

Editor-in-Chief: **Dr. Gabriele Strohschen, DePaul University, USA**

Assoc. Editors-in-Chief: **Dr. John Ketterer, Jacksonville State University, USA**
 Dr. Wu Guoliang, Yuexiou University of Foreign
 Languages, China

Managing Editor: **Dr. Linda Sun, Southern Polytechnic State University, USA**

Editorial Advisory Board

Prof. Holger Daun, Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, Sweden
Prof. J. B. G. Tilak, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, India
Prof. Henry Kaluba, Commonwealth Secretariat, London, United Kingdom
Prof. Carolyn Riehl, Columbia Teachers College, USA
Prof. Meryllann J. Schuttloffel, Catholic University of America, Washington, USA
Prof. K. Dorasami, National Council of Educational Research and Training, India
Dr. Avani Maniar, The M.S. University of Baroda, India
Prof. Johan Hoornaert, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium
Dr. K. Pushpanadham, The M.S. University of Baroda, India

Board of Reviewers

Dr. Kenneth Browne Elazier, Institute for Performance Enhancement, USA
Dr. Richard Bennett, Southern Polytechnic State University, USA
Dr. Carol A. Burg, National Louis University, Tampa, FL, USA
Dr. Thomas D. Cox, University of Houston-Victoria, USA
Dr. John T. Denny, Department of Open Schools Program, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Dr. Sue Espinoza, Texas A&M University-Commerce, USA
Dr. Beth Furlong, Creighton University, USA
Dr. Barrie Jo Price, University of Alabama, USA
Dr. Pooneh Lari, North Carolina State University, USA
Dr. Ka Sai Un, Texas A&M University-Commerce, USA
Dr. Victor Wang, Florida Atlantic University, USA
Dr. Yuan Jianhua, Beijing Foreign Studies University, China
Dr. Jin Zhang, Zhejiang University, China

Notes from the Editor

It is always a gamble when you manage a journal – you never quite know what submissions you will get. At IFOTS we delight in the diversity of each edition's themes. As editor, I often ponder this variety of entries. As I read each article, I imagine a colleague --near or far-- and what her life world is like; what needs and tasks define her daily experiences? The words, which we publish here, are important and meaningful to each of the authors. Priorities and passions are so different from one another. And so you, our readers, may hear about projects and practices and puzzling language rules – all in one issue of IFOTS. At the same time, our needs and issues that we address within the context of education also share much common ground. IFOTS values the uncovering of our shared existence as we support the concept of interdependence.

We are pleased to present you in this issue with such variety and diversity of writings that also speak to our common ground in our world community. The authors of these pieces are all in pursuit of gaining a greater understanding of our world and cultures as much as of themselves. I read a whole lot of earnest reflection and concerns for one another in these articles and between their respective lines. I am very happy to play a small part in this edition of IFOTS, along with our publisher Dr. Sun and our dedicated reviewers and board members from around the globe. Join me in this delight and read about the discourse and action that is happening on all continents.

Dr. Gabriele Strohschen

Chicago, USA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Transformational Leadership Journeys of Transnational Individuals: A Study of Belizean Leaders Kathleen P. King	5
Empowering Women Through Microfinance: Microfinance Interventions in Ghana and South Africa Devin W. Bercaw	23
Revealing Authentic Teacher Professional Development Using Situated Learning in Virtual Environments as a Teaching Tool Rebecca Blankenship and Deoksoon Kim	36
Implementing SDL As Professional Development in K-12 Settings Krista Steinke	54
The Impact of Addressee on the Form of Language Used by the Speaker Hamzeh Mohammad Al-Zghoul and Abdel-Rahman Abu-Melhim	64
Report on A Seminar: Global Adult Education: Today and Tomorrow	70
Essays: School of Public Service, Depaul University	76

This page is left blank purposely.

Transformational Leadership Journeys of Transnational Individuals: A Study of Belizean Leaders

Dr. Kathleen P. King

University of South Florida, Tampa, FL, USA

[Abstract] Built upon a framework of leadership theory and transformative learning, this paper reveals results from interviews of women higher education leaders conducted in November of 2010. The eight women from across Belize related their leadership journeys, their understanding of mentoring needs, and significant events which informed their leadership careers. Surprising results emerged and demonstrated the issues of transnational adults, international gender differences, and leadership journeys.

[Keywords] Transformational leadership; mentoring; cross-cultural understanding in adult education; gender differences in leadership

Introduction

Women professionals continue to encounter a “glass ceiling” in many variations within and beyond the workplace around the globe (Ng, & Chakrabarty, 2005; Robbins et al., 2009). Furthermore, sociologists and anthropologists demonstrate that, internationally, there are many extremely different cultural orientations towards gender and the professions. For instance, Finland has been a leader in women's rights: women's right to vote passed in 1906 (Adams, 2009; Kuusipalo, 1999; Pylkkänen, 1999). Meanwhile, United States, Canada, and Europe have been slower to adopt, even as late as post World War II (Harris, 2009; Pylkkänen). Moreover, advances in Central America, South America (Rai, & Critzer, 2000), Africa (Robbins et al.) and Asia (Budhwar, Saini, & Bhatnagar, 2006; Ng, & Chakrabarty) have been slower still.

Within higher education, academic and administrative leadership in the USA, there is a trend of greater female presence on boards and executive leadership after many years of only middle management advancement (Cooper, 2007; Harris, 2009). Moreover, a review of related journals and conferences reveals that leadership strategies for women is a popular topic.

While the literature abounds with leadership theories, transaction and transformational leadership models have endured (Monaghan, 2010). The model of transformational leadership recognizes how some leaders focus on cultivating their vision in an organization through the development of the staff, thus transforming people and organizations. Distinct from this model is the adult learning theory of transformative learning (also known as transformational learning), which describes how adults grow and change through negotiating cognitive dissonance and developing new perspective frames (Mezirow, 1978). The research questions of this study integrate the issues of transformational leadership and learning to reveal how leaders transform and also engage in transforming their organizations and followers

The first research study unexpectedly revealed that among women higher education leaders in Belize, they were almost all transnationals in that they lived in more than one country. In an increasingly global society, there are and will continue to be more leaders experiencing transnational lives (Lee & Shaw, 2011; Nowicka, 2006). Therefore, the analysis of these participants' experiences can be very informative for our understanding of the transformative developments of leadership and leadership learning.

This paper explores several critical questions about these international transnational women leaders' experiences to understand better the development and learning process, needed support, and leadership journeys. This study has great potential to reveal not only how women in leadership cope with the distinct cultural and national issues relevant to their nations, but also eventually provide the foundation for a meta-analysis across the participating nations. By revealing similarities and differences in process, opportunities and barriers, and expectations we will be able to better prepare programs, develop mutual

local and international understanding, and form global collaborations.

Theoretical Background

Transnational Literature

This research study addresses issues of not only the development of transnational leaders, but also of transnational women leaders. Parreñas (2005) presents a revealing and in-depth study of the conditions and complexities which transnational families (that is families in which one parent works in another country and is absent from the national home) experience. The context of Parreñas' study is the Philippines and demonstrates that while some nations depend on transnational workers, they hold the transnational worker and their families in low esteem because they break moral, social and, even in this case, legal codes. Parreñas' study reminds us there are many complexities embedded across logistical and family unit arrangements when one parent remotely locates for the family's economic survival or professional advancement. However, in addition to these struggles, there is also frequent conflict with societal expectations and resulting disapproval. While societal acceptance of transnational professionals may be more forgiving because of affluence and special arrangements, for blue-collar transnationals there is less acceptance.

The literature reflects three major elements about this group of participants. The first is the literature and understanding of transnational professionals in general. This literature such as Nowicka's work (2006), describes the many levels of concern, which transnationals need to manage and juggle successfully in their personal and professional lives, which other people do not. Consider for instance, how parents engage in child rearing decisions together when one is far away and not seeing the entire situation first-hand, the need for the transnational to switch among diverse cultures and languages not only when visiting home, but also whenever speaking to family, separation adjustment, and the additional expenses for travel expenses to see family and of maintaining two households. Moreover, Coles and Fletcher (2008) and Kossek and Lambert (2005) are among those authors who reveal the many issues related to gender and family as transnational professionals which illuminates another level of complexity in detail. Due to culturally specific gender and family roles, expectations and socialization transnational professionals may be required to alternate effectively between vastly different expectations. For instance, consider a Chinese-American professional functioning in both American society where feminism is more normatively accepted in metropolitan areas and some traditional societies in which women's social roles are carefully ascribed and monitored and women's rights remain an issue.

The foundation of this phenomenon is in part the rise of feminism across the world. While feminism has emerged globally on different timetables and for varied focal issues (Lee, 2011), the movement has led to changing roles, responsibilities, expectations and possibilities for women. Lee's introductory chapter describes the progressive development of the global feminist movement, worldwide conferences and transnational focus. This trend further highlights the dynamic nature of cultural norms and conflicts which transnational professional women experience. Moreover, according to Lee, inexpensive global technologies for work, which are applied and adopted continually; demonstrate that the spread of feminism will continue since technology has been a large contributor to the transnational feminist movement. These varied strains of thought yield the conclusion that the experience and coping of transnational women professionals will continue to increase and deserves attention in our study of higher education leaders.

Transformational Leadership

The literature on transformational leadership describes this theory as demonstrated by leaders who invest in the development of their staff as vital resources for their organizations. Not only do transformational leaders, cast a vision of the future, but they work with their leadership team and staff to cultivate the vision, develop their skills and implement plans (Berquist, 2007; Westrick, & Miske, 2009). While much of the literature focuses on business and management applications of this theory, Berquist (2007) and others explore the application of transformational leadership to higher education (Monaghan, 2010).

Furthermore, women's leadership and higher education leadership are frequent topics of discussion and research. However, little, if any, research exists which provides a transformative learning (Mezirow, 1978, 1990, 2000) lens to the woman leader in higher education. Combining these characteristics affords multiple layers of opportunity to examine the leader's actions with leadership teams, staff and within their organizations. Furthermore, introducing an international study focus moves us beyond the heavily researched USA higher education research arena. By examining the experiences and insights of Belizean women leaders in higher education, this research examines several questions unanswered in the literature, including: How do social and gender roles interplay with leadership roles in other nations? How do women and their families adjust to these issues outside of a USA culture, and within their homelands? What conflicts do they experience as transformational leaders?

Transformational Learning

The adult learning theory of transformational learning originated with the work of Jack Mezirow (1978, 1990, 2000) and was extensively discussed in its early years and since the late 1990s has been widely studied. Cranton (1994, 2006) was one of the early authors who helped clarify the highly theoretical discussion and apply the theory to practical strategies for facilitating adult learning. Qualitative research has been the favored research design for the studies on this topic; however King introduced a mixed-methods research design and survey instrument in 1997 which has been very popular (i.e., Brock, 2010; Guzman, 2001; Kitchenham, 2006; Whitelaw et al, 2004).

The basic tenet of transformative learning is that as adults grow across the lifespan, they will encounter "disorienting dilemmas" which cause great cognitive dissonance and potentially emotional distress as well. These circumstances may be opportunities for the individual to re-examine their previously unquestioned values, beliefs and understanding. If they continue to explore alternate ways of understanding the situation and their world, they begin to travel a "journey of transformation" as King (2002, 2003) describes it.

From the beginning of its discussion, Mezirow identified seven stages of transformative learning. These stages are experiencing a disorienting dilemma; self-examination; critical assessment of assumptions; recognizing that others have gone through a similar process; exploring options; formulating a plan of action; and reintegration (Mezirow 1990). Additional research demonstrates that transformative learning helps explain the profound learning processes experienced in many contexts including faculty development (King, 2003), professional development (Kitchenham, 2006) and higher education (Guzman, 2001). In this study, the theory provides a frame of reference for understanding the professional development of higher education leaders.

Research Background and Method

Research Background

Based on King's LAS evolving research model (2009), this paper represents one segment of a continuing international study. The purpose is to identify and understand the transformative learning experiences which have been formative in the development of international higher education leaders; in this case, specifically within Belize. A frame of transformative learning provides unique insight into personal and professional development as well as the mentoring process that many of these leaders seek.

In this multi-year study, several purposeful samples will be interviewed through academic contacts with international professional associations and conferences. A multi-phase qualitative research design provides not only nationally and culturally specific analyzes of these experiences, but also the ability to examine aggregate patterns and trends. At this point, the study includes Central America (Belize), Hong Kong, and China. Future research should include, Europe (France, Finland, Germany, etc.) North America (USA, and Canada), South America (Brazil, Argentina, etc.), more of Central America (Mexico or Dominican Republic), Africa, and Australia.

Research Method

Interest in international study of higher education women leaders' experiences of transformation, leadership development and mentoring required a research design which would allow for multiple sources of data, multiple layers of complex data, and exploration of phenomena, meaning and purposes. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) articulate the reason that the researcher chose qualitative research methods as the correct fit for this study.

The word *qualitative* implies and emphasizes the qualities of entities, processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined nor measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. Such researchers emphasize the value-laden nature of inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress *how* social experience is created and given meaning. In contrast, quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationship between variable, not processes (Denzin, & Lincoln, 2008, p. 14). [Italics in the original.]

Qualitative research affords the ability to explore not only observation, but meaning. It provides a firm basis and justification, a need to ask about how and why individuals pursue specific actions and how others react to them. With the many cultural, organizational and gender expectations merged into mix of women's higher education leadership, these questions and data were essential to unfold the situations and answers sought.

In this case, a higher education leadership adaption of King's LAS survey instrument guided detailed interviews during research in Belize using this qualitative research design (King, 2009). The data collection methods included a collection of historical documents prior, during and after the research trip and interviews, semi-structured interviews, participation in local and national educational, religious, and community events, and reflective journaling. This breadth of data collection provides several sources of data to develop a more complete view of interviewees' country, culture and experiences than a single approach such as interviews (Flick, 2009).

Examining Table 1 reveals the details of each data source collected and related analysis methods. Immediately following is a detailed narrative explaining the data collection choices. In addition to the individual data analyzes on each set of data, findings were analyzed among and between the data sets. In 1994, Krueger identified the central role of data reduction in qualitative analysis. This study employed many data analysis processes to explore and make meaning of the collected data. Reviewing the comprehensive list of seven processes of data analysis discussed by Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003), this study used five: data reduction, data displays, data consolidation, data comparison, data integration. This approach provided an extensive and multi-faceted analysis leading to several insights within and among the data sets which would not be available through single or isolated analysis.

Historical Documents

Originally, the researcher did not expect historical documents to be a significant portion of this study; however, while engaged in the study in Belize, she needed to access online resources to better understand cultural situations, and events referred to in the interviews. These and other historical documents provide permanent documentation of the research experience and triangulation of information to improve the validity of the research study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Flick, 2009). Many online news articles and editorials provided greater clarity in determining details recounted in the interviews, for example the sequence of events, and the time-specific political context of related institutions.

Interviews

The semi-structured interviews were planned to be the central focus of the research activity. They were based on King's LAS instrument (1997, 2003, 2005), which helps adult learners identify whether they may have experienced transformative learning and if so which stages they have encountered. The original instrument also documents what factors influenced this transformation both from within the educational process and beyond. The questions include both objective and free responses in order for researchers to

gain a fuller understanding of the participants' experience. Later research studies by King (2009) placed greater emphasis on the follow up interviews to provide depth of insight about the experiences. Based on this trend, the current study only conducted interviews. Moreover, this study examined experiences of a purposeful sample of a small population (women leaders in higher education in Belize); therefore, the large scale surveys conducted in King's prior work were unnecessary.

The interview questions were a foundation for a collegial discussion about the participants' development as higher educational leaders, their journeys, barriers and opportunities encountered and most importantly significant, formative events (which are the potential transformative learning experiences). I focused on having a conversation with these higher education leaders, which would genuinely demonstrate my respect for them and validate their experiences while maintaining an uncritical climate.

Researcher Reflective Journal

Slotnick and Janesick (2011) discuss the power of maintaining a researcher's reflective journal in qualitative research studies. In this study, reflective journaling included observations, reactions and thoughts about the experiences and interviews in Belize. In qualitative research, it is widely understood that the researcher plays a major role as an "instrument," or filter, of the data which is collected (Creswell, 2003). Given the variety of new cultural experiences, nationals invited her to participate in and the new learning related to interview research in this culture; this journal provided an enduring account of her perceptions.

Participation in Local and National Events

As planned, the research trip included participation in an international conference about higher education in Belize City, Belize. The researcher would not only observe the conference, but also participate as a presenter and discussant. Once she arrived, nationals invited the researcher to attend several additional local events, including local sports races and celebrations sponsored by the college, a graduation banquet for college students, Belizean Christian church services which included recognition of the conference, and visiting with college staff and families on campus. Participating in these events built stronger professional relationships with the Belizean nationals. This dynamic afforded shifting from solely a researcher stance of outsider to outsider-insider (Bhopal, & Myers, 2008). The benefit of this shift is that more nationals and participants shared information informally about the culture, family relationships, gender differences and expectations across social interactions, education, and employment. The shift also illustrated the readiness of this culture to embrace people interested in their nation.

Table 1. Collected Research Data Types and Details

Data Type	When Collected	Source of Data	Purpose	Analysis
Historical Documents	Prior: Oct. 2011 During trip: Nov. 2011 After: Nov. 2011	1) Online articles, editorials, publications, and organizational documents 2) Organizational websites 3) Paper based documents onsite in Belize	1) Historical background Cultural context 2) Organizational and national accounts of relevant events 3) Persistent documentation of events attended 4) Triangulation of data/perspectives/ accounts	-Thematic analysis -Trends -Historical analysis -Sequencing -Perspectives
Semi-Structured Interviews with Survey Structure and Data	During trip: Nov. 2011	Eight face to face interviews based on series of questions with college deans, presidents and faculty leaders, all audio recorded and hand written notes.	Gain detailed accounts of across a purposeful sample of participants to learn about transformational leadership and learning experiences	-Audio files transcribed -Demographics and frequencies of common experiences. -Thematic analysis -Trends -Historical analysis -Sequencing -Perspectives
Researcher Reflective Journal	During trip: Nov. 2011 After: Nov. 2011	Researcher notes about research trip: research process, cultural learning, context, and events.	Retain a detailed account of the research trip including research process, cultural learning, context, and events. Reflection and observations about experiences and interactions.	-Thematic analysis -Trends -Themes -Historical analysis -Chronological record -Sequencing -Changes in perspectives
Participation in Local and National Events	During trip: Nov. 2011	Researcher participation in many local and national events by invitation	Gain a more complete understanding of the cultural context, interpersonal relationships, social expectations, gender relationships, community organization roles.	Analysis through the research journal account

Procedures

Emails were sent to the women higher education leaders to invite them to participate in the interviews. Follow-up phone calls were made by a Belizean women leader in higher education who knew the researcher as she determined willingness and availability for interview appointments. Therefore, both the invitation and arrangements demonstrated insider acceptance and trust. The researcher conducted the 30-45 minute sessions at a central site or the participants' site. The researcher had a private driver escorting her to the locations while also discussing the history, economics and daily life of the regions they traversed.

