pin down; many authors struggle with a definite definition just as different reenactment and living history organizations struggle to be "authentic." It is difficult, even for historians, to know everything about a given time period (Hunt, 2004) and the reality is that no matter how authentic one might be, reenactors and living historians are typically symbolizing the past, rather than re-creating it (Handler and Saxton, 1988). Occasionally, individuals will go to extremes, such as jeopardizing their physical health, in order to be more authentic (Sparrow, 2007). The "farbs," mentioned in the introduction, then, are often the cause of great divisions among historical groups due to their perceived lack of attention to historical detail (Agnew, 2004; Gapps, 2009; Lamb, 2008). Nevertheless, those individuals in these historical hobbies are hoping that, through simulating another time period, they will find out more about themselves (Handler and Saxton, 1988).Arguing that authenticity is bound to culture, Lin (2006) reminds us that the ways, practices, and procedures in which individuals conduct and participate in living history matters. Those "farbs" lack authenticity because they are perhaps somewhat careless, or at least not as careful or caring in their actions and disposition in coming to the *project of history*. Those who attempt to get the period right, in dress, manner, action, and reflection, as part of their essential praxis, begin to find a deeper understanding of themselves in their own everyday living.

Researcher's Statement

As an active participant in the organization described in this study, I (A.S.) acknowledge the inherent bias that comes with my position and personal investment both in the group as a whole and in the individual members themselves. I have made concerted efforts to maximize confidentiality on both the individual and group level as much as I have attempted to minimize my own subjectivity. Much like the other women presented in this study, I, too, have undergone an extensive transformation since I began my involvement, which played a large role in the formation of this research. At times, information is intentionally vague so as to offer the participants as much protection as possible as they entrusted me with very personal information. I (A.S.) did not receive any compensation in any form for conducting this research and presently maintain an active role with the organization.

History of the Organization

Military Officers of the Civil War (MOCW) is a pseudonym for a small living history organization that began in 2002 and operates in the northeastern United States. While the founding of the organization essentially rests on one man, the original male members all believed in the importance of educating the public about the Civil War from a first-person perspective. Their signature program involved discussing various battles fought during the Civil War and how each general acted and reacted during them. According to one of my participants, the original members were very dedicated to authenticity and they did not socialize a great deal outside of the events they attended. Women were considered "eye candy," which is a phrase quoted to me by more than one participant. In the early years of the organization, the women were adorned with nineteenth-century attire, but were seated separately from the men during their presentations. They did not take on any nineteenth-century personas like the men did, and they spent all of their time in the background.

A philosophical rift began to grow among the men in the group about how they should be presenting information to the public; some wanted to focus exclusively on battles and tactics while others wanted to address more personal information. The men in the group who wanted to pay sole attention to the battles felt it was unacceptable to increase female involvement in the group, which supports the findings of Hunt (2004) and Turner (1990) who noted the frequent distaste for female involvement. As was noted earlier, this reflects a historical inaccuracy because it is known that many women participated in the war in a variety of ways, including disguising themselves as men on the battlefield. This disagreement eventually led to what is now referred to as "the split," which occurred when a portion of the membership announced they were splintering off to form their own organization. The effects of this division are still felt today as there was "such a sense of betrayal" and "it was akin to an ugly divorce that has left many scars" (quotes from "Caroline").

Since this division, the group has changed significantly, going from one with exclusively male personas to one where female and civilian personas are actively portrayed by its members. The turning point year for the organization was 2013; this is when a significant number of women began taking on different personas and devising ways in which women could participate more frequently. Each of the women who described the split noted that the organization has grown exponentially since it happened and has only become stronger. This is evident in the fact that there are now several female members who entered the organization entirely on their own in order to portray well-known nineteenth-century women. At the present time, there are approximately 40 individuals who belong to the organization in one way or another and both male and female membership continues to grow.

Method, Data Collection, and Participants

As noted earlier, the primary methods involved in the present research were observations, generally participant observation, and interviews. After presenting the idea of this research to the group, an email was sent to the 20 women who participate with the MOCW which included the initial interview

questions and a participation letter. Of these 20 women, only eight are actively portraying a persona instead of a background or supportive role. The level of each participant is indicated in Table 1 where her level of involvement went from being in the background to a more active role, was always an active role, was and remains a background role, or went from an active role to a background role.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Age Range	Role in Organization	Persona	Entrance into Organization
Cordelia	mid 60's	background → active	officer's wife	through husband
Violet	early 60's	background	officer's wife	through husband
Gertrude	early 60's	background → active	officer's wife	through husband
Portia	mid 60's	background → active	officer's wife → distinct	through husband
Gwen	early 40's	active	distinct	on own
Miranda	early 60's	active	distinct	on own
Clara	early 50's	background	officer's wife	through husband
Grace	mid 60's	active →background	distinct → officer's sister	through husband
May	mid 60's	active	officer's wife	through husband
Caroline	mid 50's	background	officer's wife	through husband
Rose	late 50's	background	officer's wife	through husband

Through this initial email, the women were informed that their participation was voluntary and their choice to become involved with the research (or not) would not have any effect on their group membership, nor would it impact their relationship with the primary researcher. The initial questions asked the women to elaborate on their general experiences with the organization, the struggles and rewards they have had, and whether or not their participation has changed them in any way. They were also asked if they had had any "peak experiences" and to describe what they were and how they were affected by them. The women were instructed to return their responses via email before a deadline at the end of August that year. While the responses trickled in, participant observation took place at six events that had the MOCW representation from April until August. While at these events, I (A.S.) was often able to speak directly with the participants and ask them follow-up questions to their initial responses.

The 11 women who participated in this study come from a variety of backgrounds although the most heavily represented area is education. Six of the women are educators, or have been at one point or another, all of them are middle-aged, and four of them are currently retired. Three of the women are currently portraying a persona that has something to do with either their professional life or what they studied in college. With regards to membership, one woman is considered an honorary member in the organization, one is a probationary member, eight are part of a family membership with their husbands, and one is a member on her own. Nine of the women became involved because of their husbands while two entered the organization on their own. The average amount of time they have been involved with the organization is three years and the majority entered after the rift and split occurred. In order to continue the confidential nature of this article, all names of the participants have been changed to pseudonyms and have no relation to anyone in the organization. Ultimately, 9 of the 11 women who agreed to participate were interviewed further in either face-to-face situations or via telephone. (See Table 1 for other information.)

Since interviews are one of the major categories of data collection in an ethnographic study (Sangasubana, 2009; Wolcott, 1997) as well as in case study research (Yin, 2014), this was a major source of information. Both English and Peters (2012) and Nohl (2015) conducted interviews in order to gain the richest, most informative data they could; using open-ended questions consistent with feminist

interviewing techniques (English & Peters, 2012) and allows the participant the freedom to tell his/her own story in a biographical, though not necessarily factual, way (Nohl, 2015). Although much of what was expressed in each follow-up interview remained the same as the initial response, the women were also free to include a significantly greater amount of detail than what they had typed before. Out of the nine follow-up interviews, six were recorded, transcribed, and later coded for themes. Two interviews were conducted over the phone and not recorded, but the detailed notes that were taken during these conversations were converted into a narrative that was sent back to each participant to validate. The remaining interview took place while both the participant and researcher were in nineteenth-century attire at a living history event in full view of the public, which made any attempt at recording impossible. A similar process for this interview was followed as in the case of the telephone interviews. The interview narratives were coded in the same process as each of the other interview transcriptions. The primary researcher followed the initial coding process outlined by Saldaña (2013) where similar words and phrases were first identified and later grouped together under different titles. It was from these titles that the major themes of this research emerged, with those being relevant to the present topic discussed below.

Findings

Learning and Education

The primary question driving this research had to do with what the women in the MOCW are gaining through their participation. One might be inclined to ask why anyone would want to don a nineteenth-century outfit several times each year, regardless of the weather, but more importantly, what benefits do women have when participating with an organization that was previously exclusive to males. In her initial response, Miranda mentioned that learning or education in some capacity is the reason for her continued participation in the organization. She said she is "learning more with every event" and "it has been a positive decision" in her life. This was true for three other women, one of which, Cordelia, said it is an "ongoing teaching AND learning experience [emphasis hers]." Cordelia went on to say she appreciates that one can "never be done learning" through both her own research and by listening to the stories of other members as part of this organization. May's experience is somewhat different because she specified that this is her "husband's hobby" and though she feels passionate about telling the stories of both of their personas, she would not be participating if he were not participating. Unlike most of the other women, Portia has undergone quite the transformation since joining the organization. Finding her persona almost by accident, she learned as much as she could about her through both reading and visiting areas associated with the woman's life. As it stands now, she really embodies the persona she chose and enjoys the events where she's "most teaching." She said, "I want people to understand really what women did and what it was like for women during that period of time," which is a testament to her dedication to learning about and teaching about her persona.

Clara has found a "new appreciation for history" thanks to her participation in this group and she admitted she "had no appreciation" prior to her involvement. She is enjoying learning the history that she "was reluctant to see as important as a young adult," but prefers not to have more than a "background" role as her husband's wife. Grace noted that her "knowledge of the period and of various historical personae of that era has been enriched" simply by sitting through the presentations made by the organization. Similarly, May noted that one of the greatest rewards she has had through her involvement with MOCW is in seeing how knowledgeable the other members are. Learning in this group does not always come naturally, however; the findings indicate that there is a learning curve upon joining the organization, but those who love history do not find it difficult to undertake the necessary research.

The "desire to educate oneself," as Grace put it, is very important to the individuals in this organization and many have been inspired to do more research since joining. This has helped the women to understand more about women's roles during the period as well as added to their general understanding of the Civil War era. Unfortunately for many of the women, conducting research can be challenging because information on each specific persona is not always readily available. One woman sees this as an advantage, however, because "if very little is known about the person, it's hard to do something wrong."

From the perspective of authenticity, however, this is not always desirable because it is very easy to get caught up in the contemporary and forget the details specific to the nineteenth century. None of the women will deny that it is a great responsibility to represent another individual and they do not take this responsibility lightly.

When Portia first joined the group, she "had no interest in history and knew very little about the Civil War." She said she was told by other women in the group that all she needed to know was how women dressed during the period and how to behave according to nineteenth-century customs. When she was reprimanded by other women in the group for her attire, she began researching different outfits worn by women during the Civil War period and brought pictures of them to support her claim that she was just as authentic as they were. Still, they chose not to accept her and she knew that if she was to continue in this group, she needed to find a reason beyond the study of authentic fashion. Another group member gave her a book about a nineteenth-century woman who she immediately felt a connection to and the more she learned about this woman, the more compelled Portia felt to tell her story. Since 2013, Portia has studied and portrayed her persona in an effort to raise awareness about women's activities during the Civil War. Portia has found a renewed passion for her involvement with the organization as she is able to "discuss all the social issues related to women" and promote "the ideas of where women came…where they are and how far they still have to go." Portia added: "I love teaching. I teach anyway, but I love it."

Though she has not gone through the same type of transformation, Cordelia said something incredibly similar with regards to teaching: "I love to teach and I love to learn; I guess it's a perfect combination." Other women in the organization also recognize the natural connection between teaching and learning, which is why their participation is so rewarding. The women who prefer to remain in the background, such as Violet and Clara, nevertheless recognize the importance of good teaching when it comes to the audience's learning. Still other participants, such as Gwen and Miranda, find that learning about their personas fills a need they both have to continue their own education on an individual level as they have been out of college for some time. They see teaching or presenting to the audiences as a sort of examination that all of their research has prepared them for and they welcome the challenge that acting as someone else brings to them. Since so many of the participants are or were professional educators, it makes sense for them to look for a hobby where they can continue to develop their passion.