The adapted LAS interview and consent form were the foundation for the interviews (King, 2009). The participants provided their informed consent. The researcher explained the general purpose of the study, anonymity of participation, and her desire to engage in a collegial conversation. When agreed to,

the interviews were digitally audio recorded. If at any time they wanted to speak off the record, I stopped the recorder and did not take notes. Several participants provided additional organizational materials, fliers or websites for information to supplement the interviews. The sites of the interviews included local colleges and conference events in Belize City, and at the ministry of education in the nation's capital, Belmopan.

During the interview, the researcher also recorded handwritten notes to supplement the audio recordings. These notes charted information, and included additional observations or questions. Before and after the interviews, she recorded observations and reflections in her research journal. These notes included experiences, history which had been shared, insights about culture and social interactions, and an emergent understanding of the lives of the women interviewed. After the research trip, transcribers converted the recordings into transcripts, and the researcher reviewed them for accuracy (Creswell, 2003). The researcher also assembled and chronologically organized the collected site, historical and ancillary documents, and reflective journal. Following these preliminary steps, advanced analysis began.

Participants

This study included interviewing eight women involved in different areas of higher education in Belize. As illustrated in Table 1, the interviewees ranged in age from 38 to 70, one was single, three married and the rest divorced (57.1% of marriages). Each had pursued some of their education in the USA and/or UK as transnationals. Regarding their current positions, four were senior management, two middle managers, and two managers. One was a government administrator for tertiary education (higher education in Belize), while the others were either regional or local junior college or college administrators. Their positions ranged from executive director to president, dean, campus head, director, and coordinator. At the time of the interviews, three of the participants had completed, or were completing their doctorates through online programs. Only one did not have, nor was pursuing a doctorate degree.

Table 2. *Demographics of Interview Participants*

Name	Alter Pseudonym	Age	Education	Org. Type	Title	Level of position	Marital
Ruby	Forged leader	50s	USA UK	Regional	CEO	Senior Administrator	Div
Crystal	Mentor model – Validator	50s	USA- NY UK	Regional	Head	Middle level Administrator	Mar
Janice	Impatient for Change	40s	USA- online	Regional	Dir	Manager	Div
Hope	Devoted exile Student centered	70s	USA- RI & KY	Govern- mental	Exec. Dir.	Senior Administrator	Single
Pearl	Ethical leader	60s	UK Canada	4 year college	Pres	Senior Administrator	Mar
Chantal	Proven leader	30s	USA-FL	Jr College	Dean	Middle level Administrator	Mar
Amanda	Mentor model – trainer	40s	USA- military	Regional	Faculty	Manager	Div
Jade	Leader's Mentor	60s		Jr College	Pres	Senior Administrator	Div

Research Questions by Domain

The purpose of this paper is to explore several critical questions about these international transnational women leaders' experiences to understand better (1) the development and learning process of higher education leaders, (2) the nature of the opportunities and barriers in their leadership journeys, (3) the nature of mentoring, both what has been experienced and what is needed, and (4) the emergent question of transnational professional women's experiences. This study has great potential to reveal not only how women in leadership cope with the distinct cultural and national issues relevant to their nation, but also

eventually provide the foundation for a meta-analysis across nations studied in the future. Revealing similarities and differences in processes, opportunities and barriers as well as social and cultural expectations will guide better professional preparation and development programs, mutual local and international understanding, and global collaborations.

Transformative learning. This study examines an unusual perspective regarding transformative learning research and the potential recurring and formative role of such learning in adults' lives. In addition to asking about whether transformative learning had occurred, I also asked how many times, when, their nature, and their impact on leadership development. This examination continues to unfold the path of development that leaders experience (Collins, 2005); often it takes great time and many significant events to guide leaders through their development. Research on transformative learning reveals that it is a process which occurs over time with one or more influencers (King, 2005; Kitchenham, 2008; Mezirow, 1997, 2000). This study may be able to reveal more details about the intersections of transformative learning and leadership development as it has informed fields of non-traditional higher education learning (King, 1997; Mezirow, 1978), counseling (Liimatainen et. al., 2001), faculty development (King; Kitchenham), nursing education (Cragg et. al., 2001; Liimatainen et. al.), e-learning (Cragg et. al.), and more.

Transformational leadership. Another pivotal question pursued in this research is about what, if any, experiences of transformational leadership emerge in the participants' accounts? It is hoped that examining this leadership model with the different lens of transformative learning may provide additional understanding about the origins, development and motivations of such leaders. Based on observing other women leaders and the proximity of the experiences and values of the two models, this study tests a hypothesis that there may be a relationship between critical turning points in these women's lives (transformative learning experiences perhaps) which help shape or drive their pursuit of leadership.

Furthermore, questions related to these leaders' understanding of mentoring and whether they experienced it may provide valuable direction. It is expected that these questions will reveal how these leaders view needs for support through both the opportunities and barriers of the leadership journey. From the vantage point of experienced, transformative leaders reflecting on their journey, unique and powerful insight may indicate recommendations for planning and implementing leadership programs, support groups, and mentoring programs.

Transnational. An emergent question arose from the first interviews. Each of the participants had been transnational student in either the USA or UK. Given the USA cultural context of the researcher, the specific "universal" transnational experience was unusual and unexpected. At the conclusion of the first interview, questions were added to the interview protocol to address the transnational experience, Belizean and family gender expectations, gender roles, and dominance. The additional social activities engaged in during the research trip helped provide a multitude of opportunities to observe related public, family and social behaviors and instruction on the same among young children. This topic became a significant unexpected line of inquiry and findings for this study.

Findings

Drawing from the rich collection of data and research experiences, these findings demonstrate the results of analyzing historical records, news articles, observations, interviews, researcher's reflective journal, and participation in local and national events. The analysis included consolidating and contrasting the data within individual and among different sources. Data displays assisted in revealing trends and illustrating relationships, while constant comparison coding for emergent themes revealed varied facets of the leadership experience (Creswell, 2003; Onwuegbuzie, & Teddlie, 2003). This section briefly reports the findings regarding the final five major themes of this study: historical background; transformative learning, transformational leadership, mentoring, and transnational experiences.

Belize's Historical Background

Belize is a small Latin American country, which is part of the Caribbean, but unique. Not only is English, rather than Spanish, the dominant language of the people, trade and education, but also (1) it is not an

island and (2) the people emigrated from different regions compared to most of the other islands. The music, culture, language and government of Belize stand as a distinct representative of a newly independent nation free from long-standing British Colonial rule.

In 1986, Belize became an independent nation in agreement with United Kingdom (U. S. Department of State, 2011). While maintaining a UK style government of parliament, ministries, and educational system, these same institutions distinctly communicate Belizean culture and pride today. Origins of the Belizean nationals include being held as slaves by British masters in this country. The important migration story of the Garifuna people relates that this minority group entered Belize along the southern coast in the 1790s. However, for economic and political purposes, “the British masters” purposely divided the Garifuna from the native Belizeans through “divide and conquer” strategies, lies, and rumors (Avila & Avila, 2008).

Today the population of this 8,867 square mile (22,965 square km) country is 321,115 (CIA, 2011). However, resources are scarce as the country currently has a GNP of \$2.65 billion (CIA). There are five institutions of tertiary education established in the country with several additional “junior colleges” (The Commonwealth Secretariat, 2011). Agriculture is the major industry and unemployment is at 13.1% (CIA). Literacy reports for Belize have varied widely over the years (i.e. 98 %) due to inaccurate information (Black Issues in Higher Education, 1992; Duke, 1995). The most accurate figures currently indicate a literacy rate of 76% (US Department of State, 2011).

Transformative Learning Dimensions

Regarding a better understanding of the transformative learning process, each of the interview accounts revealed that these women experienced one or more transformative learning (TL) experiences in their initial and continually development as a higher education leader. The nature of these TL experiences varied from formative to forging, and minimal danger to life threatening. Often elicited by asking them to describe “turning points” in their leadership development, the accounts varied greatly in contexts and timelines. Consider the following examples

1. Pearl survived a life-threatening hurricane in her teen years, which galvanized her will to make a better place for herself and family in the world.
2. Ruby learned about the enormous risks of being a leader with no committed followers during higher education political strife.
3. Hope was accused by the government, had death threats against her, and was exiled for her educational work with underprivileged nationals.
4. Chantal as a new leader, had to confront the college president in order to gain full control of the staff reporting to her.

Experiences such of those listed above illustrate Mezirow’s (1978, 1990) classic stages of transformative learning from disorienting dilemma to questioning, testing and consolidation of new perspectives. The new perspectives varied due to the timeframe of experiences. In some cases (Pearl, Hope, and Chantal), the leaders built resolve, character and perseverance. In these and other situations (Ruby, Hope, and Chantal), they might also have gained specific insights into leadership and leading principles.

Ruby best describes these experiences as “forging” her character, leadership and understanding of organizations. The forge metaphor is powerful in its reference to a fired kiln heating material to extreme heat and through the process making it more durable. Like these experiences, forging is not rapid; the Smith has to be patient and skilled in its execution. For many of the Belizean women leaders interviewed, successfully negotiating the fires of difficult transformative learning experiences indeed shaped their character and determination.

In many cases, multiple significant TL events guided these leaders through their development. Frequently, these experiences spread over time, providing confirmation to the expectation that adults may experience more than one TL experience (King, 2005, 2009; Mezirow, 1978, 1990). Table 2 documents the frequency and lifespan stage of the TL experiences discussed by the participants in the interviews. Certainly, it is not a comprehensive list of all of their TL experiences; however, it illustrates the experiences which participants most readily identify as significant and memorable within the scope of

their leadership development.

Table 3. Identification of TL Experiences across Lifespan Discussed in Interviews

Name	Number of TL Experiences	Childhood (0-12)	Teens (13-19)	Young Adult (20-34)	Middle Adult (35-54)	Mature Adult (55+)
Crystal	4	1	1	1	1	
Chantal	4	1	2	1		
Janice	2			1	1	
Ruby	4			2	2	
Amanda	3			2	1	
Pearl	5		1	2	2	
Jade	6+			2	4	+
Hope	6+			3	3	+

The contexts of the TL accounts shared in the interviews include corporate, military and higher education leadership careers. While most of the TL experiences identified themselves as the primary decision maker, several included participating in, watching, and understanding TL experiences of conflict (usually) their leaders experienced. The dominant time span of the TL experiences related to leadership development and disclosed by the participants were in young to middle adulthood, although 37.5% (N= 3) of the interviewees related TL experiences from childhood and teen years. A prominent observation presented in these data is that the most mature leaders had the greatest number of TL experiences and most were still experiencing them.

Opportunities. Interviewees describe several segments and points in their leadership journeys as opportunities and turning points. They relate examining their convictions, making choices to persevere or retreat, and learning to endure opposition. Rather than depicting the negative side of such circumstances, these leaders reveal that these situations enabled them to clarify their choices, values, goals and skills. The following examples briefly illustrate several different aspects of building on opportunities.

Chantal- “I went home every evening, I hope I get a good boss [for Dean], and he was the one that planted the seed and said that the only way to make sure you have a good boss is to make sure you are the boss... [Question: Who was that?] My husband! And I said it's too much trouble, too much headache, it's trouble enough to deal with the students... you know the discipline, I can handle that there, but to deal with teachers, I don't know...” [She applied and became Dean]

Pearl- [During these times of opposition...] “I had to learn to understand myself and stand for it... had to look out for welfare of others.”

Jade- “I was sitting under a coconut tree at a conference. I was holding a book, but not reading it and I was having a conversation with myself. I realized I was thinking I was in conflict and thought I needed to quit. But then I realized I had a way not to quit. It connected for me that instead I needed to talk with the staff and ask for their suggestions. I turned around 180 degrees and developed an entirely different system to work with the faculty.”

Hope- “I realized I needed to step aside from the pettiness and smallness. That once the emotions get involved in it and the back biting, that attacks get in and persist in your head. As long as I do not get on their level, I am OK. I will state my case best, but I will not fight. And I will not do you wrong even if you do me wrong.”

From the accounts above, one recognizes these women seizing opportunities to change oneself and effect change. When presented, most of these leaders picked up the challenge to stretch their thinking in new ways and move forward with new understanding with changes in responsibilities and strategies. This pattern illustrates that the leaders interviewed were proactive in developing their leadership skills and professional development choices.

Barriers. Leadership is said to be a lonely place. The interviews in this study confirm that leaders are prime targets for attacks, blame and basically finding themselves in the midst of conflict. The following excerpts illustrate common strategies the participants employed to cope with the barriers and

conflicts they encountered along the way.

Jade- “I had to realize that there was no reason she (opposing teacher) would stand up for me because of prior friendship. I had to adjust my expectations and understand. Still I was so wounded at this time.”

Hope- [Ultimate conclusion from discussion of her exile.] “[We] Overcome the barriers by offering superior education to all people, regardless of party. The party divides, not race, ethnicity or religion. In talking about it maybe it can change.”

Janice- “For example, I think of when I was really trying to change the leadership of a ... company I was working with. It required a lot of things I had to do: it was going well, but I held it too dear to me, and I felt almost indispensable... [I was thinking] ‘They need you here, they need your influence.’ Then you realize they don't need you. Even if they do, they're not acting like it, and you realize that you need to move on. [*Question, What drove that home?*] I think when I lost my job. People are always opposed to strong leaders, especially influential leaders. Still, I don't think it really drove it home then... it was years later when I saw what I was fighting for materializing [sic]. Then I thought, ‘Oh! It happened anyway!’ And, it took me a while to get over what they did to me. For me it took a year to look back and see the changes that I was fighting for happening at its own pace.”

These examples are only a fraction of the accounts shared by the women leaders interviewed regarding the barriers and conflicts they encountered. Significantly, these barriers were leveraged as opportunities for change in their lives personally and professionally. The interviewees demonstrate how they had to change their thinking, put aside personal feelings, and develop new priorities and strategies in the midst of hardship and angst.

Reading the participants' complete accounts illustrates the depth of experience, and in many cases the long time period, involved in working through some of these barriers and conflicts. Substantive, transformative change rarely happens in an instant. In these interviews, forging leaders seems to run concurrently with successfully surviving and processing barriers in personal and professional lives.

Transformational Leadership Dimensions

In response to the second research question (What, if any, experiences of transformational leadership emerge in the participants' accounts?) this study uses the unique lens of transformative learning to examine this leadership model. The expectation is that this lens may provide additional understanding about the origins, development and motivations of the women higher education leaders. Based on observing other women leaders, the proximity of the experiences and values of the two models, this study tests the hypothesis that there may be a relationship between critical turning points in these women's lives (transformative learning experiences perhaps) which contribute to or drive their pursuit of leadership.

Indeed, while research reveals that many of the women interviewed identified salient turning points, crises, and “forging” experiences, identifying a conclusive causal relationship is impossible from qualitative research. However, by their own accounts, the interviewees provide ample evidence that these experiences shaped, contributed, to and formed their leadership style, ability, and resolve. Critical events and turning points in their leadership development which they identified included

- Persisting as an agent of change despite political, verbal and governmental attacks.
- Exposing injustice, in the face of conflict.
- Standing up/taking charge, when no one else would.
- Continuing personal and professional development (That is, not being static or satisfied regardless of age or position).
- Dedicating themselves to the people they serve and the organization, instead of self-interest.
- Realizing that the welfare of others depended on their decisions and actions.

Hope: “I found out that my Indians were very bright people, and all they needed was the and a push to get an education, and we gave them that. And it started in the village [but when the accusations began] I had to stand. I fought the accusations, with the powers that be, and I

got nowhere. And I guess they were a little bit frightened... they tell me that my life was threatened. I didn't feel threatened, didn't think my life was threatened... in the end, they give me a one-way ticket...[but the children still get schooling]"

Pearl: "One of the things you need to understand when you work with people who are having difficulty, who may be upset with you, you do what is right and what is ethical, and they get upset, remember it's not about you it's about them, and not to take it on. I know it's hard, most of the faculty, you know, all the staff I work with, they would say 'but, but' and I would say, if people are upset with you, and you know you did your best, following your ethical principles, doing all the right things, then any feeling that they have is not your responsibility. It is your job to help them get through it, not become a part of it."

Ruby: "The administration had a plan to restructure, cut programs, without discussing this with the faculty that taught these programs. And I was so appalled. Now Belizeans are very... very reluctant warriors..."

_____ It showed me that if you are going to lead a group of people, first of all, you have to have a clear idea of what it is that you are leading them towards. And that idea also has to be very clear in their heads, and they push you there. And I remember saying what a lot of responsibility, because if this all falls flat...

_____ But what was energizing was that there were people that believed that they could do it because *you* believed that they could do it. And that was life changing. They believed that they could do it because I said they could."

Mentoring. Regarding mentoring, this study reveals that most of the women leaders, six of the eight, interviewed had mentors during their leadership development. (See Table 3.) Furthermore, among those interviewed and stating they had a mentor, 50% identified their mother as their sole or one of their mentors (three of the six). In addition, five of the eight women interviewed, and all except one of those with a mentor, had more than one mentor; which addresses the long held debate about whether women in higher education have mentors (Lawrence, 1986). These results provide an unexpected pattern will be explored in the Discussion given that the literature on higher education leaders, which indicates a much lower incidence of mentors for women and seldom identifies mothers (Ragin, 2010).

Table 4. *Mentoring Chart of Belizean Leaders Interviewed*

Name	Mentors			
	0	1	Several	Mother
Ruby	X			
Crystal			X	X
Janice		X		X
Hope			X	
Pearl	X			
Chantal			X	X
Amanda			X	
Jade			X	

Transnational Dimensions

Based on the unexpected, relevant, and significant findings about transnational adults in the first interview, the researcher added questions regarding such experiences immediately to the interview protocol. Not only was it determined from the interview whether the participant was transnational, but also they were asked to discuss the transnational experience, Belizean and family gender expectations, gender roles and dominance. In addition to the formal interviews, the additional social activities engaged in during the research trip were helpful in providing many opportunities to observe related public, family and social behaviors and instruction on the same among young children. This topic continues to develop a significant unexpected line of inquiry and findings for this study and future related inquiries.