Transforming Identities

Another question of interest was how participation in the MOCW affects each woman's identity, particularly if she has chosen a persona to portray. Some have not seen any major changes in themselves; several of the participants have mentioned that it is easier to portray their persona the longer they do it, but since it did not come naturally to them, or they did not outright choose their persona, they do not feel they are any different because of it. One participant did indicate that she has become more self-aware since she became involved with the organization, but most of the women who are "tag-alongs" to their husbands did not emphasize any major personal changes.

Two of the women indicated in their interviews that they believe they have created a "hybrid persona," taking some factual information from the lives of the women they portray and blending it with factual information from the nineteenth century. Because of this, these women often struggle with their identities in persona because they are dealing with the complexity of human beings who lived more than a century ago. For each of these individuals, it seems as though when they are in period attire attending an event with the organization, they are halfway between themselves and their personas, or at least what they know about them. This is an interesting space and one in which it is not always comfortable to be; it is here that transformation can occur, when a woman loses track of where her persona ends and she begins. In spite of this, there were still those participants who felt a strong identification with their personas due to the similarities in their lives.

Portia, who started with no interest in history, is the individual who seems to have been most changed by her portrayal of her persona and she said that both the group and her persona are "now so much part of [her] existence, [she] couldn't imagine life without them." "She's definitely taken me over," she added, indicating that she has gotten "better and better" at portraying this woman and expressing her

persona's mannerisms which are not wholly unlike her own. Portia also mentioned that when she dresses as her character, she is "more outgoing and aggressive," and acting this persona has helped her in "plain clothes to be a little more outgoing." For her, finding this persona awakened parts of herself that have been dormant for a long time and this connection has empowered her in ways that other areas of her life have not.

Transformational Learning in Living History

The findings have indicated several important factors when it comes to transformation through living history, particularly with regards to the persona one has chosen. Although this might not fit neatly in Mezirow's definition of TL, I do believe that transformation has taken place in at least two of the women in this organization based on certain criteria. First, if a woman picked a distinct persona to portray, she had to find enough information available so as to form a connection to that persona. Second, the persona must be similar to who the woman is in personality, opinions, etc. so that is akin to seeing herself as she might have acted in a different century. If both of these factors are in place, the woman is more likely to experience some kind of transformation; at the very least, she will find herself feeling a greater connection to the time period and the women who lived through the nineteenth century.

Other changes have taken place within these women that had nothing to do with the personas they chose but rather their involvement in the group itself. Cordelia spoke of how she learned from the presentations of others and how these presentations specifically affected her views of the Southern position. "This is so much deeper than I expected this experience to be in my life," said Cordelia, recalling what she thought when she first started learning more about slavery. Hearing a specific story told by one of the other members was "just really transcendent because he could capture emotion so deeply" and it was "almost life-changing" because it will "stay with [her] forever." This participant stated that she now reacts very differently around those who continue to support the tenets of the Southern cause. For her, issues of race and social class have been made more salient than ever before thanks to the powerful portrayal of the only black officer in the MOCW.

In keeping with the variation of experiences had by these participants, Miranda went from having no understanding of living history at all to feeling as though she chose a nineteenth-century version of herself when she settled on a persona. Now, she has come to a point where she could easily slip back and forth between her twenty-first-century self and her nineteenth-century self in her written response and in her interview. Though perhaps not to the extent of change that Portia has experienced, Miranda showed that her twentieth-century self has been modified by a woman who lived a century and a half earlier simply through an amount of dedicated research. She thinks this must be what it is like to "really get into your role" as the more she dives into her persona, the more like her she becomes. Miranda was once recorded during a presentation and when she watched her performance, she was astonished: "I could hear it in my voice. It was like I was there." Her husband, who was in the audience at the time, reiterated this for her and indicated that she truly seemed as though she and her persona were one and the same. Soon after, she concluded that, "it feels like we're actresses without a script, if that makes any sense…and a really good actress, you know, there's no disconnection between the two."

Without exception, the women who participated in this study identified a time when something happened that changed them in some way while participating in this hobby. Some have struggled to fit in with the group, but once they found a niche, usually something similar to a hobby or talent in which they engage currently, they felt that transformed their overall experience. Others have had subtler experiences, either at a parade or while listening to period music being played on a battlefield, but are nevertheless changed on some level by what they have seen or heard. This is in line with Nohl's (2015) nondetermining start where the parade or concert acted as such and was followed by successive shifts in the participant's views and beliefs. Grace and two other women had experiences like this on or near the battlefield and while listening to portrayals of other living historians. Sitting in period attire especially enhanced those experiences as the women felt as if they were watching the *actual* battle take place or listening to the *actual* individual conduct a speech. Both women were forever changed because of their experiences and know that they are luckier than most because they had them.

Discussion

The present study indicated that women's participation in a male-dominated living history organization produced various degrees of transformation, both through learning about history and self-identification, as well as provided a means for continuing education in adulthood. Nearly all the different types of learning described by Mezirow (1978) are present in some form in this organization as the participants learn how to act in the nineteenth-century style, how to behave with one another, and learn more about who they are as individuals. The participants asserted that there is just as much education for them personally as there is for any audience member and the source of this education varies from books and other research to listening to the stories presented by other group members. The following sections will reflect on the transformative power that participation in this organization has had for these women.

The Importance of Learning

It may be true that an individual who loves to learn would be naturally drawn to an organization that essentially requires learning, but most of the women in this group were brought in by their husbands, not on their own. Nevertheless, even women like Clara, who neither liked nor appreciated history upon entrance into the group, have taken an interest in discovering new things about the past. For those women who prefer to remain in the background, without regular speaking roles, it provides them with an opportunity to learn at their own pace without the pressure of having to know every detail about another person's life. The fact that so many of the women experienced personal changes, whether large or small, is reminiscent of Nohl's (2015) "nondetermining start" and the idea that something definitely changed in their lives, but it was more of a gradual change than an "aha" moment (Foote, 2015). Similarly, because their perspectives changed, the findings fit in well with Mezirow's (1978) idea that we all have certain assumed understandings that are developed through our experiences and we do not question them until we are forced to. Many of the women in this study, especially Cordelia and Portia, were challenged by their involvement with the MOCW to rethink what they had known previously about the Civil War and especially the women living during that time period. This in turn has ignited a passion in many of them to not only further their own knowledge, but to inspire the public to challenge *their* perspectives and reconsider what they know about nineteenth-century women. Further, it has made them appreciate their current lives more when they stop to think about what both men and women dealt with on a daily basis and especially during the turmoil of the Civil War.

Transformations

The hobby of living history offers numerous avenues for TL. For those women who do not wish to participate beyond a background role, they must still engage themselves in some amount of learning about the time period in order to represent the group appropriately. Even though Clara wishes to remain in the background, being part of this organization gave her a "new appreciation for history" for which she admitted she "had no appreciation" prior to her involvement. She also mentioned that her involvement has made her more self-aware, which may have been responsible for her finally discovering a new niche within the group.

For other women, sitting in on presentations made by other group members is enough to ignite a transformation, as is the case with Cordelia. In her interview, she said:

> I just remember sitting there thinking this is so much deeper than I expected this experience to be in my life…it was just really transcendent because [the presenter] could capture emotion so deeply and I mean I can't imagine ever forgetting that.

From the researcher's observations, the presenter mentioned here repeatedly left the audience speechless, thus Cordelia may not be alone in her feelings.

Many reenactors and living historians have transformational experiences on or near a battlefield and this is what happened for Grace. The first time she heard someone singing a Civil War anthem, she

said, "In that moment, my husband and I were transported to a different time and place and we thought of all those young sons long ago in their tents on the eve of battle." In a similar vein, Gwen described an event during which she and a number of others, dressed in period attire, played games and danced to period music by the light of lanterns. This allowed her to feel closer to the period, almost as if she was living in it, because there was virtually no "modern" interference. Moreover, although anachronistic in nature, Miranda's transformational experience occurred when she watched a recording of herself doing a first-person presentation. As quoted earlier, as she was watching herself she felt as though she was watching someone else, someone who came from that time period and had those experiences. As with the women who develop hybrid personas, sometimes it is difficult to define where the persona ends and the twenty-first century individual begins.

From what is known about Portia's life, she and her persona experienced nearly identical types of gender-related discrimination, 150 years apart, and had to struggle in order to be accepted as women in their chosen professions. Moreover, Portia and the persona she chose have similar beliefs and ideas, something Portia discovered through her extensive research of this woman. It quickly became clear to her that the story of this persona needed to be told, which helped facilitate Portia's transformation; in her personal and professional life, Portia has become slightly more assertive and outgoing, traits that are required for her to portray her persona accurately. Portia's connection with her persona is definitely a passionate one and it gave her new meaning when it comes to participation with the organization.

Beyond these persona-related transformations, all of the women indicated that there was at least one time during their participation where a moment at an event touched them in ways that were difficult to describe. This alludes to a spiritual perspective that, as Habito (2005) argues, can be at the center of a process of transformation activated by symbols, social relationships, feelings and states of consciousness. These peak experiences, consistent with the process of TL outlined in the literature (Cooley, 2007; Mezirow, 1997; Nohl, 2015), were reflected upon carefully and intentionally, which effectively initiated the process of TL. Although they go by many names, "magic moments" (Handler & Saxton, 1988), "time warps" (Turner, 1990), "wargasm" and "period rush," referenced by Agnew (2004) and Farmer (2005), they are sought after and appreciated by those in the living history hobby and are often the sole reason that many continue to participate (Handler & Saxton, 1988; Turner, 1990). This is true for the women in this study who, though they have dealt with various challenges, continue to involve themselves because their efforts do not go unrewarded.

Because so many of the participants have teaching backgrounds, it is not difficult to believe that they find a great deal of satisfaction in interacting with the public in this manner. Though not formal in nature, the varied experiences of a living historian or reenactor are nevertheless deliberate in the ways they invite change and inspire the individual to further his/her understanding of history. As Taylor (1998), noted, the essential practices of conditions for transformative learning are evident in the living history environment; a sense of safety, openness, and trust are promoted, and conditions for effective transformative methods of participant autonomy, and collaboration with other enactors is inherent. Living history highlights the importance of activities that encourage the exploration of alternative personal perspectives, problem posing, critical reflection, and engagement with others; all elements that contribute to a context prepared for the nurturing of transformative experiences that impact participants' lives.

Conclusion

While there has been much progression in this organization since its inception, especially in the past five years, there remains considerable room for improvement. Although it was observed that this group strongly embraces women participants, this is an interesting observation because until 2013, there was only one woman who was considered a full member by the standards of the organization. To this day, there are no women on the board nor are any women responsible for organizing and planning events. When decisions are made, they are made almost exclusively by men even though they involve both men and women; one major example of this was the present study where permission to speak to the women of

the organization was granted by the male president after the researcher presented the idea to the entire male board.