The following items summarize the immediate findings related to transnational experiences in these interviews.

- 1) All the participants were transnationals. (100%)
- 2) All participants lived in another country to pursue their advanced educational degrees. (100%)
- 3) Gender roles and expectations within their community and family allowed the participants to be released from family and child rearing responsibilities (four of the eight, 50%).
- 4) The participants and their spouse (where applicable) had a great commitment to education as the means to building Belize. (100%)
- 5) Their actions were viewed as based in nationalism—husband releases wife to live in foreign country to better their homeland (where applicable, four of six, 66.7%).
- 6) For several families, their actions were grounded in their efforts for future financial advancement—husband releases wife to live in foreign country to improve their future financial standing (where applicable three of the six, 50%).
- 7) Most of the participants used language that indicated that their decision included examining the choice to live abroad as larger than their own self interest, career development or financial gain. (They were committed to grow from the experience.)

As one would expect, the experience of being a transnational included hardships and difficulties. Such examples offered by the participants included: (1) separation from their children, (2) separation from their spouses, (3) separation from their immediate family, and (4) economic strains on the family for added expenses. The findings vividly document the many decisions facing women who travel to foreign countries to pursue their advanced degrees, their spouses and families.

Discussion

This research experience and analysis resulted in a comprehensive theme of dedication, vision and empowerment which emerged and sustained. From the interviews, to conversations with adults and children at social, professional and religious events, and observations of interactions among nationals and visitors, a clear unified vision of this young country permeates. It is a vision of a country which has recently gained its independence and continues to earnestly dedicate efforts and focus on conquering its social and economic needs. Based on this research, perhaps the only value to exceed national commitment is the belief and willingness to be the person who can make the difference in the lives of all Belizeans. The readiness among these leaders to be part of the answer to create better social, economic, health, and educational programs, systems and conditions, while addressing the problems already in place. This study reveals that Belizean women leaders in higher education make family and economic sacrifices based on these values and purposes.

Transformative Learning and Leadership

In this study, the lens of TL revealed that women leaders dedicated to cultivating the human resources in their organizations are people who have experienced a range of turning points and critical decision moments in their own journey. The message shared in these accounts is stated well by one of the participants: “These experiences forged my character.”

Transformative learning proves to be a powerful lens for exploring the lives of women leaders in higher education in Belize, because it includes space to discuss the disorienting dilemma and cognitive dissonance that often is at the root of radical change in adults’ lives. The interviewees described a variety of events serving as flash points for beginning TL experiences. From confrontation with managers or colleagues/peers, to confrontation with governing bodies and leaders, they had to “stand up” and become a leader despite the consequences, or, in some cases, their desires.

Their accounts enumerate a wide range of different experiences of wrestling with deliberating the decisions and aftermath: anxiety, fear, lack of confidence, feelings of emptiness, depression, gender role conflict, social role conflict, resolve, and confidence. Typical of TL, some move through the experience

and related range of emotions, quickly, while others with different circumstances might take much more time (Cranton, 2006; King, 2005, 2009).

The result is that TL illuminates the need for women leaders in higher education to grow into their identity and confidence. There do not appear to be “shortcuts” in this process. Even when people catapulted to leadership quickly, they experienced TL through such conflicts as a leader. Moreover, many of the participants indicated that the conflicts and challenges were unexpected in focus, timing, or both. For instance, they did not anticipate the great level of opposition or conflict. In addition, most of the time, they did not expect the extremely charged emotions and political stakes.

Moreover, these women leaders did not expect the nature and severity of the conflicts and challenges they faced and which ultimately created TL experiences. Even though Belize is a highly politically interested country, in that most people talk about and many participate in politics, the women interviewed had to learn through these trials to successfully

- Recognize political agendas,
- Recognize political subtexts (less explicit than agendas),
- Navigate political agendas,
- Navigate political subtexts (less explicit than agendas),
- Use effective political strategies when confronted,
- Use effective political strategies when in the minority opinion,
- Stand against major opposition,
- Stand against multiple factions,
- Step forward and appropriate leadership while weighing the risks,
- Develop a contingent of followers when in the minority opinion, and
- Develop a contingent of followers when challenging the organization.

Mentoring

The results of this study contradict the literature regarding women of color seldom having mentors (Ragin, 2010). Moreover, the results demonstrate that much more than solely benefiting from academic advising mentoring, the participants had multiple mentors: some mentors early in their careers, others with continuing roles, and still others emerging later in their developmental journey (Ragin; Sedlacek, Benjamin, Schlosser, & Shen, 2010). In addition, they illustrated the class two factor model evidenced among academic mentors: psychosocial and career-related (Sedlacek, et. al.). Interestingly, contrary to the literature (i.e., Sedlacek, et. al.), none of the women interviewed experienced or expected racial issues in mentoring relationships; instead gender was their barrier, if any. It would seem important to share these findings with developing leaders in order that they may benefit from the support and guidance just as these women experienced through their good mentors.

Transnational Experiences

This research revealed transnational experiences as the dominant pathway for the preparation of women leaders in higher education in Belize at this time. Clearly, a major contributing factor to this pattern has been the inability to pursue an advanced degree within Belize. And among four of the young women interviewed, in recent years, online learning offered an alternate means for their advanced degrees. Nonetheless, this group of women leaders still had all experienced transnational experiences during their educational journey.

These transnational experiences illustrate and /or amplify the opportunity for gender role equity, sharing of fiscal responsibility for the family unit, and commitment to the national welfare within the Belize culture among those couples in which one pursues advanced degrees. Given the USA cultural background of the researcher, she was very surprised by this pattern and the reasons for husbands to agree for their wives to relocate internationally for extended study. In USA culture, it generally appears that overall gender social roles and gender roles are more ingrained, and less often questioned regardless of

great need. The willingness of these couples to separate for educational advancement communicates high commitment to their goals among all involved (Coles, & Fletcher, 2008; Kossek, 2005).

Moreover, this pattern persists among many of the couples. For instance, in all of the married interviewees, there continues to be sharing of power in the family and the husband's respect the wife's professional position. This pattern is confirmed among the women who divorced since their transnational education and leadership roles began, each of them had a spouse who could not accept and/or adjust to their professional role. That is, being a women leader became a source of conflict in the home. For most of the divorced women, they describe the conflict as the husband not wanting to talk about the wife's difficulties or accomplishments at work. It appears that when a partnership perspective- sharing responsibility for the family fiscal, political or educational advancement- is sustained through transnational educational periods into leadership employment, those couples successfully navigated their marriages (Kossek, 2005; Lee, 2011; Lee, & Shaw, 2011).

Recommendations and Future Research

Recommendations

Recognizing leadership as a journey of experiences which develops insight, resolve, confidence, and skills provides a continuing learning perspective. Rather than a legendary "meteoric rise to power," the more frequent path is one of making decisions as best able, learning from conflict, and through it all forging a unique leadership character for oneself. Questions therefore arise as to whether our current strategies effectively prepare people for leadership with such a journey in mind. Do we describe the conflicts which will be encountered and the need to learn from experiences? Do we communicate fully that each person has to develop and forge their own leadership character, style and convictions through difficult experiences? The results of this study calls for us to examine our leadership, and mentoring programs across these dimensions.

In addition, the nature and severity of the conflicts and challenges which created these TL experiences need to be better introduced to our future and current leaders. Considering reading, discussing and debating the histories and conflicts of other transformative leaders in higher education would be most beneficial. Moreover, in Belize, discussing political agendas, strategies and subtexts seem to be much needed for women based on the interviewees.

Regarding transnational educational experiences, fewer couples may face this decision in Belize in the future with the availability of quality online learning. However, all need to learn more about the reality that sharing of responsibility in the family is not just for a short period, but as one advances and serves in leadership. Communicating this message early on might help families navigate this issue better.

Future Research

This study indicates three major areas of future research: transformative learning in leadership, transnational education of leaders, and international studies. This study reveals that there is great merit in pursuing research regarding TL experiences of women leaders in higher education in Belize, and beyond, in order to learn how best to (1) understand their journeys, (2) support them, and (3) prepare future leaders. Moreover, as studies continue in Belize and beyond (see below), fuller comprehension and detail of a TL informed leadership model for women in higher education may emerge.

An indicated area of future research is about successful strategies developed or used by transnational women leaders in higher education. Specifically, future research may determine if transnational experiences cultivate specific and different perspectives, characteristics and patterns yet determined. Also, research related to educational systems and gender roles would be very helpful in determining the impact of transnational education on women leaders and lay the groundwork for additional studies. Based on these results, it would be helpful to learn how transnational education may best prepare women leaders in higher education within and among developing nations. These results could help nations and individuals strategize for the investment of resources and policies to support or guide the experiences in the efforts of building national leadership.

Continuing this study in other countries will provide more insight into not only TL in leadership development, mentoring, and transnationalism, but also provide a basis to compare and contrast experiences, systems, benefits and barriers. The many elements of culture being so diverse and far-reaching assures that there will be many differences among such studies. Based on this first study, unexpected findings are now anticipated, although their nature is by definition unknown. Researchers could prepare an informative meta-analysis after a sampling of countries across world hemispheres and continents. With this goal in mind, in 2012 analysis of research conducted in China and Hong Kong is in progress; while additional research in France will commence shortly.

Conclusion

This qualitative study provides a case study of the experiences of women leaders in higher education Belize. Through the analysis of interviews of eight women leaders, historical documents, the researcher's reflective journal, and participation in social, religious and community events, the researcher developed an in-depth understanding of the perspectives and roles of these leaders. Unexpectedly, the high incidence of transnational education among the participants created new opportunities for inquiry about gender roles and social expectations. The TL lens afforded a powerful means to examine the leadership journeys of the participants demonstrating that leaders are forged, not graduated or born. Moreover, these TL experiences included many extended instances of conflict, hardship, persecution, and challenges which were unpleasant and threatening. Given that leaders consider these TL experiences as essential turning points when they reflect on their developmental journeys, formal and informal leadership programs should prepare their participants for such encounters.

The resilience, dedication and commitment of these Belizean women leaders in higher education are inspiring. In the midst of sometimes-petty political conflict, the accounts remind us of the essential explicit and implicit purposes of higher education in countries seeking to gain their fiscal foundation. These Belizean leaders inspire the highest levels of commitment to making the right choice and cultivating dedication to the advancement of others.

Acknowledgement: The author appreciates the time and transparency offered by the interview participants. Ruby, Pearl, Jade, Crystal, Janice, Hope, Chantal, and Amanda, you know who you are; thank you for teaching me about leadership and selfless commitment.

References

- Adams, E. A. (2009). Voices from two sides of the Atlantic: Women's leadership in Finland and the United States. In A. W. Wiseman, *Educational leadership: Global contexts and international comparisons*. (pp. 221-243). Bingley, UK: Emerald.
- Avila, J. F., & Avila, T. A. (2008). *Garifuna world*. Providence, RI: Milenio Associates Publishing.
- Berquist, W. (2007). Leadership at the intersect: New forms of governance to oversee new form of higher education. In W. T. Anderson, J. A. Dator, & M. Tehranian (Eds.). *Learning to seek: Globalization, governance, and the futures of higher education* (pp. 82- 100). New Brunswick, N.J: Transaction Publishers.
- Bhopal, K., & Myers, M. (2008). *Insiders, outsiders and others: Gypsies and identity*. Hatfield, UK: University of Hertfordshire Press.
- Black Issues in Higher Education. (1992). Belize: Emphasizing education in the push for productivity. *Black Issues in Higher Education*, 9, 22-29
- Budhwar, P. S., Saini, D. S., & Bhatnagar, J. (2006). Women in management in the new economic environment: The case of India. In V. Yukongdi, & J. Benson (Eds.). *Women in Asian management*. (pp. 41-50). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Brock, S. E. (2010). Measuring the importance of precursor steps to transformative learning. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 60(2), 122-142
- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). (2011). *The world fact book: Belize*. Retrieved from

- <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bh.html>
- Coles, A., & Flechter, A.-M. (2008). *Gender and family among transnational professionals*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Collins, J., C. (2005). *Good to great and the social sectors*. New York, NY: Harper Business.
- The Commonwealth Secretariat. (2011). The Commonwealth Network: Belize Higher Education Institutions. Retrieved from http://www.commonwealth-of-nations.org/Belize/Education/Universities_and_Colleges
- Cooper, J. E. (2007). Glass slippers and glass ceilings: Gender equity, governance and transformation in higher education. In W. T. Anderson, J. A. Dator, & M. Tehranian (Eds.). *Learning to seek: Globalization, governance, and the futures of higher education* (pp. 69-81). New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers.
- Cragg, C.E., Plotnikoff, R.C., Hugo, K., & Casey, A. (2001) Perspective transformation in RN-to-BSN distance education. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 40(7)
- Cranton, P. (1994). *Understanding and promoting transformative learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Cranton, P. (2006). *Understanding and promoting transformative learning: A guide for educators of adults*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Creswell, J. (2003). *Research design* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dean, D. R., Bracken, S. J., & Allen, J. K. (2008). *Council for Christian Colleges and Universities Women's Leadership Development Institute (WLDI) outcomes assessment*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2008). *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (3rd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Duke, J. J. (1995). *The political influence on literacy in Belize since 1946*. (Doctoral dissertation, University of South Florida, Tampa, Fl.) Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations AAT 9528018
- Flick, U. (2009). *An introduction to qualitative research* (4th ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Guzman, J. A. (2001). *Perspective transformation among adult Puerto Rican learners in higher education*. Santa Ana, CA: California Coast University.
- Harris, L. (2009). *Unwritten rules: What women need to know about leading in today's organizations*. Charleston, SC: Booksurge.
- King, K. P. (1997). *Examining learning activities that promote perspective transformation among adult learners in Higher Education*. (Doctoral dissertation, Widener University, Chester, PA.)
- King, K. P. (2002). *Keeping pace with technology: Educational technology that transforms. Vol. 1*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- King, K. P. (2003). *Keeping pace with technology: Educational technology that transforms. Vol. 2*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- King, K. P. (2005). *Bringing transformative learning to life*. Malabar, FL: Krieger.
- King, K. P. (2009). *Handbook of evolving research of transformative learning*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Kitchenham, A. (2006). Teachers and technology: A transformative journey. *Journal of Transformative Education* 4(3), 202-225.
- Kossek, E. E., & Lambert, S. J. (2005). *Work and life integration: Organizational, cultural, and individual perspectives*. Mahwah, N.J: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Kuusipalo, J. (1999). Finnish women in politics. In *Women in Finland*. (pp. 55-78). Helsinki, Finland: Otava Publishing.
- Krueger, A. R. (1994). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lawrence, K. A. (1986). My key to the men's room: Mentor and protégé relationships in business and professional organizations. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Central States Speech Association (Indianapolis, IN, April 4-6, 1985).
- Lee, J. (2011). Introduction. In J. Lee, & S. M. Shaw, *Women worldwide: Transnational feminist perspectives on women*. (pp. 1-14). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

- Lee, J., & Shaw, S. M. (2011). *Women worldwide: Transnational feminist perspectives on women*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Liimatainen, L., Poskiparta, M., Karhila, P., & Sjögren, A. (2001). The development of reflective learning in the context of health counseling and health promotion during nurse education. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 34, 648–658. doi: 10.1046/j.1365-2648.2001.01794.x
- Mezirow, J. (1978). *Education for perspective transformation: Women's re-entry programs in community colleges*. New York, NY: Teacher's College, Columbia University.
- Mezirow, J. & Associates. (1990). *Fostering critical reflection in adulthood*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. & Associates. (2000). *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Monaghan, C. (2010). Management and leadership. In C. Kasworm, A. Rose, & J. Ross-Gordon (Eds.). *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education* (2010 ed.). (pp.177-188). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ng, C. W., & Chakrabarty, A-S. (2006). Women managers in Hong Kong: Personal and political agendas. In V. Yukongdi, & J. Benson (Eds.). *Women in Asian management*. (pp. 25-40). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Nowicka, M. (2006). *Transnational professionals and their cosmopolitan universes*. Frankfurt, Germany: Campus Verlag.
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Teddlie, C. (2003). A framework for analysing data in mixed methods research. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.) *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research* (pp. 351-383). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Parreñas, R. S. (2005). *Children of global immigration: Transnational families and gendered woes*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Pylkkänen, A. (1999). Finnish understandings of equality. In *Women in Finland*. (pp. 24-38). Helsinki, Finland: Otava Publishing.
- Rai, K. B., & Critzer, J. W. (2000). *Affirmative action and the university: Race, ethnicity, and gender in higher*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Robbins, S. P., Judge, T. A., Odendaal, A., & Roodt, G. (2009). *Organizational behavior: Global and Southern African perspectives* (2nd ed.). Pinelands, Cape Town: Pearson South Africa.
- Sedlacek, W. E., Benjamin, E., Schlosser, L. Z., & Shen, H-B. (2010). In Allen, T. D., & Eby, L. T. (Eds.). *Mentoring in academia: Considerations for diverse populations*. In *The Blackwell handbook of mentoring*. (pp. 259-280). New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Slotnick, R. C., & Janesick, V. J. (2011). Conversations on method: Deconstructing policy through the researcher reflective journal. *The Qualitative Report*, 16(5), 1352-1360. Retrieved from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR16-5/slotnick.pdf>
- U. S. Department of State. (2011). Background note: Belize. Retrieved from, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1955.htm>
- Westrick, J. M., & Miske, S. J. (2009). Leadership for innovative Omani schools in the 21st Century. In A. W. Wiseman, A. W. *Educational leadership: Global contexts and international comparisons*. (pp. 1-47). Bingley, UK: Emerald.
- Whitelaw, C., Sears, M., & Campbell, K. (2004). Transformative learning in a faculty professional development context. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 2(1), 9-27.