Not a single participant in this study referred to herself as a feminist or expressed the idea that the promotion of feminism is a motivation for her desire to make women's issues more salient; however, it may be argued that this is implicit in the transformations that some of the women have experienced. Because these women are not only promoting and educating about the women who dared to be different in the nineteenth century, but also showing the lives of women who assumed the cultural standards set forth for them, one can see how this activity is feminist in nature. Given the general age-range of the participants, it may be the case that the word "feminist" carries a negative connotation, one which they are not willing to associate with, and this is the reason it was missing from their interviews. Whether they know it or not, those women who participate in presentations as an active representation of a Civil War woman are acting in very feminist ways, especially in the face of a male-dominated organization.

Since TL involves changing one's "frame of reference" (Mezirow, 1997, p. 5) by reflecting on our previously held beliefs (Mezirow, 1990) and generating new meaning from the changed ideas (Cooley, 2007), it is not only the women in the organization who experience this, but also the men and the audience members who attend presentations and interact with the group. Thus, one area for future research would be to uncover more about the men in this organization specifically as well as finding out how audiences feel about the presentations they watch. It may be the case that watching first-person portrayals is similar to visiting an interactive museum where both are designed for optimal transformation. This would be especially true for those audience members who have a personal connection to the Civil War period, either through family or lifelong interest (Garner, Kaplan, & Pugh, 2016). Although there is a significant body of research surrounding living history and reenactment, especially when it comes to the male participants, TL is a niche worth exploring for both genders.

The greatest area for future research lies within the living history/reenactment communities that are represented in the literature mostly through large organizations where women are not prominent members. The women who participated in this study support the idea that transformation occurs only after one changes his/her frame of reference (Polizzi & Frick, 2012), but it was not only the women in this group who underwent a change. The transformation of MOCW from an entirely male-dominated group to one where women have an increasingly prominent role is a path that other organizations can follow or perhaps are following, but unless there is research conducted on these groups, whether the process is similar to the one followed by MOCW will remain unknown. Since this study was conducted with women specifically, other future research might want to look at men in similar organizations or both men and women to compare and better understand the transformational process of education in this type of organization.

Finally, because the active portrayal of a persona involves acting, whether or not one has actually trained to be an actor, it is worth looking at different forms of acting through the lens of TL. Taken a step further, for women specifically, it is important to see if and how taking on different roles changes a woman's perspectives about herself and other women. The women in the MOCW were willing to open up about their unique experience in this group and it has led to a greater understanding of the circumstances under which learning and transformations are possible for them. This may inspire women in other living history groups or reenactment organizations to tell their stories and fill the gap about women in this hobby in the literature.

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Examining the Impact Mindfulness Meditation on Measures of Mindfulness, Academic Self-Efficacy, and GPA in Online and On-Ground Learning Environments

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Abstract

Within this study, the researcher explored the relationship between mindfulness, learning strategies, and GPA by designing and administering a mindfulness meditation (MM) program. There were two versions of the MM program. One version was delivered in an online learning format, where the researcher did not interact with students. The other version was delivered in an on-ground learning format, where the researcher did interact with students. The results indicated significant differences between scores on baseline and follow-up measures of mindfulness, with some differences emerging between participants in the different versions of the intervention. The results also indicated significant differences in learning strategies such as test anxiety, critical thinking, and metacognitive self-regulation between baseline and follow-up. Lastly, the results indicated that academic self-efficacy (ASE) mediated the relationship between Effort Regulation (ER) and GPA for those who participated in the online version of the MM program. Implications pertaining to the results and recommendations for future research are provided in the article.

Keywords: Mindfulness, meditation, anxiety, online learning, stress

Introduction

The literature on mindfulness for students in schools is growing (Black & Fernando, 2014) and beginning to emerge for college students (Ramsburg & Youmans, 2014). Mindfulness meditation (MM) is considered a process where one consciously attends to their moment-to-moment experience without judgment, through anchoring on the breath (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007). Academic self-efficacy (ASE) is considered a variable that influences factors related to, and personal engagement with, the learning process (Schunk & Hanson, 1985; Schunk, Hanson, & Cox, 1987). Within the literature, researchers reported positively predictive relationships between mindfulness and various forms of self-efficacy (SE) (Bishop, 2002; Bowen et. al., 2009; Grossman, Niemann, Schmidt, & Walach, 2004). Within this study, the researcher will explore the relationship between mindfulness, ASE, and GPA.

Statement of the Problem

As stated, there is little research pertaining to mindfulness interventions among college students (Ramsburg & Youmans, 2014). Additionally, literature is clear that ASE influences the learning process and important academic outcomes, such as GPA. The literature is also clear in that there is evidence that suggested a relationship exists between mindfulness and various forms of SE. However, to date there is no published literature where researchers explored the relationship between mindfulness, ASE, and GPA through the implementation of an MM intervention in collegiate learning environments. Additional research is needed as MM could offer a wealth of possibility in terms of potential impacts for the well-

being of college students, their academic performance, and matters pertaining to the transformation of the learning process.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of an MM intervention, hosted in online and on-ground learning environments, on measures of mindfulness, learning strategies, and GPA for students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate psychology classes at a small state school in the central United States. The research questions are provided below.

Research questions. The researcher used the following research questions to guide the analysis:

- Are there differences between students who received in person and online MM interventions on measures of mindfulness over time?
- Are there differences between students who received in person and online MM interventions on measures of learning strategies over time?
- Are there differences in the meditational effects of ASE on the relationship between effort regulation (ER) and GPA between participants in the online and on-ground MM groups?

Relevant Literature

Bean and Eaton (2000) identified three psychological processes that affected integration in a collegiate environment. Those processes are SE, behavioral coping mechanisms, and locus of control. They argued that these processes govern a student's ability to foster academic and social integration with an academic institution. As such, interventions that are able to impact positive changes in these processes could transform the learning process.

Regarding SE, Bandura (1977) initially argued that there were systemic and iterative interactions between the environment, behavior, and cognitions within his framework on social-cognitive theory. One factor that allows an individual to influence these interactions is SE. Bandura (1977, 2001) defined SE as one's capability to organize and execute behavioral strategies to achieve specific goals. Researchers also argued that SE should be measured at a level specific to the outcome domain (Bandura, 1986; Pajares, 1996). There is a great deal of research on SE and the relationship the construct has with other variables related to transformative learning.

Early research on SE and academic motivation indicated that SE influenced student levels of effort (Schunk & Hanson, 1985; Schunk, Hanson, & Cox, 1987) and persistence (Schunk, 1989). SE correlated with major choice, success in course work, and perseverance (Hackett & Betz, 1989; Lent, Brown, & Larkin, 1984). Researchers also presented information to suggest that SE provided motivation to learn through self-regulatory processes (Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992), self-monitoring (Bouffard-Bouchard, Parent, & Larivee, 1991), self-evaluation (Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994), and strategy use (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). The most interesting finding in each of these research endeavors was that SE aided in predicting standard measures of ability and prior performance within specific academic subjects, such as GPA. Specifically, meta-analytic work indicated ASE to be a better predictor of academic outcomes compared to general measures of SE (Multon, Brown, and Lent, 1991).

A literature search identified several prominent measures of ASE and resulted in the identification of the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ). The MSLQ aligned well with the social-cognitive model identified by Bandura (1977). The authors developed the MSLQ, "using a social-cognitive view of motivation and learning strategies, with a student represented as an active processor of information whose beliefs and cognitions mediated important instructional input and task characteristics" (Duncan & McKeachie, 2005, p. 117). Practitioners and adherents of the social-cognitive theoretical framework maintain that motivation and learning are not fixed traits; instead, motivation and learning are thought to be dynamic, pliable, contextually bound, and capable of being controlled by the student (Duncan & McKeachie, 2005); a position also supported by Bandura (1977) and his theories on the matter.

Regarding literature, there are a great deal of studies focused on the relationship between ASE, as measured by the MSLQ, and various variables, issues, and outcomes pertaining to transformative learning. ASE negatively predicted victimization and bullying in school situations (Andreou & Metallidou, 2004). Additionally, achievement goals predicted self-reported strategy use, SE, and test anxiety (Bandalos, Finney, & Geske, 2003). General SE is different, conceptually and empirically, from self-esteem and ASE uniquely predicted task performance (Chen, Gully, & Eden, 2004). Interventions helped move the needle on increased mastery orientation and ASE for learning, valuing of course, changes in cognitive strategy use, and reduction in test anxiety (Hofer & Yu, 2003). As such, ASE is a variable that reaches and influences many aspects of academic success and performance that could transform learning. ASE was a focal point within this research project.

For this study, Mindfulness Meditation is considered a process where one consciously attends to their moment-to-moment experience (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007), becomes aware of their experience (not avoiding or distracting), and does not attach to their experience (Strauss, Cavanaugh, Oliver, & Pettman, 2014). Why mindfulness? Researchers and practitioners of MM, "integrated the practice into Western medicine and psychology by demonstrating the efficacy of several MT programs to reduce stress and distress in healthy people" (Carmody, 2016, p. 64). The literature indicated that people suffering from a multitude of medical and psychological conditions reported improvements in their conditions and functioning after undergoing a mindfulness training protocol, specifically mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR). The setting of this document does not allow for an exhaustive review of the MM literature. However, this document does provide the space necessary to discuss the relationships between MM and SE, a factor pertinent to the learning environment.

From the outset, researchers theorized that MBSR and MM could help improve SE and control (Bishop, 2002; Bowen et. al., 2009; Grossman et al., 2004). Researchers explored the interaction of MM and several different, context specific forms, of SE. In general, findings in the literature indicated a positive and predictive relationship between a meditative practice and SE (Chang et. al., 2004). The literature contained reports of differences in SE for meditators in Thailand compared to those who did not meditate (Charoensukmongkol, 2014). Researchers explored the combined predictive quality of mindfulness, self-compassion, and SE on depression, anxiety, stress, and well-being and determined that mindfulness positively impacted both SE and the issues pertaining to mental health listed above (Soysa & Wilcomb, 2013). Mindfulness significantly and positively correlated with higher levels of counseling SE (Greason & Cashwell, 2009). The definition of counseling SE is very similar to academic SE; both are context dependent and regard individual beliefs regarding performance within the domain. Findings in the literature also suggested that mindfulness could mediate the relationship between SE and various outcome variables.

Specifically, multiple mediation analyses indicated mindfulness, as influenced by a meditation protocol, to be a significant predictor of counseling SE. (Greason & Cashwell, 2009). Coping SE mediated the relationship between mindfulness and emotion regulation (Luberto, Cotton, McLeish, Mingione, & O'Bryan, 2014). Mindfulness significantly correlated with perceived level of coping SE and coping SE found to fully mediate relationship between dispositional mindfulness and NSSI (Heath, Joly, & Carsley, 2016). Coping SE partially mediated relationship between mindfulness and FLA (Fallah, 2017). These findings suggested that the relationship between mindfulness, SE, and outcome variables is not always direct and can be measured in the context of mediation and moderation.

The literature on mindfulness meditation for students in schools is growing (Black & Fernando, 2014) and beginning to emerge for college students (Ramsburg & Youmans, 2014). Additional research is needed as MM could offer a wealth of possibility in terms of potential impacts for the well-being of college students, their academic performance, and matters relating to student retention.

In this study, the researcher explored the impact of in person and virtual mindfulness interventions for students in on ground and online psychology classes on measures of mindfulness, strategies for learning, and measures of GPA. The researcher is a practitioner of MM, regularly teaches meditation classes, and is currently pursuing a certification to teach mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) through the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Theoretical Framework

The transformative learning framework was chosen for this research project. Transformative learning is considered an integrative process that allows students to be active and reflect on their learning experience. Transformative learning asks students to enhance their skills above those taught within their chosen discipline. Additionally, they are given the opportunity to broaden their perspective of their relationship with themselves, others, their community, and their environment.