Empowering Women Through Microfinance: Microfinance Interventions in Ghana and South Africa

Devin W. Bercaw

Illinois Department of Employment Security, Office of Service Delivery. IL, USA

[Abstract] Female disempowerment is a major problem throughout the world. Disempowered women face a variety of economic, social, and physical ills, which erodes their self-image, limits their ability to make independent choices, and leaves them powerless against abuse. A disproportionate number of African women find themselves in these desperate circumstances and require immediate aid. This research was conducted to determine whether microfinance interventions targeting women in Ghana and South Africa were effective at meeting several female empowerment goals. An evaluation of secondary data revealed significant, positive improvements on all five female empowerment indicators being measured. This is incredibly encouraging for disempowered women in Africa and throughout the world. However, although women involved in both interventions saw substantial increases in female empowerment, the majority of them continued to rely on their husbands for financial support. Thus, future interventions should consider increasing women's access to larger microloans so they can maximize their business profits and become more self-reliant. It is also vital that future interventions establish stronger, cross-sector collaborations and consider how other factors (such as geographic location, village design, education, and local laws) might contribute to the severe disempowerment of women.

[Keywords] empowering women; microfinance; Ghana and South Africa; African woman; independent; poverty; violence; oppression

Introduction

Women in Africa are disproportionately affected by poverty, violence, and oppression. African women have been denied education and health care, some have had their economic and social rights restricted, and others have been exposed to more severe trauma, such as domestic violence, genital mutilation, rape, and genocide (African Union, 2004, pp. 1-8). According to the African Union (2004), "women's powerlessness, poverty and lack of decent employment opportunities" (p. 2) have contributed significantly to the number of South African women exposed to violence and diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.

Local, national, and global organizations, including the United Nations (UN), have taken actions to address the worldwide disempowerment of women, but they have failed to adequately address female disempowerment in Africa. This punctuates the need for more creative solutions that also address poverty, which is often an underlying cause of female disempowerment. Microfinance, or the provision of small loans to the poorest people of the world, has been shown to be a useful tool for alleviating poverty and meeting female empowerment goals (Grameen Bank, 2010). Microfinance interventions, which narrow their focus to specific groups of people, have also proven beneficial to women. The present study evaluates two such interventions, which targeted women in Ghana and South Africa. The resulting analysis will provide a framework for applying similar microfinance interventions to other groups of disempowered women in the future.

Historical Context

Female Empowerment. The Chronic Poverty Research Centre (2008) describes four types of power poor women often lack: power to, power with, power over, and power within. They describe "power to" as the ability to make meaningful life choices, "power with" as the ability to be socially active, "power over" as the ability to confront others, and "power within" as self-respect and confidence (2-3). Kim et al (2007) have adapted this model to exclude "power over" (1796), but the present study has expanded it to more thoroughly measure female empowerment and overall well-being. In order to improve overall well-being, women must be given the tools to advance financially, socially, physically, and emotionally. "The

concept of well-being has been perceived in two ways. First, it consists of material (economic) needs such as food, housing, productive resources and other assets for human survival. Second, it encompasses non-material elements, including psychological and spiritual dimensions such as the absence of physical or verbal violence and happiness in a marriage” (Arku, 2007, p. 3). Well-being correlates directly to empowerment. Women who are empowered are healthier, happier, more economically independent, and less prone to discrimination and violence. They also contribute more to civil society, their local and national economies, and an overall reduction in poverty and conflict (Kim et al., 2007, pp. 1794-1802).

Poverty itself is a very strong indicator of female disempowerment. “Women and girls may experience poverty in non-poor households, or heightened poverty in already poor households, due to the unequal distribution of resources and decision-making power between males and females in the household” (Chronic Poverty Research Centre, 2008, p. 2). Many poor women are limited in their ability to make choices because of financial restrictions they endure as a result of their unpaid roles as caregivers and household caretakers. Their income-generating activities are also limited, which forces them to rely on men (typically spouses) for income, which inhibits their ability to make independent decisions and leave abusive relationships.

Microfinance and Women. Statistics from the International Labour Organization (ILO) show that 70% of the world’s poor are women—a group that Zarina Geloo (2008) says is severely disadvantaged when it comes to obtaining credit (pp. 26-29). This is especially true in African nations. Studies have shown microfinance (also known as microcredit and microlending) to be a useful tool for lifting people out of poverty. “Microfinance offers poor people access to basic financial services, such as loans, savings, money [transfers] and microinsurance” (CGAP, 2010) and microfinance institutions (MFI’s) provide these types of services (Kiva, 2010). This is important because it has been shown that women gain economic, social, physical, and mental empowerment when they are lifted from poverty and they have proven to be especially good candidates for small loans (often demonstrating up to a 99.7% loan repayment rate) (Kim et al., 2007, p. 1797).

Many microfinance programs and institutions have evolved, among which the “group” and “individual” methods have been shown to be very useful for empowering women. The group method follows the basic tenets of the “Grameen” method, which relies on group solidarity and peer pressure to incentivize loan repayment. Microloans are distributed to small groups of people or villages, often through partnerships between commercial banks and non-governmental organizations (NGO’s). Bank or NGO workers contextualize the needs of their members and often complement their microfinance services with social education programs.

Many organizations also utilize the individual microfinance method to provide microloans to individual borrowers. Some of these organizations, such as Kiva International (2010), raise money to empower women through microfinance by soliciting donations online. These donations are then used by MFI’s to provide microfinance services to women (Grameen Bank, 2010).

The following are additional organizations providing more information on the services:

- Kiva International: www.kiva.org
- Women for Women International: www.womenforwomen.org
- World Vision Micro: www.worldvisionmicro.org

Microfinance has also evolved to include microfinance “interventions,” which target specific groups of disadvantaged people (such as people in a specific village or city). A number of these interventions have focused on women living in poverty because poverty-stricken women are far more likely to face abuse than women living in more stable financial conditions. However, very few interventions have focused on African women, who are disproportionately affected by poverty and violence (African Union, 2004, p. 50). Therefore, it is vitally important that future interventions target women living in Africa.

African Women. Oppression and violence against women has been sanctioned—even perpetrated—by the very governments trusted with protecting the rights of their women (Clinton 2003, p. 269). Women in Africa suffer tremendously from violence, partly because “the cultural values and norms of most African societies have a high tolerance for violence towards women and an abuse of their human rights” (African Union, 2004, p. 50), and partly because of severe poverty in Africa. Millions of African

have been exposed to household conflict, violence, and extraordinarily high HIV/AIDS infection rates over the last few decades and hundreds of thousands of African women have been raped in recent years. This type of violent physical oppression, along with limited access to income-generating activities and social norms and cultural values that perpetuate gender inequality, severely limits the power of African women and their ability to make independent life choices and leave abusive relationships (Chronic Poverty Research Centre, 2008, pp. 2-3).

Sovereign states, international organizations, and other nonprofits and NGO's have often proven incapable of dealing with many of the world's problems. Africa is a stark example. Official police estimates show there were 55,114 rapes in South Africa between 2004 and 2005 and a South African woman is killed by an intimate partner every six hours (Womankind Worldwide, 2010). Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) involves "physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, or economic abuse committed by a person against a spouse..." (Chonya & Tolosi, 2009, p. 304). IPV exposure has been linked to increased risk of HIV/AIDS infection in women and data from South Africa reflects this. A survey of 1,366 South African women shows that victims of domestic violence are "48% more likely to be infected with HIV than those who [are] not" (UNIFEM, 2010) and of the estimated 5.7 million South Africans living with HIV/AIDS, 57% are women (Womankind Worldwide, 2010).

One in three Ghanaian women are beaten, slapped, or otherwise physically abused by previous or current partners. In Ghana, like many other places in Africa, women are often considered the property of men. This has caused them to accept punishment in the form of violence and discrimination (GSHRDC, 2010). This is partially because Ghanaian culture portrays violence against women as a "private matter" that should be addressed informally, and because rape is legal in Ghana, which leaves women virtually powerless against violence. Ghanaian women are also exposed to economic abuse because Ghanaian civil law fails to protect them from the deprivation of basic necessities, such as food and shelter (Cantalupo et al., 2006, pp. 2-4).

In the Nuba Mountain region of Sudan, the application of Sharia law has eroded women's rights so much that "enslaved Nuba women have been subjected to brutal beatings, forced marriages, and concubinage," as well as rape and torture (McFarland, 2008, p. 21). They have also been denied basic necessities, such as food, clothing, water, and access to education and economic opportunities. The Sudanese government's policies have promoted severe discrimination and violence against women as part of a male-dominated effort "to push women to the periphery of the political, social, and economic sphere" (McFarland, 2008, p. 21).

In one weekend in 2004, military personnel in the South Kivu province of the DRC raped roughly 16,000 women (Kavanagh, 2010) and "since 2005, more than 32,000 cases of rape and sexual violence have been registered in South Kivu alone" (Holmes, 2007). Military personnel in the South Kivu province of the DRC raped more than 8,000 women again in 2009 (Kavanagh, 2010). These numbers grossly underestimate the problem as many cases go unreported (Economic Commission for Africa 2010, p. 68) and women in these areas are so disempowered they have no means of escaping the carnage. In many African countries, rape has even become increasingly accepted as a part of daily life. Between 2004 and 2008, rapes by civilians in eastern Congo increased from less than 1% to 38%. The DRC is among the poorest countries in the world and extreme poverty has also contributed to prolonged intrastate conflict and incomprehensible violence against women there (Kavanagh, 2010). Clearly, much more needs to be done to help women living in Africa.

Microfinance Interventions in Africa. The Fiaseman Rural Bank Micro-finance Scheme (FRBMS intervention) in Ghana and the Intervention with Microfinance for AIDS and Gender Equity (IMAGE intervention) in South Africa specifically targeted disempowered women living in poor, African nations (Kim et al., 2007, pp. 1794-1802; Arku & Arku, 2009, pp. 200-213). Women in these two countries were targeted for a number of reasons. "In Ghana, socio-cultural practices and traditional beliefs perpetuate the subordination of women to men" (UNIFEM, 2010). In order to examine the impact the intervention had on gender roles, household finances and economic stability, education, and overall household well-being, Cynthia and Frank Arku collected a variety of data from men and women who participated in the intervention (Arku & Arku, 2009, p. 202).

The IMAGE intervention used microfinance to address female empowerment and IPV in South Africa. Economic underdevelopment and gender inequalities are risk factors for IPV and HIV/AIDS infection. According to the African Union, “women's powerlessness, poverty and lack of decent employment opportunities” (African Union 2004, p. 2) have contributed significantly to the disproportionate number of South African women exposed to violence and diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. Both the FRBMS and IMAGE interventions have been successful at meeting several female empowerment goals in Africa.

Methodology

FRBMS Intervention. The FRBMS intervention was based on the group model of microfinance and provided microloans to small groups of men and women consisting of 5-20 business owners. A microfinance partnership was created between the Fiaseman Rural Bank in Ghana (a private bank that already had existing microfinance services) and Care International, a US-based NGO. The partnership established loans with a maximum amount of US \$500 at an interest rate of 34% (higher than conventional loans in order to cover the extra costs of securing loans for rural people).

The intervention conducted a study of five participating communities within the Bogoso area of the Wassa District of Ghana, which included the communities of Coboldkrom, Adwinpa, Agyeikrom, Ayensukrom No. 2, and Insu, from which 40 male-headed households were sampled. The researchers defined a household as “two or more related or non-related persons living in the same compound and who combine resources to support their living” and “all women in the male-headed households were married to the male head” (Arku & Arku, 2009, p. 202). The researchers collected a variety of data, which combined interviews, focus groups, and the use of secondary data. They identified whether households involved in the intervention experienced a change in gender roles and if the intervention successfully empowered women, while benefitting men and children (Arku & Arku, 2009, pp. 201-202).

IMAGE Intervention. The IMAGE intervention utilized microfinance and participative education as a means of empowering poor women in the rural, Limpopo province of South Africa. It provided microfinance services to 430 of the poorest women in the province and utilized 430 matched control participants for comparison. Based on the group model of microfinance, the Small Enterprise Foundation (a South African NGO) distributed nearly 1750 small loans to groups of five of the poorest women (ranging in age from 18-96) in the poorest villages in the Limpopo province between September 2001 and March 2005. The researchers utilized a cluster-randomized design and collected data from both groups in three cohorts before and after the intervention, utilizing in-person interviews that were conducted by trained interviewers (Kim et al., 2007, pp.1794-1797).

Women involved in the intervention were required to develop business plans and meet every two weeks at loan centers (consisting of approximately 40 women) to repay their loans, apply for more credit, and discuss their business plans. For individual groups to qualify for more credit, all five members had to repay their loans. The intervention also included a social education component, called the Sisters-for-Life program, which was administered by a South African NGO. It included two phases of training over a 12-month period and educated men, women, and youth about violence against women and gender equality.

The Present Study

Individuals, organizations, and governments can use microfinance to make a difference in the lives of disempowered women. African women are especially prone to disempowerment for a number of reasons, which is why this research focuses on their immediate need. The present study will provide a thorough evaluation of secondary data obtained by researchers involved in the FRBMS and IMAGE interventions. This data will be used to draw conclusions about their effectiveness at meeting several female empowerment goals. The present study will show that microfinance is an effective tool for empowering African women and its analysis will serve as a framework for future interventions. The accompanying recommendations should help future interventions achieve even greater success, which will benefit disempowered women throughout the world.

Variables. The present study utilizes the Female Empowerment Model (FEM) to measure female

empowerment against five indicators: financial, social, physical, emotional, and decisional (Figure 1).

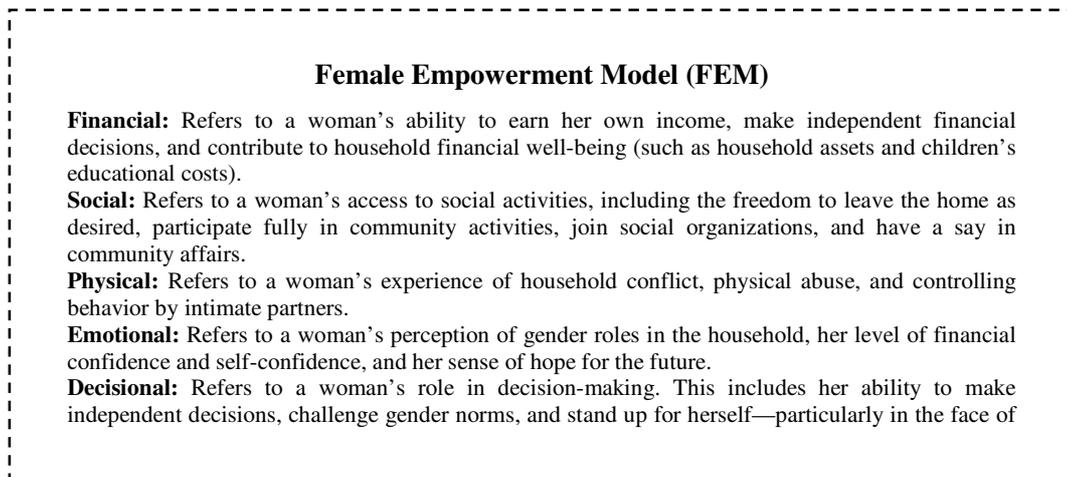


Figure 1. Female Empowerment Model (fem). (Adapted from Chronic Poverty Research Centre. 2008, pp. 2-3).

FEM has been adapted from the Chronic Poverty Research Centre model, but has been expanded to more thoroughly measure female empowerment as it relates to the FRBMS and IMAGE interventions. FEM suggests that empowered women should have the following: the ability to earn their own income and make independent financial decisions; the ability to participate in social activities (such as community events and leisure activities); freedom from physical and emotional abuse—including household conflict and IPV; and self-confidence and a feeling that their spouses value them. These factors contribute to their ability to make independent choices, challenge gender norms, and leave abusive relationships.

Limitations/Reliability of Data. The present study focuses on microfinance interventions in Africa. While this somewhat limits its scope and applicability, it also adds to the limited body of research in this area. Additionally, this study's framework and recommendations, as well as the FEM, can be applied to similar interventions and data under most circumstances when context is taken into consideration.

The present study had no control over original sampling methods, study design, and interview questions. However, both interventions utilized control groups, which helps satisfy concerns about the reliability of the data being used. While there is limited information regarding the methods used to select the FRBMS study sample, the researchers employed a variety of data collection tools, including in-person interviews, focus groups, and participant observation, which supports the validity of their data. Also, a team of experienced, graduate and doctoral-level researchers conducted the IMAGE intervention and their study was registered with the National Institutes of Health (Kim et al., 2007, p. 1796). They pair-matched and randomly allocated villages in South Africa to receive the intervention and utilized experimental and control groups (Kim et al., 2006, p. 1973). Their selection methods ensure little or no selection bias. Also, "all interviews were conducted by female interviewers who had received 4 weeks of intensive training..." (Kim et al., 2007, p. 1796), which ensures consistent, reliable data collection. Additionally, the present study does not thoroughly examine how culture and legal statute might affect microfinance interventions, which is a component that might be more specifically addressed in future research. It is likely that areas with cultures and statutes not supportive of women's rights are less conducive to microfinance interventions. Perhaps, though, it is these areas that are in the most desperate need of intervention.

Lastly, the present study did not specifically address violence against women employed as a tool of warfare. This is a major problem in Africa. Microfinance interventions in places like Darfur are likely to fail until these areas are ripened for change. Perhaps microfinance partnerships between organizations that advocate for women's rights (such as the UN) and organizations that provide microfinance services and social education programs could produce successful results under these circumstances. Additional

research in this area is essential.

Results and analysis

FRBMS Intervention. All 40 households sampled in the FRBMS intervention responded during the data collection phase. Thus, the sample size was 40 households with a 100% response rate. Based on FEM, female respondents saw positive improvements on all five female empowerment indicators being measured.

Financial. Female respondents saw an overall increase in their income, which allowed them to contribute more to household needs. They also contributed substantially more to their children's educations. The number of women paying 50% or more of their children's education costs increased by 7.5% during the intervention (Arku & Arku, 2009, p. 207).

Social. Female respondents increased their ability to travel for extended periods of time, as well as interact with friends and family in social settings during the intervention. They were able to go on trips of up to a few days to travel to cities to purchase goods for their microfinance work. While they were away, husbands took care of the children and household, which is a luxury the women did not have prior to the intervention. They also had more leisure time and engaged in social activities without having to work, although their workdays were as much as two hours longer than prior to the intervention (Arku & Arku, 2009, p. 203).

Physical. It is unknown whether women from the sample saw a reduction in IPV, as it was not a specific focus of the original study. However, the majority of Ghanaian households include extended family members and the households involved in the FRBMS sample ranged from 7-25 people. Consequently, the researchers focused on conflict levels between spouses, between parents and children, and between parents and their extended families. The researchers saw a dramatic reduction in conflict levels between spouses during the intervention (see Figure 2). 70% of female respondents indicated there was "not much conflict" between spouses in their household during the intervention. They also reported a 27.5% reduction in "a lot of conflict" in the household and a 5% increase in "no conflict" whatsoever.