To promote transformative learning, instructors must assist their students in developing awareness of their own and other's perspectives. Students need experience identifying their own perspectives and to reframe problems to obtain a new point of view. Students also need support to sufficiently engage in active discussion. Communication is essential to affirm perceptions and to come to a decision about a belief. Here, active discussion becomes intrinsic in making meaning (Mezirow, 1997, p. 10).

For example, professor Moira Martin, PhD (2018) endeavored to help her students become aware of their internal processes so they would become open to others in the classroom. She generated a transformative learning experience for her students by introducing brief mindfulness meditation practices at the beginning of her classes. Additionally, she had her students discuss their MM experiences with other students. As a result, her students were better able to participate in transformative learning. They were now able to connect with each other, enabling them to engage in open discussion (Martin, 2018). This endeavor provides a fitting foundation, which suggested that MM is a practice and tool through which learning can be explored and transformed.

Methodology

The researcher employed a quasi-experimental quantitative method within this exploratory study. Specifically, the researcher sought to examine the impact of a MM program on measures of: mindfulness, learning strategies, and GPA between students enrolled in online and on-ground psychology classes at a small state university in the central United States. There were two versions of the MM program. One version designed specifically for the online classes and another version designed for the on-ground classes.

Participants

One hundred undergraduate and graduate students, recruited from classes where the researcher was the instructor, enrolled and participated in the study. The age of participants ranged from 18 to 57 ($M = 25.32$, $SD = 8.94$). The majority of respondents were female (62%). The ethnicity of participants reflected enrollment numbers within the institution, with the majority of participants identifying as Caucasian (64%), Native American (16%), or African American (10%). The participants were nearly evenly divided between freshmen (24%), sophomores (14%), juniors (19%), seniors (28%), and graduate students (15%). Nearly half of participants were first generation college students (43%). The majority of participants were traditional college students having started college immediately after graduating from high school (77%).

Procedure

Participants were invited and recruited to participate through both undergraduate and graduate psychology courses, taught by the researcher. Students were given extra credit points for participation in the research. Extra credit points were only assigned if students completed both the baseline and follow-up measures. The invitation and recruitment process consisted of the researcher introducing students to the concept of MM, the purpose of the research, and inviting them to begin participation by completing the consent form and baseline measures for the project through an online survey. Students were instructed to meditate as often as their schedules would allow during the eight weeks that elapsed between the baseline and follow-up measures.

As stated, the researcher designed two different MM programs for evaluation within the research project. The researcher targeted the online version of the MM program toward students enrolled in online classes. The researcher did not physically interact with these students. Instead, the researcher sent an email with an introductory note and a link to a video explaining the research to invite and recruit these participants. Within the online MM program, the researcher recorded and provided videos orienting students to the practice of MM. Additionally, the researcher provided students access to guided meditations, hosted online, and recorded by the researcher. Both sitting and lying down meditations were provided to participants. The participants in the online MM program were encouraged to meditate as often as their schedule allowed.

The on-ground version of the MM program was slightly different than the online version. Participants enrolled in the on-ground version received the same introductory videos and recordings of guided meditations as the students in the online version. The difference is that the researcher did interact with these participants. Furthermore, the researcher led participants through brief, guided meditations before beginning each class. Students not participating in the research were allowed to do what they wished during this time. The researcher also instructed students on general topics related to mindfulness and meditation in class lectures during the duration of the program. As stated, the researcher provided recorded guided meditations, hosted online, for students to continue their practice at home. Students in the on-ground version of the program were instructed to meditate as often as their schedule allowed.

Measures

The researcher administered selected measures for the study before releasing the content for the respective MM programs, baseline, to the students and then again administered the measures eight weeks after baseline, referred to as follow-up. The researcher employed the Five Facets of Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) to measure facets of mindfulness (Baer et al., 2006; Baer et al., 2008). The researcher also elected to administer the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) to assess various learning strategies (Duncan & McKeachie, 2005).

The FFMQ is a widely used measure in research regarding mindfulness and MM (Baer et al., 2006; Baer et al., 2008; Carmody, Baer, Lykins, & Olendzki, 2009; Keng, Smoski, & Robins, 2011). The measure assessed five facets of mindfulness related to observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging of inner experience, and non-reactivity to inner experience. The FFMQ contained 39 items, with seven to eight items for each of the five facets. The scales for each item ranged from 1 (Never or very rarely true) to 5 (Very often or always true). Each of the scales had adequate to excellent internal consistency for both the baseline ($\alpha = .76–.95$) and follow-up ($\alpha = .70–.93$).

As stated, the researcher also elected to use the MSLQ to assess various learning strategies (Duncan & McKeachie, 2005). Researchers developed the MSLQ, "using a social-cognitive view of motivation and learning strategies, with a student represented as an active processor of information whose beliefs and cognitions mediated important instructional input and task characteristics" (Duncan & McKeachie, 2005, p. 117). Practitioners and adherents of the social-cognitive theoretical framework maintain that motivation and learning are not fixed traits; instead, motivation and learning are thought to be dynamic, pliable, contextually bound, and capable of being controlled by the student (Duncan & McKeachie, 2005); a position also supported by Bandura (1977) and his theories on the matter. To this point, the researcher believed the theoretical foundations of the measure aligned well with the theoretical foundations of transformative learning.

The MSLQ contains three sections. One section, containing 31 of the 81 items, focused on motivation, assessed beliefs regarding a course, academic self-efficacy, and test anxiety (TA) in the course. The second section, containing 31 of the 81 items, focused on learning strategies and assessed student use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, specifically metacognitive self-regulation (MCSR). The last section focused on learning strategies, containing 19 of 81 items, and assessed how students manage different resources, specifically effort regulation (ER).

All items in the measure utilized a seven-point Likert-type scale and scale scores were calculated by averaging the scores for items within the scale. Researchers are allowed to select which scales to use

as the authors developed the measure so that the scales can be used interchangeably (Duncan & McKeachie, 2005). For the purposes of this research, the researcher elected to focus on measures related to ASE, TA, critical thinking (CT), MCSR, and ER. The researcher assessed the internal consistency of each of these measures at both baseline and follow-up (see Table 1). Both the CT and ER scales had slightly lower than acceptable levels of internal consistency at the baseline measurement. Lower levels of internal consistency are not uncommon in measures with so few items. The researcher elected to keep the measures given that these levels of internal consistency were in line with the internal consistencies published in the original measures and given the acceptable levels of internal consistency at the follow-up.

Table 1

Internal Consistency of MSLQ Measures Baseline & Follow-up

	Baseline		Follow-Up	
	α	No. of Items	α	No. of Items
ASE	.86	8	.91	8
TA	.85	5	.84	5
CT	.68	5	.86	5
MCSR	.79	12	.77	12
ER	.68	4	.78	4

The researcher also assessed participant perceptions of meditation at the follow-up. Specifically, the researcher assessed participant enjoyment of meditation using a single item. The scale for the enjoyment of meditation item ranged from 1 (did not enjoy meditating) to 5 (very much enjoyed meditating). Participants were also asked to report the frequency of their meditation practice. The scale for the item pertaining to frequency of practice ranged from 1 (Struggled to consistently meditate) to 5 (Daily meditated). Participants were also asked to estimate the amount of time they meditated each week in minutes, their preferred form of meditation, the length of meditation they most preferred, and the likelihood that they would develop a daily mediation practice in the future.

Results

Regarding meditation, participants completed several measures assessing their attitudinal perspectives and behaviors associated with their meditation practices during the eight-week program. Regarding the enjoyment of meditation, there were no significant mean differences between participants in the online ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.07$) and on-ground ($M = 4.32$, $SD = .89$) versions of the MM programs (see Table 2). They both enjoyed meditating. There were no significant mean differences in measures pertaining to the weekly frequency of meditation between participants in the online ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 1.34$) and on-ground ($M = 3.04$, $SD = 1.07$) versions of the MM programs. Participants in both groups reported meditating just over an hour each week ($M = 72.25$, $SD = 10.67$), with no significant differences emerging between the groups regarding time spent meditating. Participants in the on-ground version of the program were significantly more likely to prefer the lying down body scan meditation ($M = 1.30$, $SD = .46$) compared to participants in the online version of the program ($M = 1.11$, $SD = .32$); $t(78) = 2.11$, $p = .04$. The size of the effect was medium ($\eta^2 = 0.05$). Participants in both programs preferred short meditations, lasting between seven to twelve minutes. Lastly, participants in both programs reported realistically seeing themselves developing at least a weekly meditation practice because of the research.

Table 2

Online & On-Ground Perspectives on Meditation and t-*test results*

| | Online | | On-Ground | | | | |
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*df*	*p*
Enjoy	4.00	1.07	4.32	.89	1.48	78	.14
Frequency	3.17	1.34	3.04	1.37	-.44	78	.66
Time	73.13	12.56	71.02	8.78	-.14	78	.88
Form	1.11	.32	1.30	.46	2.11	78	.04
Length	2.18	.76	2.35	.79	.97	78	.33
Likelihood	2.08	.79	2.08	.66	-.01	78	.99

Research Question No. 1

Regarding the first research question, are there differences between students who received in person and online MM interventions on measures of mindfulness over time? The researcher used a repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance (RM-MANOVA) to assess for differences on measures of mindfulness between the groups over time. The researcher chose the MANOVA given the theoretical linkages between the measures of mindfulness. The dependent measures used within the analysis were the five measures of mindfulness assessed in the FFMQ. Those measures were observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judgment, and non-reactivity. The independent variables within the analyses were the groups, online vs. on-ground, and time, baseline vs. follow-up. The researcher checked preliminary assumptions regarding normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, multicollinearity, and no serious violations were noted.

The results of the analysis indicated that there were no significant interaction effects between the independent variables of intervention group and time: $\lambda = .887$, $F(5, 64) = 1.637$, $p = .16$. The lack of a significant interaction effect provided the necessary support to interpret the main effects within the analysis. The results indicated a significant main effect for time: $\lambda = .539$, $F(5, 64) = 10.940$, $p < .001$. The size of the effect was large ($\eta^2 = 0.46$). Additionally, the results also indicated a significant main effect regarding differences between the groups: $\lambda = .770$, $F(5, 64) = 3.822$, $p < .01$. The size of the effect was large ($\eta^2 = 0.23$). Taken together, these significant main effects for time and group suggested that there were changes over time, from baseline to follow-up, and between the groups, online vs. on-ground, on a linear combination of scores across the five measures of mindfulness.

Furthermore, the results also indicated that there were significant differences on several measures of mindfulness from baseline to follow-up (see Table 3). There were significant differences on measure of observation, acting with awareness, non-judgment, and non-reactivity. There were no significant differences on measures of describing. The size of the effect for each of the significant differences was large. These results demonstrated that the MM programs had an impact on most all measures of mindfulness assessed within the FFMQ
(Baer, et al., 2006).

Table 3

Differences in Measures of Mindfulness Over Time

| | Baseline | | Follow-Up | | *F* | *p* | η^2 |
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			
Observe	26.82	6.50	29.87	5.59	29.411	.000	0.30
Describe	26.79	7.97	26.94	8.22	2.001	.162	0.02
Acting with Awareness	22.82	7.09	24.29	6.82	7.387	.008	0.10
Non-judgment	21.03	8.38	23.08	7.89	15.117	.000	0.18

Table 3 Continued

Non-reactivity	20.10	5.40	22.79	5.72	34.249	.000	0.34

The results also indicated that there were significant differences between participants in the online and on-ground versions of the MM programs on measures of mindfulness. Specifically, there were no significant differences between participants in the groups on measures of observation [$F(1, 68) = 0.029$, $p = .865$], acting with awareness [$F(1, 68) = 2.139$, $p = .148$], and on measures of non-reactivity [$F(1, 68) = 0.940$, $p = .336$]. However, there were significant differences between the groups on measures of describing and non-judgment (see Table 4).

Table 4

Differences in Measures of Mindfulness between Groups

		Baseline M	Follow-Up M	F	p	η^2
Describing	Online	29.14	30.49	9.009	.004	0.12
	On-ground	24.05	24.82			
Non-judgment	Online	22.21	27.10	8.991	.004	0.12
	On-ground	18.90	20.51			

Specifically, those participants in the online version of the programs had significant increases on scores on measures of describing and measures of non-judgment from baseline to follow-up. These results suggested that there may have been an effect that could be attributed to participants in the online program that could not be attributed to those in the on-ground. These results provided enough evidence to answer the research question in that there were changes in scores on measures of mindfulness over time and between the groups. The MM programs likely drove these overall changes.

Research Question No. 2

Regarding the second research question, were there differences between students who received in person and online MM interventions on measures of learning strategies over time? The researcher used a mix of and within measures of analysis of variance (ANOVA) to assess for differences on measures of learning strategies. The dependent measures used in these analyses were TA, CT, and MCSR. The independent measures used in these analyses were the groups, online and on-ground, and time, baseline to follow-up. The researcher assessed all relevant assumptions associated with this analytical technique and there were no violations of assumptions. The results of the analyses indicated significant differences on measures of learning strategies related to TA, CT, and MCSR.

Regarding differences on measures of TA between groups and over time, there were significant differences worth noting (See Table 5). The results of the analysis indicated that there were no significant interaction effects between the independent variables of intervention group and time: $\lambda = .950$, $F(1, 75) = 3.918$, $p = .05$. The lack of a significant interaction effect provided the necessary support to interpret the main effects within the analysis. The results indicated a significant main effect for time: $\lambda = .892$, $F(1, 75) = 9.115$, $p < .01$. The size of the effect was large ($\eta^2 = 0.11$). However, the results indicated no main effect regarding differences between the groups: $F(1, 75) = 0.789$, $p = .38$. These results suggested that all participants, regardless of group membership, reported significantly lower scores on measures of TA at the follow-up compared to baseline.

Table 5

Mean differences on measures of Test Anxiety over Time by Group

	Baseline		Follow-Up	
	M	SD	M	SD
Total	4.44	1.57	4.05	1.48
Online	4.77	1.52	4.05	1.56
On-ground	4.20	1.58	4.05	1.43

Regarding differences on measures of CT between groups and over time, there were significant differences worth noting (See Table 6). The results of the analysis indicated that there were no significant interaction effects between the independent variables of intervention group and time: $\lambda = .980$, $F(1, 78) = 1.596$, $p = .21$. The lack of a significant interaction effect provided the necessary support to interpret the main effects within the analysis. The results indicated a significant main effect for time: $\lambda = .946$, $F(1, 78) = 4.443$, $p < .05$. The size of the effect was medium ($\eta^2 = 0.05$). Additionally, the results indicated a significant main effect regarding differences between the groups: $F(1, 78) = 9.289$, $p < .01$. The size of the effect was large ($\eta^2 = 0.11$). These results indicated that in general, participants reported significantly higher scores on measures of CT at follow-up compared to baseline. Additionally, the results indicated that participants in the on-ground MM program had a significantly higher increase in scores on measures of CT, compared to the participants in the online group, from baseline to follow-up.

Table 6

Mean differences on measures of Critical Thinking over Time by Group

	Baseline		Follow-Up	
	M	SD	M	SD
Total	4.03	1.21	4.35	1.37
Online	3.70	1.27	3.82	1.47
On-ground	4.26	1.12	4.74	1.16

Regarding differences on measures of MCSR between groups and over time, there were significant differences worth noting (See Table 7). The results of the analysis indicated that there were no significant interaction effects between the independent variables of intervention group and time: $\lambda = .992$, $F(1, 74) = 0.574$, $p = .45$. The lack of a significant interaction effect provided the necessary support to interpret the main effects within the analysis. The results indicated a significant main effect for time: $\lambda = .898$, $F(1, 74) = 8.447$, $p < .01$. The size of the effect was large ($\eta^2 = 0.10$). However, the results indicated no main effect regarding differences between the groups: $F(1, 74) = 0.332$, $p = .57$. These results indicated that scores on measures of MCSR significantly increased from baseline to follow-up. However, there were no significant differences between the groups. This suggested that the MM program had an effect on scores on measures of MCSR for all participants.

Table 7

Mean differences of Metacognitive Self-Regulation over Time by Group

	Baseline		Follow-Up	
	M	SD	M	SD
Total	4.37	0.97	4.64	0.87
Online	4.26	1.16	4.61	0.96
On-ground	4.44	0.81	4.65	0.80

The results of the analyses associated with the second research questions revealed several pertinent insights. Participants, regardless of group, reported significantly lower scores on TA at follow-up compared to baseline. Second, participants in the on-ground MM program reported significantly higher scores on measures of CT at follow-up compared to baseline. Lastly, participants, regardless of group, reported significantly higher scores on measures of MCSR at follow-up compared to baseline. These significant differences could be attributed to the intervention and effect of MM providing enough support to suggest that MM influenced differences in scores on these measures over time.

Research Question No. 3

Regarding the third research question, are there differences in the meditational effects of ASE on the relationship between ER and GPA between participants in the online and on-ground MM groups? The researcher used regression analysis and the Process macro to investigate this research question. Overall, the results indicated that ER was a significant predictor of GPA: $F(1, 78) = 13.18, p < .001, R^2 = .14$ (see Figure 1). This suggests that higher levels of ER are predictive of higher GPAs: $b = .27, t(78) = 3.63, p < .001$. The results also indicated that ER significantly predicted ASE: $F(1, 78) = 25.83, p < .001, R^2 = .25$. These results suggest that EF had an impact on ASE: $b = .44, t(78) = 5.08, p < .001$. The results also indicated that ASE significantly predicted GPA: $F(2, 77) = 11.23, p < .001, R^2 = .23$. These results suggest higher scores on ASE are predictive of GPA: $b = .26, t(77) = 2.84, p < .001$.

Finally, results indicated that ER did not significantly predict GPA when controlling for ASE: $F(2, 77) = 11.23, p < .001, R^2 = .23$. This result is not statistically significant from zero, indicating that there is no relationship between ER and GPA after controlling for ASE: $b = .15, t(77) = 1.87, p = .07$. These results fulfilled the criteria in Baron and Kenney's (1986) model for mediation in that there is no effect of ER on GPA after controlling for ASE. These results confirmed that ASE mediates the relationship between ER and GPA in the total respondents within the sample. After running the mediation model on the total sample, the researcher elected to run the same model on the online and on-ground participants separately.
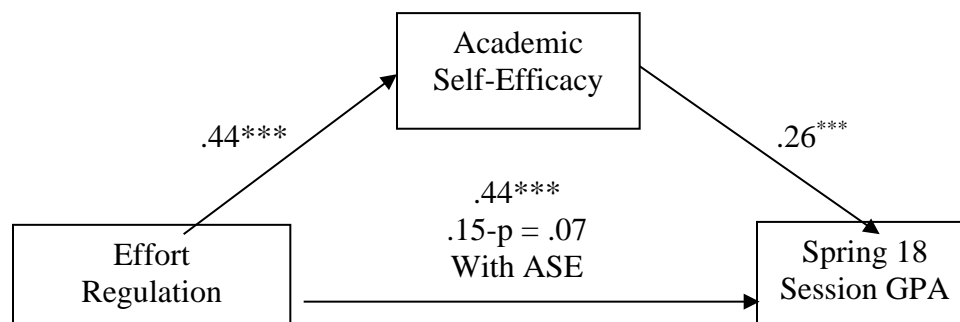
Figure 1. Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The researcher used regression analysis and the Process macro to investigate this research question for participants in the online MM program. Overall, the results indicated that ER was a significant predictor of GPA: $F(1, 30) = 6.84, p < .05, R^2 = .19$ (See Figure 2). This suggested that higher levels of ER are predictive of higher GPAs among participants in the online MM group: $b = .16, t(78) = 2.62, p < .05$. The results also indicated that ER significantly predicted ASE: $F(1, 30) = 9.76, p < .01, R^2 = .25$. EF had an impact on ASE amongst participants in the online MM group: $b = .45, t(30) = 3.12, p < .01$. The results indicated that ASE significantly predicted GPA: $F(2, 29) = 5.89, p < .01, R^2 = .29$. Higher scores on ASE are predictive of GPA amongst respondents in the online MM group: $b = .16, t(30) = 2.05, p < .05$. Finally, results also indicated that ER did not significantly predict GPA when controlling for ASE: $F(2, 29) = 5.89, p < .01, R^2 = .29$. This result is not statistically significant from zero, indicating that there is no significant relationship between ER and GPA after controlling for ASE amongst participants in the online MM: $b = .09, t(29) = 1.37, p = .18$. These results fulfilled the criteria in Baron

and Kenney's (1986) model for mediation in that there is no effect of ER on GPA after controlling for ASE amongst participants in the online MM group.
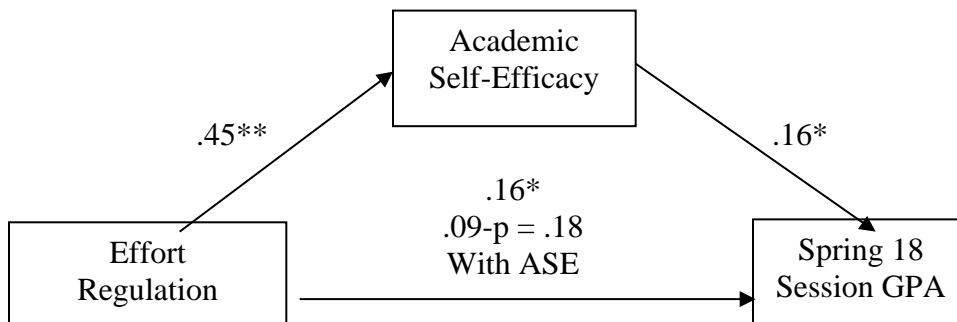