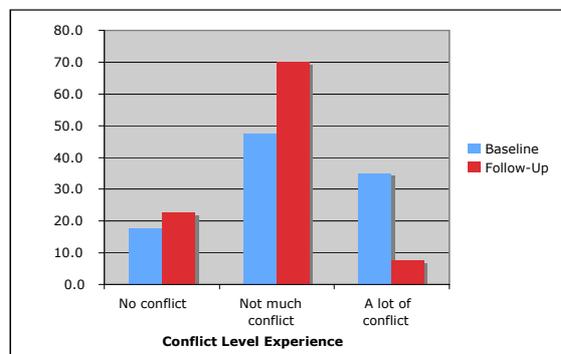


Figure 2. Conflict levels between spouses

There was a more dramatic reduction in conflict levels between parents and their children during the intervention (see Figure 3). Overall, 67.5% of female respondents reported there was "not much conflict" between parents and children in the household during the intervention, as opposed to 27.5% who reported the same thing prior to the intervention. They also reported a 42.5% reduction in "a lot of conflict" in the household and a 2.5% increase in "no conflict" whatsoever.

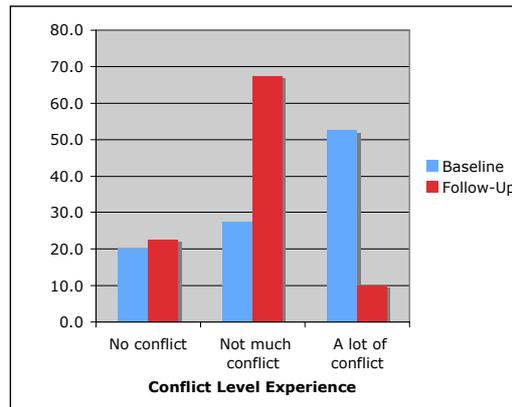


Figure 3. Conflict levels between parents and their children

However, conflict levels between spouses and their extended families increased during the intervention (see Figure 4). Overall, the number of female respondents indicating there was “not much conflict” between spouses and extended families in the household dropped from 65% to 7.5% from baseline to follow-up and the number of female respondents indicating there was “a lot of conflict” in the household increased from 0% to 50%. Conversely, a small number of female respondents indicated a 7.5% increase in “no conflict” whatsoever. The first two statistics directly contradict the assumption that microfinance interventions reduce conflict in households. However, other statistics point to an overall reduction in conflict in households participating in the FRBMS sample.

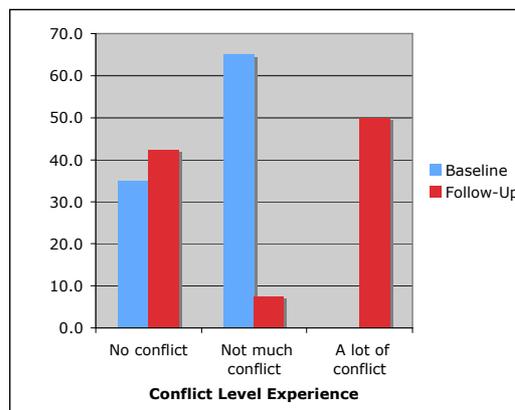


Figure 4. Conflict levels between spouses and their children (Adapted from Arku 2007, pp. 10-12).

Lastly, female respondents did not see a difference in their reproductive choices during the intervention. This was because children were needed to complete tasks associated with their microfinance work, not because men forced decisions upon them. Children—especially girls—handled 25% of the new responsibilities created by their microfinance work (Arku & Arku, 2009, p. 208).

Emotional. The majority of female and male respondents appreciated the changes in gender roles that took place during the intervention. This was partly due to the fact that the women’s microfinance efforts helped provide for their families. Male respondents (husbands of women involved in the intervention) agreed that their wives’ microfinance work reduced anxiety about providing for their families and contributed to the overall well-being of the household (Arku & Arku, 2009, p.208).

Decisional. Female respondents increased their options and gained decision-making power during the intervention (see Table 1). Prior to the intervention, they were confined mostly to housekeeping and economic activities. During the intervention, men took on far more household responsibilities and women took part in more economic decisions. Prior to the intervention, 20% of female respondents were involved

only in housekeeping activities, 20% were involved only in economic activities, and 60% were involved in a combination of the two. After the intervention, 100% of female respondents were involved in both activities. Also, husbands were 20% more likely to take sole responsibility of housekeeping activities and were more willing to give up some of their economic decision-making power during the intervention.

Table 1. Changes in the Levels of Participation in Household Decisions

Activity Type	Wives' Decisions				Husbands' Decisions			
	Baseline		Follow-Up		Baseline		Follow-Up	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Housekeeping Only	8	20.0	0	0.0	12	30.0	20	50.0
Economic Activities Only	8	20.0	0	0.0	13	32.0	12	30.0
Housekeeping & Economic Activities	24	60.0	40	100.0	15	37.5	8	20.0
Total	40	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0

(Adapted from Arku & Arku 2009, p. 206)

Additionally, female respondents significantly increased their involvement in resource allocation during the intervention. They said they had become more like “husband and wife” than before (Arku & Arku, 2009, p. 207), meaning more allocation decisions were made jointly during the intervention. Joint allocation decisions increased by at least 20% from baseline to follow-up and “the gap between husbands’ and wives’ participation in decisions about the allocation of household resources [was] reduced dramatically” (Arku & Arku, 2009, p. 207).

IMAGE Intervention. The IMAGE intervention provided microfinance services to 430 of the poorest women in the rural, Limpopo province of South Africa and utilized 430 matched control participants in three cohorts for comparison. Loan repayment rates were 99.7% and totaled over US \$290,000.00. 99% of intervention participants and 97% of control participants were interviewed at baseline and 90% and 84% (respectively) were interviewed again at follow-up. *Financial.* Female respondents increased their financial standing after the IMAGE intervention (see Table 2). Women who had household assets greater than 2000 rand increased by 10% from baseline to follow-up. Follow-up data also shows that 65.3% of female respondents spent more than 200 rand/year on shoes and clothing after the intervention, although no data was available to show whether this represents an increase or decrease from baseline. Additionally, female respondents who had informal savings group membership increased by 11.7% during the intervention.

Table 2. Household Assets and Expenditures (Adapted from Kim et al., 2007, p. 1800)

Categories	Baseline		Follow-Up	
	No. of Respondents	% of Responses	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Household Assets > 2000 rand	203/421	48.2	223/383	58.2
Expenditure on Shoes/Clothing > 200 rand/year	N/A	N/A	246/377	65.3
Had Savings Group Membership	104/425	24.5	140/387	36.2

Social. Female respondents reported significant social empowerment improvements after the intervention (see Figure 5). They increased their membership in social groups to 71.2%, which represents a 44.6% increase from baseline to follow-up. This is one of the most substantial positive increases on any one of the female empowerment indicators. Female respondents were also 34.7% more likely to take part in collective action activities during the intervention.

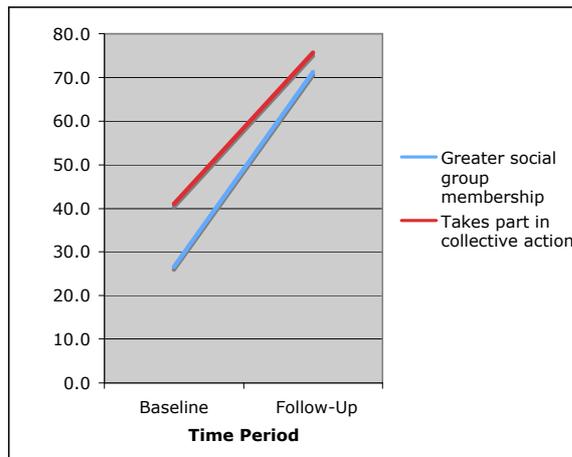


Figure 5. Social group membership and collective action (Adapted from Kim et al., 2007, p. 1800)

Physical. On the whole, female respondents experienced past year IPV 5.5% less after participating in the intervention (see Table 3). This represents a roughly 50% reduction in IPV. They also saw a 1% decrease in controlling behavior by partners.

Table 3. Experience of IPV and Controlling Behavior by Partners (Adapted from Kim et al., 2007, p. 1800)

Categories	Baseline		Follow-Up	
	No. of Respondents	% of Responses	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Experience of Past Year IPV	22/193	11.4	17/290	5.9
Experienced Controlling Behavior by Partners	67/193	34.7	95/282	33.7

Emotional. 72% of female respondents reported greater feelings of financial confidence after the intervention, which represents a 26.5% increase from baseline (see Table 4). They also reported that their partners were more supportive of them and they believed their partners valued their contributions to the household more than they did prior to the intervention. 72.6% of these women also reported feelings of greater self-confidence after the intervention.

Table 4. Self-financial Confidence, Supportive Partner Relationship, and Perceived Contribution to Household Valued by Partner (Adapted from Kim et al., 2007, p. 1800)

Categories	Baseline		Follow-Up	
	No. of Respondents	% of Responses	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Greater Self-Confidence	N/A	N/A	278/383	72.6
Greater Financial Confidence	193/424	45.5	278/386	72.0
Supportive Partner Relationship	135/193	70.0	212/290	73.1
Perceived Contribution to Household Valued by Partner	105/186	56.5	121/185	65.4

Decisional. Female respondents indicated an overwhelmingly positive increase in their ability to make decisions and challenge gender norms after the intervention (see Figure 6). They indicated a 29.4% increase in their ability to make independent decisions and a 23.8% increase in their ability to challenge gender norms.

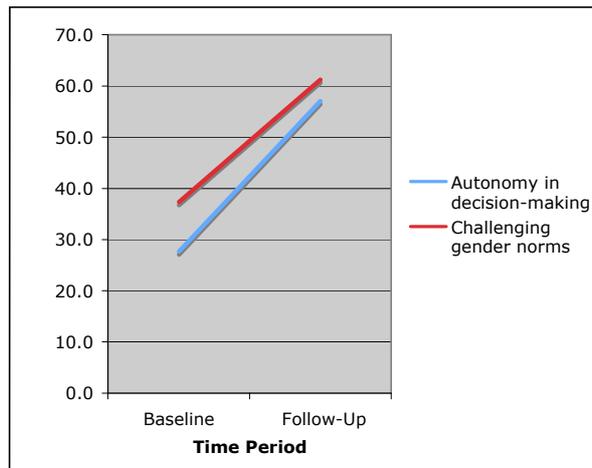


Figure 6. Autonomy in decision-making and challenging gender norms (Adapted from Kim et al., 2007, p. 1800)

Conclusion

The present study examined female empowerment and microfinance as a means of empowering women, with a specific focus on women in Africa. Two microfinance interventions in the African countries of Ghana and South Africa were evaluated to determine their effectiveness at meeting several female empowerment goals. Women involved in both the FRBMS and IMAGE interventions saw positive improvements on all five Female Empowerment Model (FEM) indicators (financial, social, physical, emotional, and decisional). It is clear that both interventions have had a positive impact on the groups of women they targeted, which is promising for poor, disempowered women in Africa and throughout the world.

As expected, women involved in both interventions increased their income. As a result, a majority of women involved in the IMAGE intervention (IMAGE women) had enough money to allocate to shoes and other clothing goods after the intervention. Some of these women no longer relied on their husbands for money, partly because they were the sole breadwinners when their spouses were too old or sick to work.

Women involved in the FRBMS intervention (FRBMS women) were able to contribute more to their children's education costs. This is a very important finding because "education is a powerful tool for breaking intergenerational cycles of poverty. Education can change social relationships, especially towards gender equality" (Chronic Poverty Research Centre, 2008, p. 4). However, FRBMS women still relied on their husbands for financial support and identified the need for larger loans in order to invest more money, increase their profits, and gain stronger independence.

Women in both interventions saw significant increases in physical empowerment, which can likely be explained by a few factors. First, both interventions contained a social education component, which educated men, women, and children about the benefits of microfinance, gender issues, and female empowerment. This, along with the possibility that the cultures of the tribes involved were somewhat conducive to social change (and more inclined than some other cultures to support women's rights) might have contributed to the great reduction in conflict and violence within participants' households. Also, because women were empowered on other indicators, they may have felt a stronger ability to stand up for themselves.

Although FRBMS women saw a dramatic reduction in conflict between themselves and their spouses and themselves and their children, they also experienced a dramatic increase in conflict between themselves and extended family members. This can likely be attributed to the fact that extended family members took on additional tasks related to the women's microfinance work, which strained relationships and caused greater conflict. These women also experienced longer working days as a result of their microfinance work, but it is likely they welcomed this as they made the choice to engage in additional

social activities. IMAGE women saw significant increases in social empowerment. They increased their social group membership by 44.6% and engaged in far more collective action activities than before the intervention. It is unknown whether these women also experienced longer working days as a result of their increased social activities.

Women involved in both interventions saw major increases in their emotional well-being. Both men and women involved in the FRBMS intervention observed and appreciated changes in gender roles that took place after being educated about female empowerment and taking part in the microfinance component of the intervention. IMAGE women felt their spouses were more supportive of them and valued their contributions to the household more after being involved in the intervention. A large majority of them also reported greater feelings of financial confidence and self-confidence.

Additionally, women involved in both interventions saw overwhelmingly positive increases in their ability to make meaningful, independent life choices. All FRBMS women expanded their daily routines beyond only housekeeping or economic activities and many became more involved in household resource allocation. IMAGE women increased their independence and their ability to challenge gender norms. Both interventions contributed significantly to the women's overall well-being and enhanced their ability to confront abusers and leave abusive relationships. This is extremely encouraging for future interventions and gives much hope to disempowered women. However, interventions should consider a variety of factors if they are to achieve similar or greater success in the future.

Recommendations

First, women might have seen larger profits if they had been given access to larger microloans. The majority of women involved in both interventions continue to rely on their spouses for financial support, which limits their ability to leave abusive relationships. Future studies should consider increasing microloans, based on the business plans developed by its participants.

Second, neither intervention seemed to adequately address the need for support services for women encountering financial hardship and/or domestic violence. Although both interventions utilized cross-sector partnerships as a basis for their programs, future interventions might establish stronger collaborations with organizations capable of providing physical, emotional, and financial support services to local, disempowered women. Increasing the availability of these services would likely strengthen the entire foundation of their programs.

Third, the underlying causes of abuse are undeniably rooted in culture and abuse is often supported by laws designed to oppress women. As such, future interventions would benefit from more comprehensive social education programs that address cultural issues and study designs that include plans to effect the change of local laws that are unfavorable to women. Otherwise, it is unlikely that gains in female empowerment will be sustained over time. Additionally, conflict levels between spouses and their extended families increased during the FRBMS intervention. Therefore, it might also be beneficial for social education components of future interventions to include training related to the management of microfinance activities and provide tools for avoiding and dealing with internal household conflict.

Lastly, the present study does not specifically address whether similar microfinance interventions would benefit women facing more severe forms of violence (such as rape and genocide) in conflict areas of developing nations. It is likely that microfinance interventions alone cannot help these women in a very meaningful way, but the problem is very real and requires immediate attention. Future microfinance interventions might be able to address these severe cases of disempowerment by establishing partnerships between international peacekeeping organizations (such as the UN) and MFI's. Failure to act would be catastrophic.

References

- African Union. (2004). *The road to gender equality in Africa: An overview*. Retrieved from, www.africaunion.org/.../gender/THE%20ROAD%20TO%20GENDER_2.pdf
- Arku, C. (2007). *Changing gender roles and their socio-cultural implications for rural households' well-being: A study of micro-finance in Bogoso, Ghana* (Master's thesis). Guelph, Ontario, Canada:

- University of Guelph.
- Arku, C., & Arku, F. (2009). More money, new household cultural dynamics: Women in micro-finance in Ghana. *Development in Practice, 19*(2), 200-213.
- Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP). (2010). What is microfinance? Retrieved from, <http://www.cgap.org/p/site/c/template.rc/1.26.1302/>
- Cantalupo, N., Vollendorf, L., Kay, P., & Shin, S. (2006). Domestic violence in Ghana: The open secret. *Georgetown Journal of Gender & the Law 7*, 1-70.
- Chonya, L. N., & Tolosi, M. S. (2009). Domestic violence. In *Zambia Demographic and Health Survey*. Retrieved from, <http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pdf/FR211/FR211%5BRevised-05-12-2009%5D.pdf>
- Chronic Poverty Research Centre. (2008-09). Progressive social change-women's empowerment, policy brief based on the Chronic Poverty Report 2008-09. Retrieved from, www.chronicpoverty.org/uploads/publication_files/PB_12.pdf
- Clinton, H. R. (2003). *Living history*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Daka, C. N., Tolosi, M. S., & Kachemba, A. (2009). Women's empowerment and health outcomes. In *Zambia Demographic and Health Survey*. Retrieved from, <http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pdf/FR211/FR211%5BRevised-05-12-2009%5D.pdf>
- Economic Commission for Africa. (2010). *Commitment to addressing violence against women*. Retrieved from, http://www.uneca.org/eca_resources/Publications/books/awr/chap3.pdf
- Geloo, Z.. (Oct. 2008). Women breaking the cycle of poverty. *New African, 477*, 26-29.
- Grameen Bank. (2010). *Banking for the poor: A short history of Grameen bank*. Retrieved from, <http://www.grameen.com/>
- GSHRDC (Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre). (2010). *Facts on violence against women in Ghana*. Retrieved from, http://www.gendercentreghana.org/article_details.php?id=10
- Holmes, J. (2011). *Congo's rape war*. Retrieved from, <http://www.latimes.com/news/print/edition/asection/la-oe-holmes11oct11,0,7188606.story>
- Kavanagh, M. J. (2010). Rapes by civilians in Eastern Congo rises 17-fold in 4 years, Oxfam Says. Retrieved from, <http://preview.bloomberg.com/news/2010-04-15/rapes-by-civilians-in-eastern-congo-rises-17-fold-in-4-years-oxfam-says.html>
- Ki-Moon, B. (2010). United Nations Secretary-General's campaign: UNITE to end violence against women. *United Nations*. Retrieved from, <http://www.un.org/en/women/endviolence/>
- Kim, J., C., Watts, C. H. Hargreaves, J. R., Phetla, G., Morison, L.A., Busza, J. Porter, J. D. H., & Pronyk, P. (2006, Dec.). *Effect of a structural intervention for the prevention of intimate-partner violence and HIV in Rural South Africa: A cluster randomised trial, Lancet 368*, (9551), 1973-1983.
- Kim, J., C., Watts, C. H. Hargreaves, J. R., Phetla, G., Morison, L.A., Busza, J. Porter, J. D. H., & Pronyk, P. (2007). Understanding the impact of a microfinance-based intervention on women's empowerment and the reduction of intimate partner violence in South Africa. *American Journal of Public Health, 97*(10), 1794-1802.
- Kiva. (2010). *How Kiva works*. Retrieved from, <http://www.kiva.org/about/how>
- MADRE. (n.d.). Mission/vision. Retrieved from, <http://www.madre.org/index/meet-madre-1/who-we-are-49/mission--vision-160.html>.
- McFarland, S. (2008). The victimization of the Nuba women of Sudan. *Journal of Third World Studies 25*(2), 21-37.
- UNIFEM. (2010). Gender issues: Violence against women. Retrieved from, <http://www.unifem.org>
- United Nations Security Council. (2000). *Resolution 1325: Women and peace and security (S/RES/1325)*. New York, NY: UN Security Council.
- United Nations Security Council. (2009). *Resolution 1888: Women and peace and security (S/RES/1888)*. New York, NY: UN Security Council.
- Womankind Worldwide (2010). Why South Africa? Clouds over the Rainbow Nation. Retrieved from, <http://www.womankind.org.uk/why-south-africac07a.html>

Women for Women International. (2010). Helping women survivors of war rebuild their lives: What we do. *Women for Women International*. Retrieved from, <http://www.womenforwomen.org/about-women-for-women/victims-to-survivors.php>

World Vision. (n.d.). *Donate a microloan*. Retrieved from, <http://www.worldvisionmicro.org/donate-amicroloan?open&campaign=1209242&cmp=KNC-1209242>

Revealing Authentic Teacher Professional Development Using Situated Learning in Virtual Environments as a Teaching Tool

Rebecca Blankenship

Brandon High School, Tampa, Florida, USA

Deoksoon Kim

University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida, USA

[Abstract] The purpose of this study was to demonstrate if and how pre-service teachers form pedagogic identities while participating in simulated professional development activities using two Internet-based virtual environments, *Second Life* and *Skype*. To reveal the pre-service teachers' pedagogic identity development, an exploratory case study (Yin, 2008) was conducted through which data were gathered from 4 interactive episodes as well as from face-to-face debriefings and personal reflective statements that occurred between the episodes. The findings of this study suggested the positive potential of using virtual environments to enable pedagogic transformations among pre-service teacher participants with appropriate considerations acknowledged for teaching audience, developmental goals, and venue of instruction.