Figure 2. Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The researcher used regression analysis and the Process macro to investigate this research question for participants in the on-ground MM program. Overall, the results did not indicate that ER was a significant predictor of GPA: $F (1, 40) = 1.83$, $p = .18$, $R^2 = .04$ (See Figure 3). This suggests that higher levels of ER are not predictive of higher GPAs among participants in the on-ground MM group: $b = .17$, $t (40) = 1.35$, $p = .18$. The results indicated that ER significantly predicted ASE: $F(1, 40) = 14.32$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .26$. These results suggested that EF had an impact on ASE amongst participants in the on-ground MM group: $b = .45$, $t (40) = 3.78$, $p < .001$. Results did not indicate that ASE significantly predicted GPA: $F (2, 39) = 2.39$, $p = .10$, $R^2 = .11$. Higher scores on ASE were not predictive of GPA amongst respondents in the on-ground MM group: $b = .29$, $t (40) = 1.69$, $p = .10$. Finally, results also indicated that ER did not significantly predict GPA when controlling for ASE: $F (2, 39) = 2.39$, $p = .10$, $R^2 = .11$. There is no significant relationship between ER and GPA after controlling for ASE amongst participants in the on-ground MM: $b = .04$, $t (39) = 0.32$, $p = .75$. These results did not fulfill the criteria in Baron and Kenney's (1986) model for mediation in that ASE did not mediate the relationship between ER and GPA amongst respondents within the on-ground MM program.
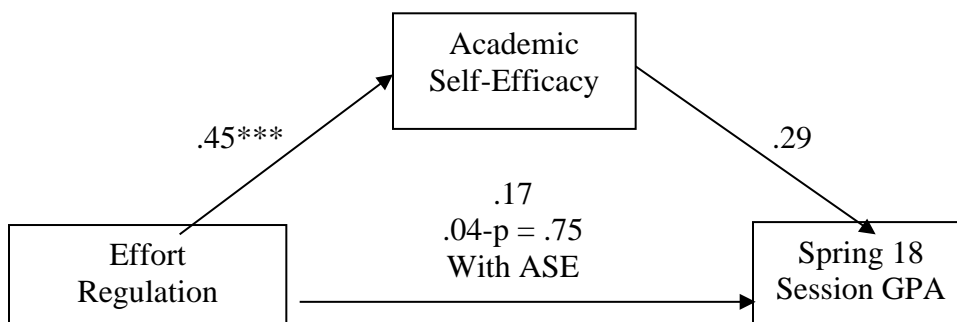
Figure 3. Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

When examined together, these results suggested that self-efficacy, related to academic matters, mediated the relationship between a student's attempts to regulate their academic efforts and GPA, an important academic outcome. This mediation effect held true amongst total participants in the sample. However, this mediation effect differed between the groups. Specifically, the mediation effect remained intact amongst participants in the online MM group and did not for participants in the on-ground MM group. These results helped to answer this research question, in that there are differences between MM groups pertaining to the meditational effects of ASE on the relationship between ER and GPA. It should be noted, that there were no significant differences between online ($M = 5.67$ $SD = 1.04$) and on-ground ($M = 5.78$, $SD = 0.84$) participants on measures of ASE; $t (76) = .471$, $p = .639$.

Discussion

Regarding attitudinal perspectives and behavioral adoption of MM, participants enjoyed meditating. In fact, participants were asked to report what they liked about meditating. One participant stated, "It gave me time to just focus on myself and how I was feeling and take some time out of a normal hectic day." Another participant noted, "It gave me time to focus on me and not worry about finals or the future." One participant noted the timeliness of the research project:

> I like the timing of this research project being during the end of the semester projects because it calmed me down and made me less stressed. I also think it improved my ability to complete my projects and tests because I was less stressed.

These results suggested that students are willing to adopt MM as a practice. Additionally, these results suggested that MM has a place in transforming learning by affecting the health and wellness of students given that students specifically sensed and discussed the impact of MM on their stress during traditionally hectic times during a semester. Additionally, these results further supported the notion that MM transformed learning in that MM provided students tools to remain centered in their own active and reflective learning experience.

The results suggested that students participating in either the online or the on-ground version became more mindful due to changes in scores on measures of mindfulness. These results provided additional support to suggest that MM intervention are effective amongst college students. Additionally, these results suggest that MM has a place within the learning environment of college students. While preliminary, the significant changes in scores on mindfulness measures suggests that MM could continue to be an effective tool for coping and management of the self during stressful times in learning environment.

There were significant differences on measures of learning strategies. Participants reported lower scores on measures of TA and higher scores on measures of CT and MCSR at follow-up compared to baseline. There were no real notable differences between the groups, one MM program did not seem to influence more or less change in scores on these measures. Taken together, MM could be a unique intervention for transforming learning given that the practice allows students to recognize how they individually influence the learning process through increased critical thinking and self-regulation, two factors critical to seeing new things and seeing old things differently. Most importantly, these data further supported the notion that MM physiologically affects the self-perceptions of anxiety related to tests. This result alone provides support that MM can indeed transform learning for college students.

Academic self-efficacy, the idea that a student believes that they will be successful and that they have the ability to be successful, mediated the relationship between effort-regulation and GPA for students in the online MM program, not for those students in the on-ground MM program. These results should be interpreted and discussed in light of other results within the research. Specifically, participants in the MM group has significantly higher scores on measures of non-judgment compared to participants in the on-ground MM group. Interestingly enough, non-judgment was the one facet of mindfulness to significantly correlate with effort-regulation ($r = 0.23$, $n = 87$, $p < 0.05$). Taken together, these results may suggest that the MM intervention for online students helped reduce their overall judgment of attempts to regulate their efforts toward academic success and in turn, the reduction in judgment may have affected their belief in their ability to be successful in an online course.

Recommendations

Given the lack of empirical attention of MM interventions among college students and in light of the relatively successful adoption of the MM intervention in this endeavor, researchers should most assuredly continue exploring the relationship and impact of MM interventions on college students in

various learning environments. Specifically, the complex relationship between individual student factors, the learning environment, and the learning process need additional attention in light of MM interventions.

One such context fitting for continued exploration is the context of the online learning environment. The online learning environment in higher education seems here to stay. The disconnect that emerges in this learning environment between professors and students, due to lack of interpersonal interaction, could be mediated by a MM intervention. Students in this endeavor, who were in the online MM program, remarked that the MM gave them a tool to manage their anxiety for tough, math heavy, classes that were hosted online. As a result, researcher should continue exploring the effect of MM in the online learning environment.

The results from this study should be taken into context given that the strategies for learning were measured in the context of undergraduate and graduate psychology courses. Students in general psychology are completing a general studies course. Other students were completing upper level courses within the psychology program. Students majoring in psychology are likely to be more engaged with the content and could see courses as less challenging due to their engagement. As such, the researcher recommends further exploration of the relationship between mindfulness, strategies for learning, and GPA within the context of courses perceived as being more difficult (e.g., college algebra).

During this endeavor, the researcher carried out both on-ground and online MM interventions. No clear evidence emerged suggesting one was more successful or fruitful than the other. Both seemed to work in terms of changes in mindfulness scores over time. However, after having facilitated both the online and on-ground versions of the MM programs and having taught mindfulness classes outside the context of a collegiate learning environment, the researcher believes MM to be successful in a collegiate learning environment more thought needs to be devoted to the design and execution of a MM within a collegiate learning environment. Specifically, a program needs to be designed and tailored directly to college students for a MM intervention to be most successful.

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Translanguaging Usage and Perceptions in Higher Education: Towards Inclusionary Pedagogy and Transformative Learning

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Abstract

This paper discusses how translanguaging has often historically been thought of as a form of linguistic processing in language acquisition programs (Mazak & Carroll, 2017), and the more recent move to use it as a teaching strategy that increases equity and levels the power of voice and participation in the classroom (Creese & Blackledge, 2010 & 2015). This paper describes a qualitative research project that surveyed teaching faculty and students at a local university about their translanguaging strategies and usage. This research is meant to increase understandings of translanguaging usage and perceptions to advance excellence in pedagogical approaches to adult education, concentrating on strategies to increase equity in education, as well as how it can lead to transformative learning.

Keywords: translanguaging, transformative learning, equity in education, adult education
pedagogy

Introduction: Moving from Bilingual Education to a Pedagogy of Inclusion

Historically, translanguaging has often been thought of as a form of linguistic processing in language acquisition programs (Mazak & Carroll, 2017). Recently the concept has been viewed as a valuable teaching strategy, moving classrooms from places where "one story" hegemonic discourse dominates to places of pluralistic and more inclusive adult educational praxis. This move has been related to the recognition of language as a social construct and identity as something we "perform" (Creese & Blackledge, 2015, p. 21).

There have been decades of discussion on the pedagogy of bilingual language learning, and more recently on translanguaging in bilingual education (Baker, 2003; Cummins, 2005; Gravelle, 1996; Heller, 1999; Lindholm-Leary, 2006; Swain, 1983). Others have moved this dialogue out of bilingual teaching and into pluralistic/multilinguistic classrooms as a strategy of inclusive learning (Lewis, Jones and Baker, 2012) that questions the hegemonic norms of monolingual classrooms (Garcia and Leiva, 2014; Mazak and Carroll, 2017). This questioning of hegemonic norms and use of translanguaging as a pedagogy of inclusion is where this paper aligns, and as such, similar to Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012), discusses pedagogically planned translanguaging usage across contexts and cultures for cognition (p.650), in a university campus teaching and learning setting. Specifically, I look at how:

Translanguaging as a concept shifts focus from the structural analysis of language itself to what people *do* with language in their everyday lives […] rethink bilingualism as the norm […] put monolingual ideologies of language aside and adopt beliefs about language that put bi- and multilingual practices at the center of our investigation, teaching, and policymaking. (Mazak, 2017, p. 9; as cited in Mazak and Carroll, 2017)

Further to this idea of what we 'do' with language, is the idea of what multiple language learning contexts do to us in terms of our learning. Hodge (2019) notes that through interactions with others, transformative learning experiences can happen which can cause the learners perspectives to become more inclusive, more differentiated, more permeable and more integrated (p. 145). This echoes Gobbo, Galeotti, and Esposito's (2017) idea that we develop a 'deeper knowledge' as we move from subjective to intersubjective understandings (p. 165-66).

Background

Prior to this study, the author had been using translanguaging in an English as an Additional Language environment while working for a local school board's adult non-credit programs. At this time, a workshop had been implemented focusing on parental understandings of cultural differences in expectations at primary schools for their children. This workshop specifically tackled the messages that the parents' children would hear in the schools centering on foods for lunches, showering, washing hair, brushing teeth, and laundry. The creation of this workshop was due to complaints that had been received at the adult education centre from teaching staff at the elementary level, as the elementary teachers were aware that the children's parents were attending classes at the adult education centre. The elementary teachers had reached out to us in the hopes that we could do some "educating on North American norms." As an adult educator of Freirian pedagogies (Freire, 1971), with a critical view of hegemonic discourses, this workshop was *instead* developed to help parents understand the messages and pressures their children would be facing *due to* "North American norms" to help families navigate their choices and responses when these pressures became obvious. The choice to change the narrative of the workshop from "teaching North American norms" to "dealing with pressures related to North American norms" was also meant as an opportunity for students to provide their counter-narratives to challenge the dominant supremacy discourse within ideology that centers on hidden embedded assumptions of "teaching North American norms for acculturation and assimilation." As such, the workshop was also framed in this alternate way as a strategic form of anti-racist, anti-oppression advocacy, and ally work (Adams, et al., 2010; Bishop, 2015; Boyd, 2016; Carruthers, 2018; Hoefer, 2016; Mullaly, 2010; O'Neal, 2019; Satzewich, & Liodakis, 2013; Sen, 2003; Smucker, 2017).