[Keywords] Pedagogic identity; professional development; teacher education; virtual teaching tools;

Introduction

The most effective learning within a professional community occurs when said learning is highly situated around social interactions in which authentic practice takes place (Bell & Morris, 2009; Lave & Wenger, 1991). In terms of pre-service teacher education programs, a gap between what a pre-service teacher internalizes and alters by way of reflective practices and what is left unaltered continues to generate significant discussion among educational researchers (Freeman, 1996; Wallace, 1996). These discussions focus around discovering how it is possible that, when most of their professional development activities are face-to-face, these teachers become self-regulated- a topic curiously missing from the existing research and scholarly discourse. Concomitant to the discussion is how collaborative and *in-the-head* learning among teachers engaged in these development opportunities becomes cognitively unpacked through interactive collaborative practices (Erben, 1999, 2001).

Simulations or opportunities to practice new instructional techniques are most often conducted peer-to-peer: professionals are engaging and practicing with each other rather than with students who might represent their classroom demographic. Thus, teachers will often dismiss the information or training as impractical and unrepresentative of their authentic teaching climates. Relocating the face-to-face training to a virtual classroom, then, could provide pre-service teachers with an opportunity to use a simulated instructional setting to apply practically specific ESOL competencies while simultaneously interacting with other pre-service teachers. In theory, this type of scaffolded interaction could potentially enable internalization (and later application) of the pre-service teachers' ESOL training by using *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) and *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009) as facilitating instructional tools to reveal authentic pedagogic identity development. *Second Life* is a Multi-User Virtual Environments (MUVEs) in which participants interact using a digital representation of themselves (called an *avatar*) (Ducheneaut, Wen, Yee, & Wadley, 2009). *Skype* is an Internet-based video conferencing program with live chat and instant messaging capabilities.

Re-Conceptualizing Teacher Training in the 21st Century

Emerging technologies such as *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) and *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009) have enabled the development of training programs that digitally mirror what a teacher might encounter in the real world. These digital realities have been made possible by advancements in multimedia as seen in

Internet- and non-Internet-based programs. Better and more realistic graphics, more user-friendly interfaces, and mobile technologies have contributed to the popularity of using virtual programs for training (Haugen, Ask, & Bjoerke, 2008). However, when faced with providing teachers with real-world scenarios, instructors must frequently contend with providing situations so detached from the teacher's reality that it renders their future application almost useless (Shulman & Hutchins, 2004). Thus, rather than attempt to modify the training materials and settings to illustrate what might potentially occur in an actual classroom, it is more cost- and time-effective to maintain the status quo (Shulman & Hutchins, p. 140). Bell and Morris (2009) point out that many professional development activities fail because they are decontextualized from the actual teaching environment. In considering traditional face-to-face ESOL courses, much of the information is presented in a lecture-type format with few to no references to real-world application. Instruction is meant to elicit standards and behaviors with little follow-up of what the teacher might encounter in his or her actual classroom. Collaborations are frequently reduced to represent predetermined bites of information that are considered relevant by the instructor - a view not necessarily shared by the actual participants (Freeman & Richards, 1996).

Teacher education presents an especially unique challenge when considering virtual environments as professional training tools (Haugen, Ask, & Bjoerke, 2008). Virtual learning environments are considered part of on-line learning environments (OLEs) in which the teacher and student are separated from one-another and interact through the technical and social features offered by a particular program (Gunawardena & McIsaac, 2004; Khan, 1998, 2000). Emerging technologies have led to additional interest among teacher education and training programs regarding the influence of these technologies on how and where teachers receive professional training (Oncu & Cakir, 2011). In 2010, The Horizon Report identified several emerging technologies with a significant impact on learning and teaching. The report specifically acknowledged the benefits that multidimensional collaboration has had on higher education, stating that within the next 2 to 3 years, Multi-User Virtual Environments (MVUEs) and other similar virtual programs will become mainstream within higher education programs (Haugen, Ask, & Bjoerke, 2008).

The current research in teacher training programs suggests a method to post-method ideological shift among pre- and in-service teachers (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). This ideological shift influences not only how teachers are trained but also how teacher identity is defined. Teacher identity can be operationalized in terms of the sociocultural collaborative practices that enable reflection (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2003). Operationalizing teacher identity in terms of reflections through collaborative iterations enables the holistic consideration of how identity is formed and changed through dialogic engagement (Erben, 1999, 2001; Lave & Wegner, 1991). From the methods perspective, teachers are viewed as vessels of institutionally predetermined instructional strategies (Green, 2000).

Teacher training provides the place of developing their identities as a teacher (Shulman & Hutchins, 2004). Most teachers' training is meant to elicit what are considered standard professional knowledge and related pedagogic behaviors (Kumaravadivelu, 1994). Teachers trained using the traditional approach typically applies these new knowledge and instructional practices in their classrooms without self-imposed alteration thus obviating their ability to independently alter the pedagogic training they received. This is especially the case in terms of educational reform in the last 5 years, in which teacher agency is subjugated to broader institutional change (Lasky, 2005).

Further, it is the era of postmodernist thought in educational research that has perpetuated the artificial separation between teacher and student that often results in decontextualization of content-area training (Bell & Morris, 2009). Teachers and administrators in the United States and England have focused on individualism and isolation in teacher-student relationships (Zembylas, 2003). Thus, teachers, regardless of subject, have engaged in pedagogic isolationism based on a separatist identity constructed from a method-centric set of teacher knowledge received through some type of professional training. As Kumaravadivelu (1994) and Shulman and Hutchins (2004) suggested, a methods-based approach can limit the teacher's ability to self-regulate, thus limiting their capacity to act as an autonomous agent within their institutional settings (Day, Stobart, Sammons, Kington, Gu, Smees, & Mujtaba, 2006).

Dialogic Engagement

Knowledge that a teacher receives is viewed as *gifted* to them (Freire, 1990). In other words, the institution determines what professional knowledge the teacher acquires during training rather than the teacher discovering these knowledge through collaborative interactions. Much of what is reported by educational researchers regarding how a teacher develops professional knowledge and identity is what Windschitl and Joseph (2000) referred to as “constrained reality” (p. 140). In our research, we critically and subjectively examined pre-service teachers’ post-method professional development within the virtual environments to determine if their development was just a mirror image of the institution’s training culture.

To identify the teacher voice for these pre-service teachers, they must use their pre-existing ESOL competencies to take control of their instruction and reveal their authentic teacher self in the virtual classroom settings (Windschitl & Joseph, 2000). The dialogic, or what Freire (1990) referred to as the “essence of education” (p. 8), becomes the liberator when the pedagogue can transition from being an object (integrated) agent to subject (adapted) agent of the institution.

Virtual environments can provide the place of collaborative dialogic engagement (Alessi & Trollip, 2005). Virtual environments have the potential to liberate the pre-service teacher in such a way that his or her true identity and knowledge base can be freed from contextual restraints (Allen & Lewis, 2006). Accordingly, by removing a teacher from the more prescribed face-to-face context and placing him or her in a virtual environment, the identity and knowledge base could theoretically be revealed through new, technologically-mediated socially constructed interactions (Clark & Mayer, 2006; Clarke, 2009). The significance of the study here is that it has the potential to provide pre-service teachers with the opportunity to transcend *what is expected* with face-to-face training to *what is transformative* in a more realistic setting (Shulman & Hutchins, 2004).

Virtual Environments to Partner with Digital Natives

Learning a new technology is beneficial in building professional skills. This is especially important in the 21st-century as technologies are advancing and changing on an almost daily basis (Prensky, 2010). According to Prensky’s definition (2004), most of today’s teachers would be considered digital immigrants with regards to their experience and use of current technologies. In establishing and maintaining a rapport with today’s digital natives, it is important that teachers have a working knowledge of the programs students are currently using so that they can partner effectively with them for meaningful and relevant instruction (Rosen, 2010). Here, the teacher has the opportunity to move from the digital objective to the digital subjective by exploring and implementing such programs as *Second Life* and *Skype* into their teaching.

Teachers and students were becoming more digitally literate as technologies changed to become more user-friendly and interactive, almost mirroring activities in daily life (Veletsianos & Miller, 2008). This is particularly noted with the rise in use, especially in the last decade, of the personal computer and the Internet in schools (Prensky, 2010). During this time, the technological expectations of pre- and in-service teachers have changed significantly (Kim, 2011); it is expected that 21st-century teachers will not only be able to deliver content knowledge through effective pedagogy but also utilize some technology during the lesson (Kim, 2009; Prensky, 2010).

Thus, for the 21st-century teacher, it is not enough just to have an institutionally pre-determined set and environments of knowledge and pedagogic skills (Chan & Pang, 2006). As the geopolitical landscape changed at the end of the 20th-century and technologies advanced, public schools were faced with multiple challenges, requiring the adaptation of teacher training and developmental standards to better align with the rapidly changing curricular and technical needs of the modern classroom and student. However, many of these changes have not been implemented due to other administrative considerations, evidenced by a noticeable gap in the literature (Earle 2002; Hodas, 1996; Ringstaff & Kelley, 2002).

Recent advances in virtual environments further enable the teacher to lift the traditional classroom interactions into a simulated environment, thereby lending a cognitive malleability not necessarily present in face-to-face instruction. Learner motivation and interest, important to any design consideration, would

necessarily increase as students negotiate course content within an interactive and engaging environment. Thus, the most effective plan would be one that takes both the cognitive and socially constructed paradigms into consideration (Zhan, Xu, & Ye, 2011). Creating a curriculum that is dense with multimedia will not ensure that sustained learning has occurred (Clark & Mayer, 2006). Accordingly, the teacher must now act as a partner who adapts the technology to accommodate the needs of today's digitally literate students (Prensky, 2010).

Emerging technologies, such as MVUEs and Internet-based video conferencing programs like *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009), have enabled the development of training programs that digitally mirror what a teacher might expect in face-to-face training simulations. Advancements in multimedia seen in Internet- and non-Internet-based programs have made virtual training venues possible & may encourage collaborative digital engagement (Wells, 2007). Better and more realistic graphics, more user-friendly interfaces, and mobile technologies have contributed to the increase in use of virtual simulations for teacher training. However, when faced with providing teachers with real-world scenarios, teacher trainers must frequently contend with providing situations so detached from the teacher's reality that it renders the content of the training and the teacher's future instructional application of that content almost useless (Shulman & Hutchins, 2004). Thus, rather than attempt to modify the training materials and settings to illustrate what might occur in an actual classroom, it is more cost- and time-effective to maintain the status quo – a scenario that was the impetus for developing this study (Shulman & Hutchins, p. 140).

Research Questions

The discrepancy between how a teacher practically applies the content of face-to-face versus virtual training led to the following research questions for this study:

1. In what ways do the dialogic engagements of pre-service teachers regulate professional growth and identity transformation in the virtual environments?
2. How do ESOL pre-service teachers practice in virtual environments such as *Second Life* and *Skype*?
3. What are the similarities and differences between using virtual environments such as *Second Life* and *Skype*?

Methods

The data were gathered from the virtual interactions and organized into thematic clusters that were determined *a posteriori* to the study's design and resultant analysis. Using within case analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994), collaborative episodes were unpacked over the course of the virtual interactions, especially as the interactions related to productive, constructive, and destructive collaborations (Erben, 1999; 2001). We used Erben's technique for tallying utterances among interlocutors during collaborative episodes for two reasons. First, Erben's definitions of productive, constructive, and destructive collaborations classified the specific language used by participants to support social cohesion within a group. Examining the type of social language used among interlocutors aligns with the critical lens underlying the theoretical foundation of this study. Second, the social aspect of this collaborative language provided us with a holistic tool whereby we could examine what types of socially-based language the pre-service teachers used to construct their teacher identities.

Participants

A criterion-based nonrandom sampling scheme (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007) was used to select participants for this study. The nonrandom selection criteria were determined *a priori* to the study. The pre-service teachers participating in this study were selected from a private university in a state in the southeastern United States. The selected participants included: (a) 12 pre-service teachers; (b) the ESOL II course instructors; and (c) a Level 2 ELL. The pre-service teachers were undergraduate Elementary Education majors enrolled in an ESOL II course needed to meet their subject-matter endorsement and state professional licensing requirements. The two instructors were Dr. Marquis and Mrs. Rosenblum (pseudonyms are being used to ensure the participants' anonymity). Dr. Marquis was the primary

instructor for the ESOL II course and was the supervising professor for 4 of the 12 pre-service teacher participants. Mrs. Rosenblum was a practicing foreign language teacher in the same school district where the students were completing their practica. She was a Level 6 ELL, was ESOL endorsed, and had a Master's degree in Foreign Language Teacher Education. Mrs. Darbyshire, the ELL the students were working with, was a native of Argentina in her 70s: Spanish was her first language. She was a low Level 2 ELL with only the educational equivalent of high school.

Data Collection Instruments

The programs used to capture the dialogues among the pre-service teachers were *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) and *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009). For data collection, the protocol called for the use of *Fraps* (Beep, 2008) to capture the interactions in *Second Life*; *Fraps* was to be used to create screenshots, audio, and video of the sessions. The debriefings between the interactions occurred face-to-face and were videotaped for later transcription. The protocol included the use of *Skype*– interactive sessions that were videotaped and later transcribed.

Data Collection Procedures

In the protocol, the 12 students were divided into four groups of three students each. Students selected their groups, and then collaborated to create a total of four social studies lessons to present to the ELL, Mrs. Darbyshire, in *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) and *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009). Prior to the first session, the students discussed the lesson plans they made and the ESOL modifications they applied to address the ELL's language and cultural needs.

Groups volunteered to present their lessons to Mrs. Darbyshire. The lessons were elementary grade-level specific, based on thematic social studies units. Level 2 ELLs share common developmental characteristics: accordingly, the ESOL modifications would be similar and appropriate to meet Mrs. Darbyshire's needs. The interactive sessions lasted an average of 25.25 minutes. After the sessions, all students debriefed face-to-face (for 15 minutes) regarding the presentation of the lesson and the interactions. This interactive cycle would occur three additional times allowing each group to have instructional time in the virtual environments. The following table presents the student groups, venue and duration of instruction, and lesson content. Each group assigned a student leader to guide the instruction of the ELL. Because these four students had the most direct contact with Mrs. Darbyshire, the ELL, their individual experiences were the primary focus of the data analysis and concomitant discussion.

Table 1. *Student Groups by Venue of Instruction, Duration of Instruction, and Lesson Content*

Group	Venue of Instruction	Duration of Instruction	Lesson Content
GROUP 1 (ABBY)	Second Life Debriefing Time (In class)	21 Minutes 15 Minutes	Elementary Grade 2 The Early Settlers of Florida
GROUP 2 (BECKY)	Skype Debriefing Time (In class)	24 Minutes 15 Minutes	Elementary Grade 3 The Branches of the United States Government
GROUP 3 (ISABEL)	Second Life Debriefing Time (In class)	28 Minutes 15 Minutes	Elementary Grade K The Climate and Geography of the United States
GROUP 4 (LARRY)	Skype Debriefing Time (In class)	28 Minutes 15 Minutes	Elementary Grade 5 The Westward Expansion of the United States

Data Analysis

Data gathered for this study from the virtual interactions and face-to-face debriefings were transferred into documents for word-level analysis. Key words from the transcripts were then selected based on the

following criteria: (a) the frequency of their occurrence in the text; (b) the nongrammaticality of their usage; and (c) their potential thematic relevance for tallying the types of collaborative episodes. Once certain key words emerged as prominent across the interactions and follow-up debriefings, thematic nodes were created in order to document a word's occurrence across the different sessions.

To examine the data, we used a within-case analysis, and we used those results to construct a causal network in order to report "how structural changes induce[d] procedural and attitude changes" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 139). To construct the network, we used the technique designed by Erben (2001) for tallying instances of collaborative utterances in the dialogue among the participants.