The workshop was structured using translanguaging across what would be a multilinguistic environment as students came from over 19 countries of origin and nearly as many language backgrounds. I had the instructors help group students in language groups for the workshop, some groups having as many as ten participants, and others being only pairs. Each group had learners whose English levels spanned being emergent to nearly bilingual as well. During the workshop, as the facilitator, I used approximately grade three level English, many graphics, encouraged translating, first language usage for group discussions, and chart paper brainstorming/writing in first languages. Time was built into this workshop to allow for the back-and-forth between first and second (or third, fourth, and fifth) languages and the higher-level English speakers were the spokespeople for their groups when the discussion was

brought back to the larger group in English for everyone (as the common emergent language in the room). Group discussions were heated, engaged, and lively. At times, before discussions moved back to the larger group, pairs, and small groups would spill into English or other shared languages (like French for example) as learners asked other ethnic/cultural/language groups in the room what their practices were, what foods were called in their languages, and at one point even shared where to find specific foods and how they cooked them.

These types of spontaneous conversations and cross-cultural sharing situations had been rarely seen in other workshop settings (although they happened often in the regular classroom spaces). At the end of the workshop one of the instructors even came up to me and thanked me for the way I had structured the workshop (in language groups using translanguaging strategies) stating it was the most engaged and interesting workshop the group had had. Students also thanked me as they often had frustrations with workshops delivered by other agencies that did not include translating, spoke too quickly in English, had too much English type on PowerPoint slides, and had content that was not conceptually or culturally understood (and not explained). I had known of these frustrations prior to developing the workshop due to my role in the institution, and this was a part of why I was delving into translanguaging strategies in the first place: I wanted to see if there were better ways to reach and engage with students. This workshop, even as a small first step, showed me that these strategies were important in our classrooms.

This simple workshop day was the beginning of what would become a tipping point in my own career, where I moved more concretely from the assumptions and "default positioning" of monolingual classrooms to a more pluralistic understanding and approach where translanguaging is encouraged. From here, I moved to a full-time faculty position in an academic department (not a language teaching program) at a local university, where I had also been teaching as a sessional for years. I decided to continue this line of translanguaging inquiry and praxis within this mainstream higher education environment, in my classes, and as a line of inquiry as discussed below.

As such, the research I undertook was meant to be used to advance excellence in adult education pedagogical approaches, concentrating on issues of equity in education at the local university. This research supported the local university's strategic research plan in that it advanced knowledge related to "…identity, narrative, language, culture, community, and nationality as well as other aspects of the human experience." (Algoma University, 2015, p. 6) while supporting the varying voices and worldviews in higher and adult education classrooms. The research supported the university's commitment to the principles of diversity and equity which had been stated clearly:

> v. We will seek ways to integrate inclusive excellence throughout our university's teaching, research, community engagement and governance. In doing so, we will engage with students, faculty, staff, our boards of governors, senates, and alumni to raise awareness and encourage all efforts. (Kent, 2017)

As a university that states it also has a diverse student body (Kent, 2017), our teaching strategies and instructional styles should reflect this diversity for student/faculty success, and translanguaging could potentially be seen as a useful pedagogical approach in terms of "inclusive excellence" as we focused forward.

Teaching and learning themes heralded at the university that would apply to translanguaging included: *Active and Collaborative Learning*, as this pedagogical approach does both in relation to the

specific and conscious planning and unfolding of these themes in classrooms; *Student-Faculty Interactions*, as we are partners in learning "with" each other through this approach (Garcia & Wei, 2014); and *Enriching Educational Experiences*, as this particular strategy has the potential to enrich our classroom environments. This enrichment happens by creating spaces for multiple understandings; specifically, this is related to how language and worldviews are conceptually tied to each other, how language is being socially constructed in real time, how we create our identities contextually (Creese & Blackledge, 2015), and how creating space for more than one language in a room can also create the space for the multiple worldviews that come with pluralistic and multi-linguistic environments (Mazak & Carroll, 2017). This last point delves into the potential of translanguaging to be used strategically as a tool for transformative learning as students experience "perceptual shifts" when exposed to the pluriverse (Martusewicz, Edmundson, & Lupinacci, 2011) of worldviews.

Methodology

This was a qualitative research project that surveyed both teaching faculty and students at the local university, and that was passed through the university's Research Ethics Committee. Participants that were recruited included both faculty and students who volunteered to take the survey. Inclusion criteria for the faculty survey included any current part-time or full-time faculty member at Algoma University as per faculty email lists, and exclusion criteria for the faculty survey included anyone that was not a current full-time or part-time faculty member at Algoma University, also as per faculty email lists. Inclusion criteria for the student survey was similar and included any full-time or part-time students registered in classes during the 2018 year, as per the Algoma University Student Union (AUSU) student email list, and similarly exclusion criteria for the student survey was any prior students not registered in classes during the 2018 year. Recruitment beyond email lists included a survey awareness campaign for students through AUSU: putting the callout for survey volunteers (participants) onto the student news / calendar site as other events are advertised, and posters advertising the survey placed across campus.

Faculty and students were surveyed separately, using the same questions, for a comparative analysis of what was seen as current understandings, beliefs, and usage of translanguaging in classrooms and on the campus at large. Survey Monkey was used for the surveys as the questions were fairly simplistic. Participants were made aware of the potential use of their Survey Monkey data for meta-analysis due to US laws and regulations, and that, while unlikely, it would still be anonymous, there would be no identifiable data, and data could not be tracked back to individuals (https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/legal/privacy-policy/).

As noted, surveys were being used to elicit understanding of the number of languages both faculty and student survey participants had and used, whether English was their first language, translanguaging strategies faculty and student participants currently used, and beliefs faculty and students had around monolingual/multilingual usage in classrooms and on campus.

The weakness of the study was that it was biased towards those interested in taking the study, as those who were, participated. The survey thus does not intend to represent the campus community, but is an entry point for further discussion; as such, it has the potential to strengthen further understandings within higher education teaching and learning settings regarding translanguaging usage and perception, and looks at the potential implications tied to transformative learning.

Results

Our local university is quite small compared to many, being the size of high schools in other jurisdictions. From this small base, eighteen faculty and thirty-five students participated in the surveys. As 89% of faculty who took the survey were English first language users but 46% of students who took the survey were not English first language users (only 55% of students were); the language diversity of the student participants was greater than the language diversity in faculty participants. Seven faculty presented with more than one language, and the number of additional languages they could function in depended on if it was speaking, reading, writing or listening as noted in Figures 1.1 to 5.1 below. Student surveys noted that 40% of students had two languages, and many had up to four and five languages that they could function in depending on if it was speaking, reading, writing, or listening as noted in Figures 1.2 to 5.2. This difference in language diversity between faculty and students would be interesting to track across the university as a whole, and as related to diversity hiring policies.
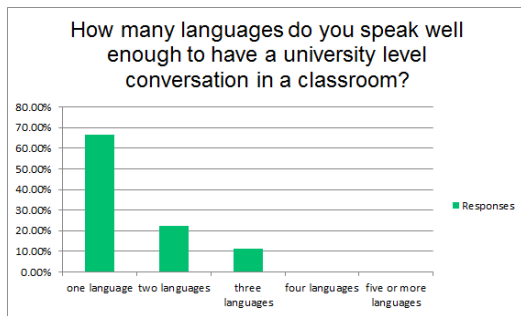
Figure 1.1 Faculty Response – speaking # of languages
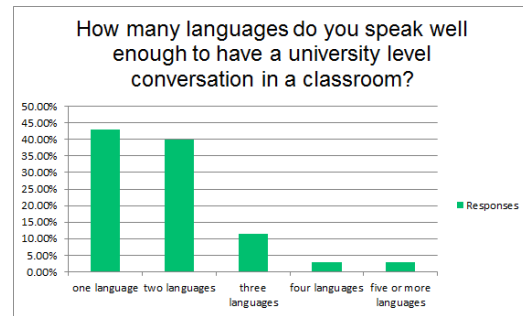
Figure 1.2 Student response – speaking # of languages
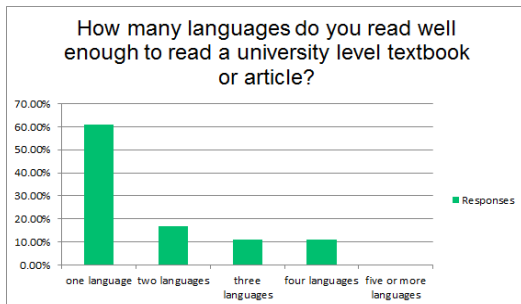
Figure 2.1 Faculty response – reading # of languages
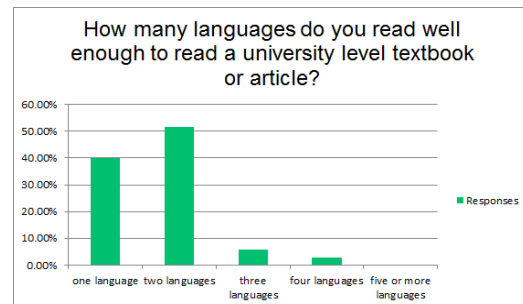
Figure 2.2 Student response – reading # of languages
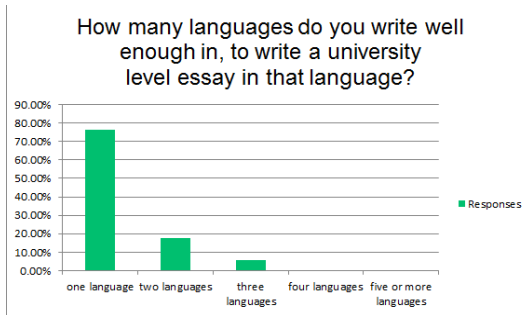
Figure 3.1 Faculty response – writing # of languages
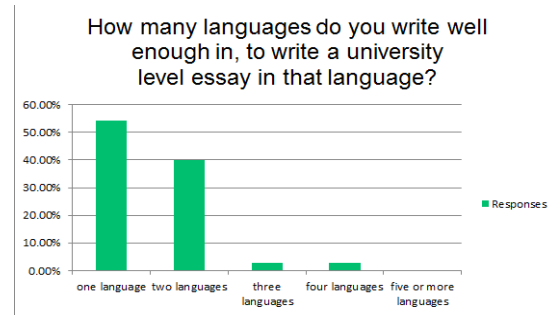
Figure 3.2 Student response – writing # of languages
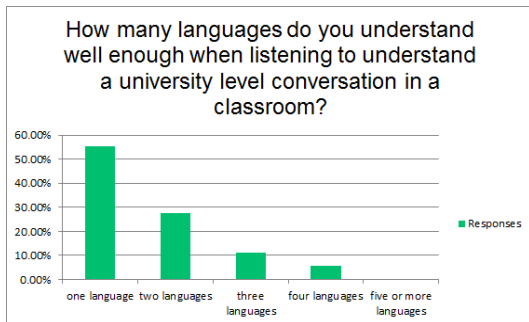
Figure 4.1 Faculty response – listening # of languages
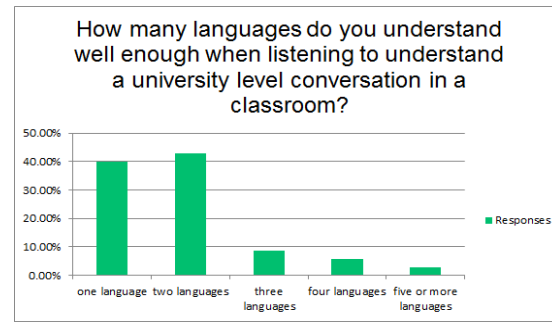
Figure 4.2 Student response – listening # of languages
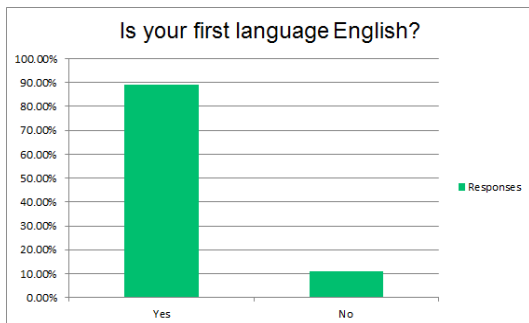
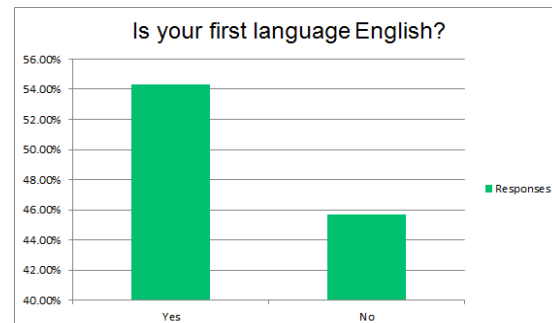*Figure 5.1* Faculty response – English 1st language