Comparing the Collaborative Experiences of 4 Pre-service Teachers

Data, comprising debriefings and transcribed interactions among the participants, were examined for key vocabulary. This vocabulary was then reduced and coded into themes used to construct a causal network (Miles & Huberman) in which instances of productive, constructive, and destructive collaborative dialogue (Erben, 2001) were related to the identified themes and interactive characteristics of the pre-service teachers. From the standpoint of collaboration, we used Erben's (2001) model to identify and to tally the types of collaborative episodes that occurred among the participants. These collaborations included productive, constructive, and destructive utterances. As defined by Erben, "constructive collaborations are utterances that promote social cohesion within the group" (p. 325). Destructive collaborations were defined as those collaborations that jeopardized the social cohesion of the group (p. 325). Productive collaborations were described as "any interaction which contributes to the facilitation of shared knowledge and establishment of intersubjectivity" (p. 325).

Keeping in mind that the principals during the interactions were the group leaders Abby, Becky, Isabel, and Larry, we tracked the collaborations specific to these four pre-service teachers. We reduced the types of collaborative episodes to the particular utterances used by these four pre-service teachers during the collaborations. Finally, to determine which types of collaborative utterances were used most frequently, we looked at the interactions among all of the pre-service teachers and compared them against the tallies from Abby, Becky, Isabel, and Larry. We used this information to construct a Causal Network of potential self-regulation through collaboration (Miles & Huberman, 1994) in order to describe the pre-service teachers' pedagogic growth across the sessions in *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) and *Skype* (Skype Technologies, 2009).

Results

The results of the study include two main themes: (a) comparing collaborative utterances among Abby, Becky, Isabel, and Larry to understand differences and similarities among them and (b) pre-service teachers' casual network of pedagogic transformations.

Comparing Collaborative Utterances among Abby, Becky, Isabel and Larry

Table 2 offers a comparison of the collaborative instances specific to the four pre-service teachers (Abby, Becky, Isabel, and Larry) who had the most direct interaction with Mrs. Darbyshire across the four sessions. Abby and Isabel used *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) for their interactions; Becky and Larry used *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009). *Second Life* and *Skype* share similar features, such as live chat and voice. The primary technical difference between the two programs is that in *Second Life*, participants use an avatar for their interactions, while in *Skype* participants can see each other using a webcam. In terms of the interactions, there was a notable difference between the collaborative utterances in *Second Life* (higher) and *Skype* (lower) as noted in the tallies below. In the sessions in *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004), Abby's productive utterances were tallied at 28, which was more than the tallies for Isabel at 22. The following are examples of Abby's and Isabel's productive utterances during the interactions in *Second Life*. As this was the group's first interaction with Mrs. Darbyshire, Abby mostly used the productive utterances related to facilitating and prompting.

Example of Abby's productive utterances (facilitating/ promoting)

Abby: Mrs. Darbyshire, you speak, and we will type.

Mrs. Darbyshire: Sound no good...voice confuse...

Abby: If you just respond to the questions we are asking...We will type and you just speak. Where is your home?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Tampa.

Abby: Nice. How many people live with you?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Four children and one man.

As Abby facilitated Mrs. Darbyshire, she answered the question from Abby. By the time that Isabel's group interacted with Mrs. Darbyshire in Session 3 in *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004), a rapport had been established: she could use other productive utterances such as *scaffolding and editing*.

Example of Isabel's productive utterances (*scaffolding/editing*):

Isabel: Do you like to cook Mrs. Darbyshire...

Mrs. Darbyshire: Oh yes...like cook...

Isabel: What do you like to cook?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Everything...

Isabel: Can you explain to us how to make one of your favorite dishes?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Voice confuse...

Isabel: What is your favorite dish you like to cook?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Oh...I like cook empanada.

With Isabel's scaffolding, Mrs. Darbyshire responded that "empanada" is the dish she liked to cook. Of Abby's and Isabel's productive utterances, most (12 for Abby and 14 for Isabel) were used for managing operations. From the tally of constructive utterances, the majority (7) of Isabel's utterances were affirmations, as were Abby's (3). Isabel had more constructive utterances (8) than did Abby (5). There was only one tally of a destructive utterance and that was from Isabel in the Week 5 interaction. The following are examples of Abby's and Isabel's constructive utterances. Most of Abby's constructive utterances were *affirmation* and *inclusion*, as were Isabel's. Notice how Abby and Isabel use personal references to affirm Mrs. Darbyshire's responses to their questions and include her more personally in the conversation.

Example of Abby's constructive utterances (*affirmation/inclusion*):

Abby: Do you have any pets? I have a dog.

Mrs. Darbyshire: Yes. I have dog.

Abby: What is your dog's name? My dog's name is Lilly.

Mrs. Darbyshire: My dog name Sparky.

Example of Isabel's constructive utterances (*affirmation/inclusion*):

Isabel: What do you do with your family? I like sports. Do you like sports?

Mrs. Darbyshire: I like...ummmm... my daughter child...play tennis...ummm...with me...

Isabel: Oh...so you like tennis? I like tennis too! Who is your favorite player?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Uh...I like...watch...Federer...

Table 2. Instances of Collaborative Utterances for Abby, Isabel, Becky, and Larry

Type of Collaboration	Abby	Isabel	Becky	Larry
Productive Collaboration	28	22	78	35
Constructive Collaboration	5	8	4	6
Destructive Collaboration	0	1	0	4

Becky and Larry had a total of 103 productive utterances. Larry's instances of productive collaboration were 35; Becky's were 78. Becky had less constructive utterances (3) than did Larry (6). Four instances of destructive utterances were tallied for Larry with no instances tallied for Becky. Of the productive collaborations, the majority (30) of Larry's utterances were in the form of prompting, assisting, and coaching. Most of Becky's productive utterances (78) were in the form of prompting, coaching, use of common referring expressions, and use of context information. Becky's constructive collaborative utterances (3) were humor as were the majority of Larry's constructive collaborative utterances (4). Like Abby, most of Becky's productive utterances were in the form of *facilitating* and *prompting* as were Larry's. Both Becky and Larry used *affirmations* and *inclusion* as part of their constructive utterances.

Examples of Becky's productive utterances (prompting):

Becky: Do you have any other hobbies?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Yes...Sometimes my other hobby is tennis...

Becky: Do you watch tennis on TV.?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Always tournaments in the channel...

Becky: What channel do you watch?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Watch...ummm...tennis channel...tournaments...

Becky: Who is your favorite player to watch?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Fedderer...Roddick...muchos...very much players...

Becky asked questions in which Mrs. Darbyshire is interested. In particular, Becky expanded on the questions related to Tennis, was Mrs. Darbyshire's hobby. Mrs. Darbyshire responded enthusiastically, using the word "muchos" and adding a couple of popular players' names.

Examples of Larry's productive utterances (prompting):

Larry: How long have you been here in the United States...

Mrs. Darbyshire: 10 years ago...

Larry: You have been here for 10 years?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Yes...10...live in other state...then move here...family...

Larry: So you lived in another state and you moved here because this is where your family lives?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Yes. Family here...

Larry: Who in your family lives here?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Ummm...daughter...daughter's child...girl child...boy child...

Larry: So, you live with your daughter and your grandchildren?

Larry continued the topic related to Mrs. Darbyshire's background information, such as her family and her residency in the United States and responded to her correctly using her responses.

Examples of Becky's constructive utterances (affirmation/inclusion).

Becky: What are your favorite hobbies?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Oh playing cards...I play online...bridge...

Becky: You play bridge on line? Very fun...I play cards on line too!

Mrs. Darbyshire: I like play bridge online...

Becky also responded positively and encouraged Mrs. Darbyshire's responses, saying "Very fun... I play cards on line too!"

Examples of Larry's constructive utterances (humor):

Mrs. Darbyshire: I like cook Italian...

Larry: Oh, you like to cook Italian food. What kind of Italian food?

Mrs. Darbyshire: Ummm...lasagna...ravioli...

Larry: How do you cook your ravioli? What do you put in them?

Mrs. Darbyshire: No...no cook...buy...at supermarket...

(Laughter from classmates/Mrs. Darbyshire)

This excerpt demonstrates the more comfortable relationship between Larry and Mrs. Darbyshire. Particularly, this exchange expressed Mrs. Darbyshire's humor. Meanwhile, we also observed destructive collaborations, only Isabel and Larry had instances of destructive collaborations. For Isabel in *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004), she stated that her fellow group member Delia "will laugh the whole time" during the interaction. Larry's destructive utterances were directed at his group members as well. The following is an example of Larry's destructive utterances during the interaction in *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009).

Example of Larry's destructive utterances:

Larry: So, what else do you like to do?

Gabby: You are talking too fast. She needs help with question words.

Larry: No I'm not...she understood me....

Gabby: Are you sure about that?

After examining the collaborative utterances of the four pre-service teachers, we next compared the collaborative utterances of all participants across the four sessions. We then constructed a table to compare Abby, Isabel, Becky, and Larry's collaborations with those of all the other participants (following table). We later used these instances to construct a Causal Network (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to describe how the identified themes and interactive characteristics filtered through the technologies created a collaborative environment in which self-regulation and transformation occurred.

The most collaborative utterances among all of the participants were tallied from the interactions in *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004). Of these utterances, the majority were productive (392), followed by constructive (47) and destructive (2) utterances. More than half (284) of the productive utterances as well as the largest amount (42) of constructive utterances occurred during Sessions 1 and 3 within *Second Life*. The only two instances of destructive utterances occurred in *Second Life* (this number was from the remaining participants and not from Abby, Isabel, Becky, and Larry).

Table 3. Comparison of the Types of Collaborative Utterances used by Abby Isabel, Becky, Larry and Participants

Type of Collaboration	Abby	Isabel	Becky	Larry	Weeks 4 and 5 Second Life	Weeks 4 and 5 Skype
Productive Collaboration	28	22	78	35	284	108
Constructive Collaboration	5	8	4	6	42	5
Destructive Collaboration	0	1	0	4	2	0

Note: Weeks 4 and 5 Second Life and Weeks 4 and 5 Skype: These tallies (the larger numbers) are for the other 7 students in the class – does not include Abby, Isabel, Becky, and Larry because the chart is comparing their individual tallies to the utterances of their classmates.

From the standpoint of productive collaborations, the most instances were tallied for Becky (78), followed by Larry (35), Abby (28), and Isabel (22). If the tallies are then considered at the individual student level, the following was revealed. Larry and Becky, who used *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009) for

the interactions, had the most combined instances of productive collaborative utterances at 113. In terms of constructive collaborations, Becky had the least amount of constructive utterances at 4, with Isabel having the most at 8. Abby's and Isabel's combined tallies from *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) were 50. By contrast, Abby and Isabel had a greater number of constructive utterances (13) than Becky and Larry did (11). Among the four students, there were 5 instances of destructive collaborations. Becky and Abby did not have any destructive utterances, whereas Isabel had 1 in *Second Life* and Larry had 4 in *Skype*.

Causal Network of Pedagogic Transformations

Although the tallies were instructive in understanding the types of utterances, we needed to explain the relationship among the identified themes, interactions, and technologies. Using the techniques for within-case analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994), our Causal Network (see the following figures) traced the pre-service teachers' pedagogic transformations across the collaborative episodes. As with tallying the instances of collaborative utterances, we chose to focus again on the transformations of Abby, Becky, Isabel, and Larry as they had the most direct and sustained interactive experiences with Mrs. Darbyshire.

Using the Causal Network enabled us to demonstrate the most important concepts related to the developmental progressions of Abby, Becky, Isabel, and Larry during the interactions. The interactions were predicated on the fact that these pre-service teachers had pre-existing knowledge related to the language needs of an ELL. Also, as the cohort had existed for 2 years, the students were familiar with working in teams/groups and delegating tasks (2) for various assignments. Causal network of potential self-regulation through collaborative episodes are demonstrated in the following figures (Figure 1, 2, 3, and 4).

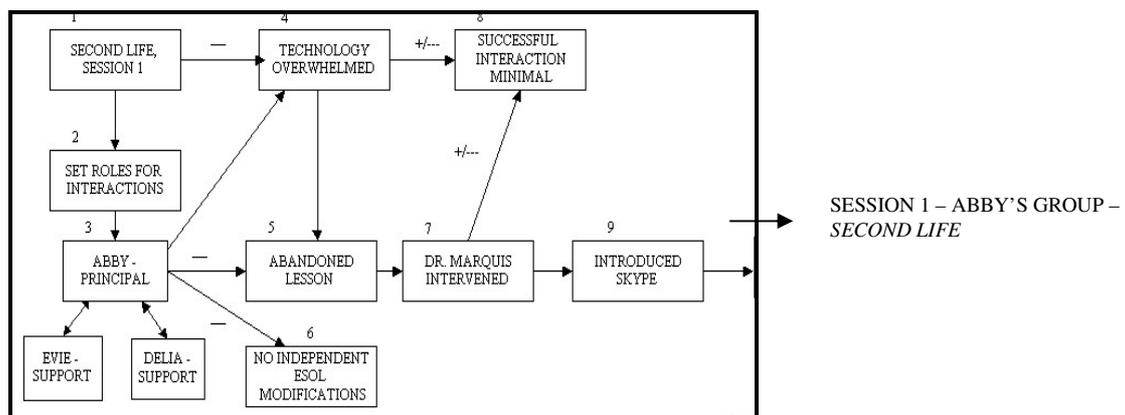


Figure 1. Causal network of session 1 – Abby's Group – *Second Life*

Figure 1 demonstrated the following: From the very first interaction (1) in *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004), the collaborative reciprocity (3) among Abby, Delia, and Evie was very apparent. Even though the technology initially overwhelmed the group (4), they - especially Abby - were eventually able to collaborate with Dr. Marquis (7) to implement some ESOL modifications (6), although the modifications were not implemented without his assistance. Even though the group chose to abandon the lesson (5), the interaction was moderately successful (8).

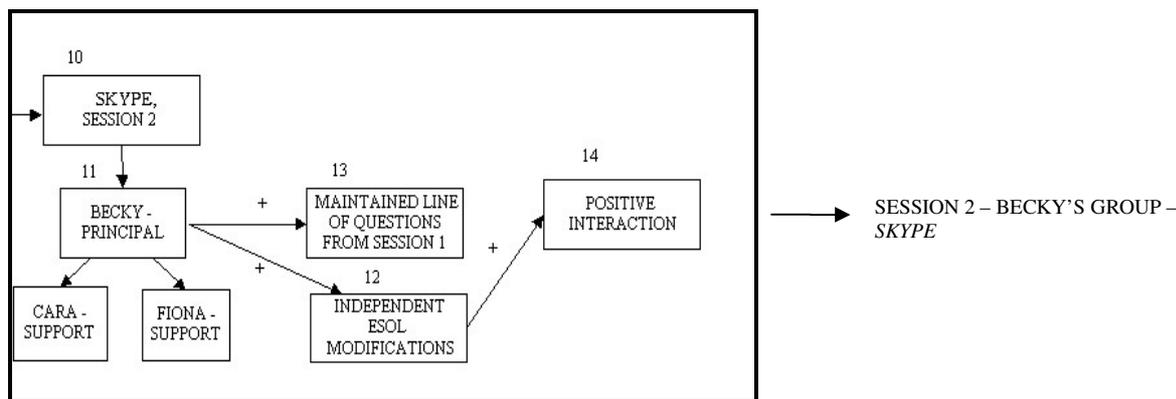


Figure 2. Causal network of session 2 – Becky’s Group-Skype

Part of the collaboration during the session was a direct result of Dr. Marquis’s intervention. Based on the students’ and Mrs. Darbyshire’s reaction to *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004), he recommended (9) that the second session take place in *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009). Figure 2 demonstrated, in terms of collaboration, there was not the same reciprocity among Becky, Cara, and Fiona. Rather, Becky acted as the principal instructor (11) during the interaction, directing Cara and Fiona. Because Abby’s group abandoned their lesson (5), Becky chose to continue the same line of questions (13) from the previous session. Here she was able to implement independently language modifications (12), which resulted in a positive collaboration with Mrs. Darbyshire.

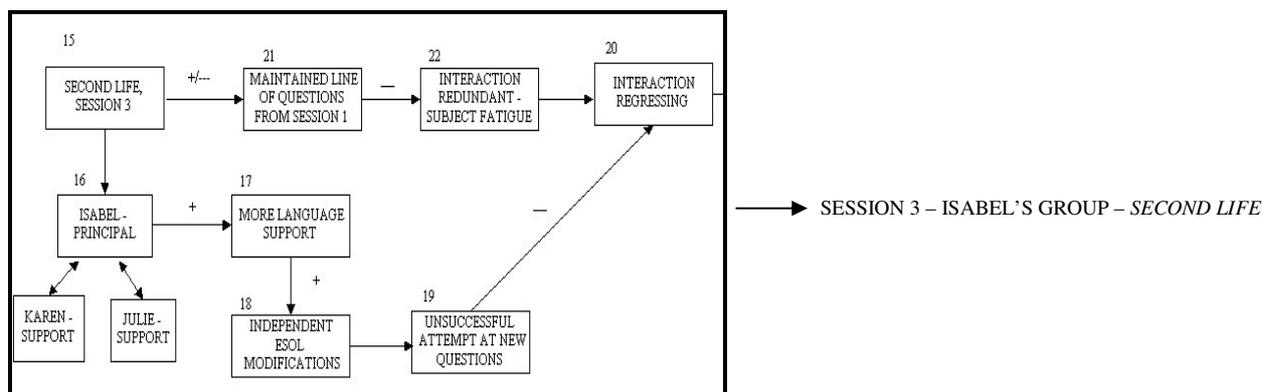


Figure 3. Causal network of Session 3 – Isabel’s Group – *Second Life*

Interestingly, after *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009) was introduced and more constructive collaborations were taking place, Session 3 in *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) (Figure 3) mirrored the collaborations in Session 1. Even though Isabel was the leader during the interaction, her collaborations with Karen and Julie were reciprocal (16). Similar to Becky, Isabel was able to provide more language support (17) and implement ESOL modifications independent of Dr. Marquis’s guidance (18). However, because her group chose to continue the same line of questions from the first two sessions (21), she was not successful in attempting to introduce any content from her lesson (19). Thus, the collaborations became redundant (22), and the interaction began to regress (23).