Figure 5.2 Student response – English 1st language

For both faculty and students whose first language was other than English, some seemed to use their first language in classrooms and on campus either "every day" or "some days," yet more students replied "rarely" and "never" (Figures 6.1 to 7.2). The fact that students did not always use their first languages in classrooms, combined with the students' use of translanguaging on campus more than in classrooms, could be related to: being a minority language user in classrooms but not in social situations; that students felt more comfortable using their first languages outside of classrooms; feeling there is an expectation of English language use in classrooms; having high levels of English language usage; or other reasons which would require further study to discern. For students that did use translanguaging strategies, they largely replied that they used their own language for writing, reading, and speaking, such as for notes, general class concepts, and speaking with friends. Some noted asking their teacher questions in

their first language if the teacher spoke the same language, and that they used their own language for presentation preparation, and when forming study strategies; Google, translators, and dictionaries were also being used often. Of the few faculty participants that had first languages other than English, they were using their first language for instruction, researching, clarifying in the classroom, making their own notes for lessons, and had computers set to their first languages.
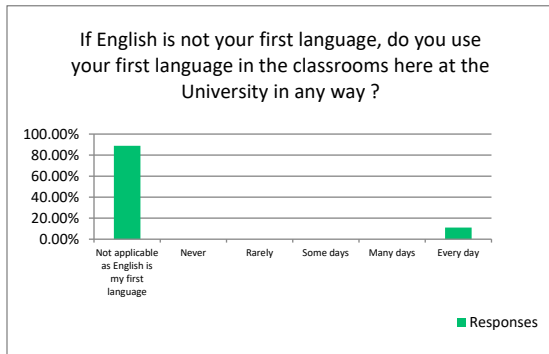

Figure 6.1 Faculty response – translanguaging in classrooms
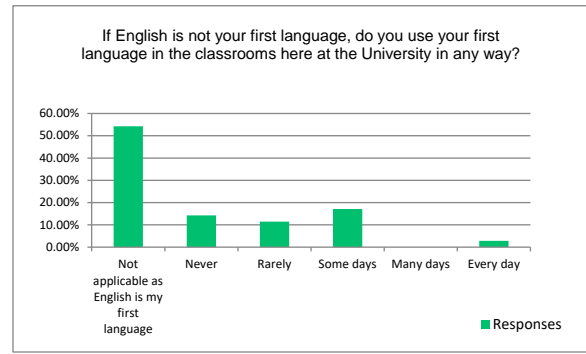
Figure 6.2 Student response – translanguaging in classrooms
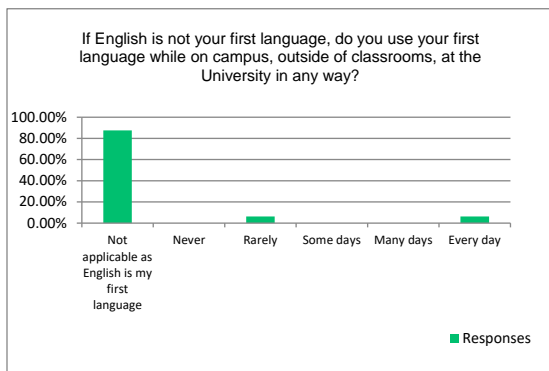
Figure 7.1 Faculty response – translanguaging on campus
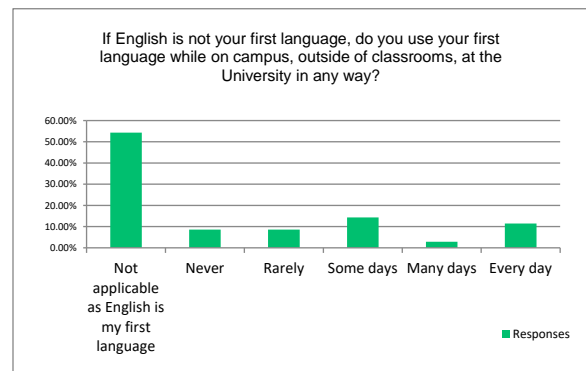
Figure 7.2 Student response – translanguaging on campus

Overall, the use of other languages in the classroom and translanguaging strategies seemed lower than expected given the language diversity of students. More students and faculty thought we should be encouraging the use of languages other than English on campus and in classrooms than not, yet both students and faculty largely did not encourage nor discourage first language use in classrooms (Figures 8.1 and 8.2). This could imply that neither faculty nor students see or understand the added value of translanguaging strategies within pedagogy, are unclear if they should be encouraging multiple languages in the classroom, or have other reasons which are unclear without further study; yet, faculty and student survey participants thought providing student services in first languages was important and something that should be done (Figures 9.1 and 9.2).
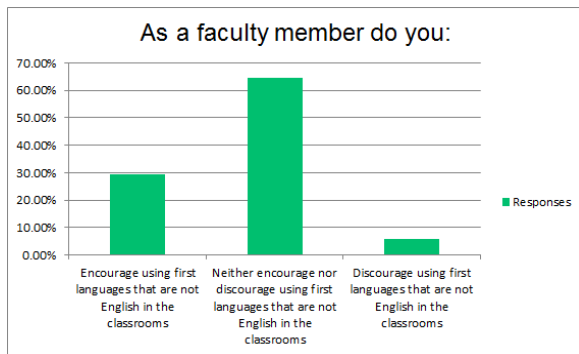
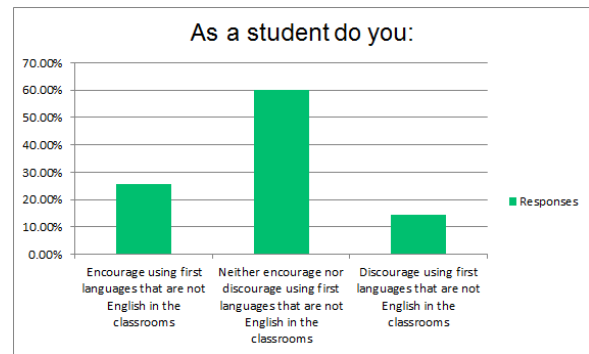Figure 8.1 Faculty response – encouraging
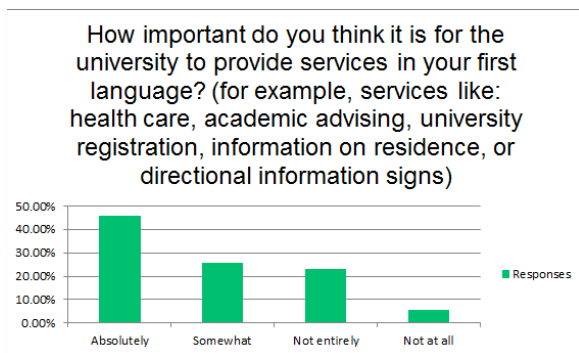
Figure 8.2 Student response – encouraging
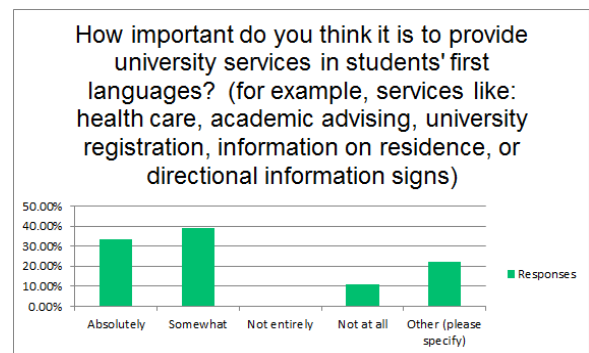
Figure 9.1 Faculty response – services

Figure 9.2 Student response – services

From Inclusionary Pedagogy to Transformative Learning

Of the faculty who did support translanguaging, one noted its importance to:

> Promote comfort with multilingualism and translanguaging, particularly as we are going through conversations about decolonizing academic institutions and working cross-culturally. Part of this is encouraging comfort with the "unknown," that sometimes people (whether students, staff, faculty, or community members) will say things (whether because of language use, register use, or other variations) that one simply won't understand. Creating classrooms that are more embracing of linguistic diversity will not only promote deeper inclusion of students whose first language is not English, but also strengthen our (student & faculty) scholarship as we increase our capacity to dialogue through/across linguistic boundaries.

Another faculty member noted how it opened learning up to new possibilities as:

> I particularly encourage comparative comments about how languages differ, as this illuminates the ways in which language both limits and enables thought—a key learning outcome of my discipline. Therefore, it is highly valuable to the whole class when a student exclaims "we cannot say that in our language; we would say 'xxx'". That opens up helpful discussion.

Both of these faculty saw the importance of the use of multiple languages in classrooms and translanguaging across languages. Although neither uses the term "transformative learning" in their quotes, both suggest perceptual shifts related to learning. It is in these spaces that translanguaging can become a strategy for transformative learning as Hodge (2019) describes processes related to emancipative learning through interacting with others. Hodge notes it is in our social interactions that we must face our limiting beliefs and self-reflect (p. 148-49), which, when related to adult education praxis, highlights that the end point of critical reflection can become the transformative learning moment (Hodge, 2019). Again, this speaks to learning that is "concerned with creating opportunities that challenge the dominant discourse and move individuals toward action embedded in social justice and social development" (Smith, 2017, p. 3). Challenging dominant discourse can also be seen in Garcia & Leiva's (2014) idea of translanguaging being liberatory for students who find themselves in the language minority of a classroom as it normalizes bilingualism and as such is transformative when it reaches the potential of challenging and removing language hierarchies. This type of potential for transformation is echoed by the two faculty members in the survey, as the experience of dissonance moments related to other worldviews and ways of knowing, particularly as based in language expression, can lead to new learning. This is exactly why using translanguaging pedagogically for transformative learning holds such potential.

Conclusions

The prospect of using translanguaging for pedagogical purposes holds much promise as noted by the few faculty survey participants that stated its value. Their use and encouragement of first language usage in their classrooms, is hopeful. Certainly, educational awareness of what translanguaging is, strategies that can be used, ways of encouraging it, and general first language use in classrooms for learning could all be explored at the local level, and beyond, through professional development workshops.

Further, how translanguaging helps level power imbalances in classrooms, helps to form identity, can be used to bridge the "unknown" divides between cultures, and provides ways of actively working towards intercultural education, all need to be explored in higher education settings, beyond language programs, in more detail. Neither faculty or students encouraged nor discouraged multiple language use in classrooms or on campus in the local survey, yet there is promise in these spaces for transformational learning to occur with the use of translanguaging.

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