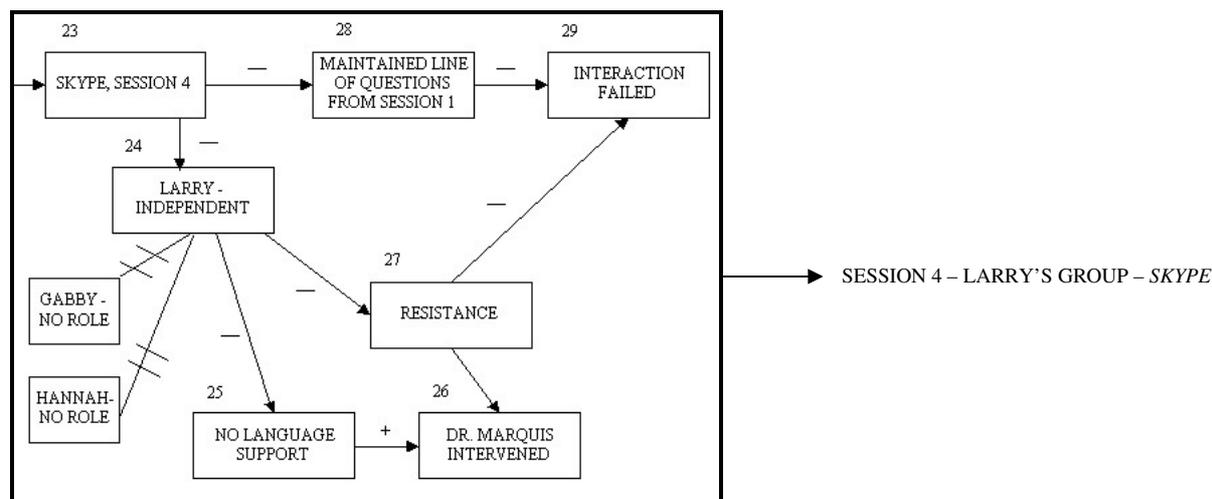


Figure 4. Causal network of session 4 – Larry's Group-Skype

The final session (Figure 4) took place in *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009). There was such a lack of collaboration among Larry's group and between Larry and Mrs. Darbyshire that the interaction was similar to the first meeting in *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004). Larry opted to maintain the same line of questions (28) from the first session, acting independently (24) of his classmates and Dr. Marquis's suggestions. He offered no language support (25) to Mrs. Darbyshire and was resistant (27) to Dr. Marquis's attempts to positively collaborate (26). Thus, the final interaction was unsuccessful (29).

Second Life (Linden Labs, 2004) and *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009) were used as the intervening technologies between the pre-service teachers' existing knowledges and what was anticipated in terms of self-regulation. However, as the display indicates, what was evinced in the collaborations would be anticipated from a group of students participating in a cohort. In other words, their interactions were consistent with pre-existing ESOL knowledge and collaborations in other classes.

Discussion

Based on results, we developed our discussion around the following themes related to using virtual environments for pre-service teacher training: (a) promoting dialogic engagement to facilitate pedagogic transformation; (b) Promoting professional identity development beyond the status quo; and (c) similarities and differences practicing in the virtual training environments

Promoting Dialogic Engagement to Facilitate Pedagogic Transformation

In order for the pre-service teachers in this study to pedagogically develop beyond their existing set of instructional skills, institutional constraints had to be lifted so that they could feel more liberated in exploring and growing beyond their existing knowledge. Accordingly, we had to construct the learning objects in *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) and *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009) so that existing institutional constraints (such as course assignments, graduation requirements, and state licensing mandates) did not impede the pre-service teachers' ability of achieving self-regulatory behaviors through their dialogic engagements (Wells, 2007).

From their reflective statements, through the dialogic engagement (Wells, 2007) the pre-service teachers commented on both positive and negative aspects of using *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) and *Skype* (Skype Technologies, 2009) for the interactions with Mrs. Darbyshire. The pre-service teachers stated the following positive perspectives related to their instructional experiences in the virtual environments: (a) it was good to experience a new technology; (b) the experience gives a different instructional perspective; and (c) good for students learning at a distance (Kim, 2011). They also expressed the following frustrations related to using *Second Life* and *Skype* for the interactions with Mrs. Darbyshire: (a) not a traditional face-to-face setting; (b) did not have access to hands-on materials; and (c)

did not have the stability that students associated with a face-to-face classroom (these negative reactions would be consistent with constraints related to the idealized instructional model as conceived by the institution; Shulman & Hutchins, 2004).

Apparently venues such as *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) and *Skype* (Skype Technologies, 2009) provide the social space of dialogic engagement for instructing an ELL, as noted in the pre-service teachers' transformations from first reflection to final debriefing. There was evidence in the dialogue (especially during Becky's and Isabel's sessions) that some self-regulation was occurring or had already occurred and was being implemented through their dialogic engagements with their group members (Erben, 2001). However, what was not discernable from the dialogue was if the self-regulation was an expected reaction to their previous institutional experiences or if the new instructional venue was enabling the self-regulation to occur. The final debriefings suggested that potential pedagogic transformations stopped when the assignment ended.

While all of the pre-service teachers (with the exception of Larry) stated that they recognized the potential of using virtual environments for interacting with ELLs and receiving professional training, they expressed that they would not continue to explore how to use the environments beyond the ESOL II class. Abby noted that using the virtual classroom would be good for students learning at a distance and stressed the importance of learning new technologies, but that *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) and *Skype* (Skype Technologies, 2009) could not replace the face-to-face setting. Becky and Isabel had similar reflections about using virtual classrooms as an instructional venue. They reflected that using such virtual settings would be ideal in an afterschool setting and, similar to Abby's reflection, both recognized the importance of learning new technologies. However, they would not choose to use them outside of their class assignments. For Larry, he articulated in his first to final reflections that he, under no instructional conditions, would use virtual classrooms for instruction or professional development.

Thus, as noted by Shulman and Hutchins (2004), this group of pre-service teachers did what was "expected" rather than what was truly "transformative." If the interactions had taken place outside of the university setting, were not a course assignment, and were not linked to the technology competency of the ESOL portfolio, the students might have felt less restricted, thereby facilitating a potential authentic transformation from the objective to the subjective. Thus, to promote pre-service teachers' transformation from the objective to subjective, the individual must consciously reflect on his/her relationship within the context of the institution's pre-determined reality (Freire, 1990). It is when the teacher engages in an iterative reflective process imbedded in collaborative practice that s/he becomes the most effective and is capable of professionally regulating beyond his/her existing set of skills (Bell & Gilbert, 1996). For Abby, Becky, and Isabel, their reflective statements and contributions to the debriefings revealed self-regulatory behaviors that enabled effective instruction and pedagogic growth to occur. For Larry, these iterations did not occur, resulting in his identity being objectified to his own set of pre-existing instructional and technical skills obviating his ability to professionally grow (Cooper & Olson, 1996).

Promoting Professional Identity Development beyond the Status Quo

Effective classroom teachers share many common characteristics. Among those characteristics are the ability to create a comfortable classroom environment in which an open and uninhibited dialogue flows between teacher and student (Danielson, 2007). This idea, of course, strays from the traditional linear approach where teaching is something *done* to the student (Lingard, 2003). Because most teaching institutions formatively evaluate teachers using a traditional linear teaching model, most teachers assume an objective and subjective teaching persona. When being observed and/or formally evaluated, teachers assume the objective persona; and, conversely, when not being observed or evaluated, teachers assume the subjective persona. They maintain both personas as a direct result of institutional constraints.

After the interactions, the debriefings were immediate, and instructional adjustments were made subsequent to those debriefings. In other words, there really was no reflective downtime for the students to consider their collaborations or instructional interactions with Mrs. Darbyshire. This lack of deeper reflection is consistent with the traditional training model in which teachers receive pre-determined bites

of information with no opportunity for reflection or practice (Johnson, 1997; Lingard, 2003; Zembylas, 2003). Danielson (2007) points out that reflective teaching contributes to the development of an effective teacher with sound instructional practices. These reflections could also have the positive potential to enable the teacher to move from the objective to the subjective by reviewing and questioning what is considered to be the pedagogic status quo (Freire, 1990). Using programs like *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) or *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009) has the potential to provide training environments in which teachers feel more liberated to explore their true instructional selves and transform beyond institutional constraints (Hou, 2011). From the standpoint of collaboration, teachers might use virtual environments to liberate themselves from the institution so that they feel emancipated to reflect on their teaching. Again, as Freire (1990) noted, by engaging in an iterative reflective process, an individual's mind is freer to explore his/her relationship with the institution and make alterations to that relationship. With the emerging technologies discussed here, teachers might choose to establish their own collaborative network, independent of the institution, where they freely discuss and reflect on their instruction (Perez-Garcia, 2009). As evidenced by this study, a teacher's existing knowledge might facilitate collaborations that see a significant movement from the objective to the subjective enables pedagogic transformation to occur.

Similarities and Differences Practicing in the Virtual Training Environments

As it presently exists, most professional development training requires little to no advanced technical skill. In other words, it is sufficient for a teacher to have just basic computing skills. Also, many of the programs that teachers use on a regular basis (i.e. word processing, e-mail, grade programs) share similar features. This, of course, is not insignificant. To maintain the status quo and the teacher's position as object, the institution would not encourage the use of non-traditional programs for training. Even when the training involves technology, the results for reflection and practice are similar to those when the training involves instructional strategies. Training, even involving technology is simply meant to reproduce the system (Chalmers & Keown, 2006).

Thus, for the 21st-century teacher who is more engaged with technology than ever before, a significant rationale would have to be put forward by the institution for offering or requiring training in an avatar-based virtual environment. Just as with the pre-service teachers in this study, most in-service teachers still receive professional training face-to-face. Even if the training is offered on-line, the options for interaction with colleagues are limited, and the programs tend to be designed to illicit static responses. For today's teacher, then, there would have to be some significant motivation (either from the institution or some personal/professional motivation) to receive professional training using a program such as *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004).

As Rosen (2010) pointed out, there has not been a study conducted to suggest if or how teachers are using virtual classrooms with their students. Therefore, in considering the technical skill set of the 21st-century teacher, most teachers have the basic computer skills associated with the fiduciary responsibilities of their job (Addison & O'Hare, 2008). For the most part, teachers can compose e-mails, work in word processing programs, calculate grades using some grade-documenting program, and use Internet-based resources. External to the institutional setting, many teachers regularly use social networking sites such as *Facebook* (Facebook, 2009) or are at least familiar with instant messaging and chat programs. However, using social networking programs does not necessarily require the same skill set that is needed for an avatar-based virtual world. Accordingly, many of a teacher's existing computer skills mirror the skills needed to interact effectively in a social networking program (typing, inserting pictures in a document, using a local chat bar). Therefore, the pre-service teachers in this study had to experience not only a pedagogic transition but also to experience technical growth beyond their existing skills.

It was the similarities and differences between *Second Life* (Linden Labs, 2004) and *Skype* (Skype Limited, 2009) that prompted the pre-service teachers' technical growth. This was particularly noted in the amount of collaborative language used by the pre-service teachers during the interactions. More collaborative language was used in *Skype* based on two factors reported by the pre-service teachers. First, *Skype's* chat and video features and its user interface are very similar to many social networking

sites such as *Facebook* – the social networking program that all of the pre-service teachers regularly used. This facilitated their interactions noted by more tallied instances of collaborative utterances. While *Second Life* did have chat and voice capabilities, there were no other features of the program similar to common social networking programs, thereby reducing the number of tallied collaborative utterances. Second, the video conferencing feature digitally mirrored what the pre-service teachers were accustomed to in terms of their practical experiences, i.e. working with ELLs face-to-face. *Second Life*, even though it had voice capability, has end-users interacting with avatars which may or may not resemble the actual user. Thus, in training pre-service teachers, a more salient training plan may include beginning in *Skype* to acclimate teachers to the training environment before moving them to an MVUE such as *Second Life* to enable intramental development.

Conclusion

In traditional teacher training programs, opportunities to engage in collaborative practice are typically abandoned in favor of efficiency (Albion & Maddux, 2007). Also, most opportunities to practice are conducted peer-to-peer, the results of which are intended simply to restate the goals of the training session. As Kwo (1996) pointed out, reactions to the training sessions were reflective of what the teacher *thinks* the trainer wants to *hear* rather than a true reflection of what had actually been internalized from the training sessions. Thus, teachers continue to be objects of the training, conforming to the set institutional standards. Atwell (2007) suggested that this evinces a dysfunctional relationship between institutional expectations and teacher cognitive development. Also, there is typically no follow-up discussion after the trainings occurred further contributing to both cognitive and pedagogic isolation (Johnson, 1997; Zembylas, 2003).

When a teacher's pedagogic knowledge and identity moves from the objective to subjective, this freedom does not translate to an institution's fixed training model (Chalmers & Keown, 2006). Thus, any sociocultural interactions a teacher might have had or attempted during the trainings are reduced to pre-determined bites of information considered relevant by the institution but often actually irrelevant to the actual teacher-participants (Freeman & Richards, 1996). Accordingly, our learning objective in this study was to determine if relocating traditional face-to-face training to a virtual environment would be liberating enough that these pre-service teachers could experience authentic development beyond their existing pedagogic knowledge.

This led us to consider an overall question that provided the exploratory foundation around which this study was conceptualized. This more global question considered whether teachers can experience authentic pedagogic transformation when traditional face-to-face training is relocated in a virtual environment. The idea of reconceptualizing how teachers receive training would certainly not be in alignment with current trends in professional development. One of the immediate recommendations from Horizon Report (2010) was the need for teacher education programs to reconceptualize training such that it more closely addresses the skill set needed by the 21st-century educator. As Shulman and Hutchins (2004) pointed out, much of the information presented in current training comes in the form of pre-packaged items conceived around what are considered to be idealized instructional models. Thus, the *simulations* and *practice* are so detached from the teacher's reality that they frequently become stored away, rendering their practical application meaningless which ultimately contributes to the teacher remaining as the institutional object. This detachment is what most often leads to the cyclical pattern of pedagogic isolation that is entirely characteristic of teacher training programs and practicing in-service teachers in the United States. Also, reinventing the traditional training model presents time and cost issues that many school districts consider prohibitive (Horizon Report, 2010); for most school districts, it is easier just to maintain the status quo (Shulman & Hutchins, 2004).

References

- Addison, A., & O'Hare, W. (2008). How can massive multi-user virtual environments and virtual role play enhance traditional teaching practice? *Conference proceedings at Researching Learning in Virtual Environments* (pp. 7–16), Milton Keynes, UK: Open University.

- Albion, P. R., & Maddux, C. (2007). Editorial: Networked knowledge: Challenges for teacher education. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, 15, 303-310.
- Alessi, S. M., & Trollip, S. R. (2001). *Multimedia for learning: Methods of development*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Atwell, G. (2007, January). Personal learning environments: The future of elearning? *eLearning Papers*, 2, 1-7. Retrieved from, <http://www.elearningeuropa.info/files/media/media11561.pdf>
- Beijaard, D., Meijer, P., & Verloop, N. (2003). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20(2) 107-128
- Beepa. (2008). Fraps (Version 2.9.8) [Computer software]. San Francisco, CA: Beepa.
- Bell, B., & Gilbert, J. K. (1996). *Teacher development: A model from science education*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bell, A., & Morris, G. (2009). Engaging Professional Learning in Online Environments. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 25(5), 700-713. Retrieved from <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet25/bell.pdf>
- Chalmers, L., & Keown, P. (2006). Communities of practice and professional development. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 25, 139-156.
- Chan, C. K., & Pang, M. F. (2006). Teacher collaboration in learning communities. *Teaching Education*, 17, 1-5.
- Clark, R. C., & Mayer, R. E. (2006). Using rich media wisely. In R. A. Reiser & J. V. Dempsey (Eds.), *Trends and issues in instructional design and technology* (pp. 311-322). Columbus, OH: Pearson.
- Clarke, M. (2009). The ethico-politics of teacher identity. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 41, 185-200.
- Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Cooper, K., & Olson, M. R. (1996). The multiple 'I's' of teacher identity. In M. Kompf, R. W. Bond, D. Dworet, & R. T. Boak (Eds.), *Changing research and practice: Teachers' professionalism, identities, and knowledge* (pp. 78-89). Bristol, PA: Falmer Press.
- Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Day, C., Stobart, G., Sammons, P., Kington, A., Gu, Q., Smees, R., & Mujtaba, T. (2006). *Variations in teachers' work, lives and effectiveness* (Research Report RR743). Runcorn, Cheshire: Department for Education and Skills.
- Ducheneaut, N., Wen, M., Yee, N., & Wadley, G. (2009). Body and mind: A study of avatar personalization in three virtual worlds. *Proceedings of the 27th International Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1151-1160). Boston, MA: Association for Computing Machinery.
- Earle, R. S. (2002, January). The integration of instructional technology into public education: Promises and challenges. *Educational Technology*, 42, 5-13. Retrieved from <http://www.bookstoread.com/etp/earle.pdf>
- Erben, T. (1999). Constructing learning in a virtual immersion bath: LOTE teacher education through audiographics. In R. Debski & M. Levy (Eds.), *WorldCALL: Global perspectives on computer-assisted language learning* (pp. 229-248). Lisse, Netherlands: Swets & Zeitlinger.
- Erben, T. (2001). *Student teacher's use of microteaching activity to construct sociolinguistic knowledge within a Japanese immersion initial teacher education program in Australia*. Lancaster, UK: University of Lancaster.
- Facebook. (2009). Facebook [Computer Software]. Cambridge, MA: Facebook, Inc.
- Freeman, D. A. (1996). Renaming experience/reconstructing practice: Developing new understandings of teaching. In D. A. Freeman & J. C. Richards (Eds.), *Teacher learning in language teaching* (pp. 221-241). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Freeman, D. A., & Richards, J. C. (1996). Prologue. In D. A. Freeman & J. C. Richards (Eds.),

- Teacher learning in language teaching* (pp. 1-6). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Freire, P. (1990). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum.
- Green, N.S. (2000) *Training for work and survival*. In P.B. Joseph, S.L. Bravmann, M.A. Windschitl, E.R. Mikel, & N.S. Green. *Cultures of Curriculum*. United States: Taylor & Francis Inc
- Gunawardena, C. N., & McIsaac, M. S. (2004). Distance education. In D. H. Jonassen (Ed.), *Handbook of research for educational communications and technology* (2nd ed.). (pp. 355–395) Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Haugen, H., Ask, B., & Bjoerke, S. (2008). Online learning superior to on-campus teaching – student engagement and course content central for e-learning outcome. In G. Richards (Ed.), *Proceedings of world Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, and higher education 2008* (pp. 876–883). Chesapeake, VA: AACE.
- Hodas, S. (1996). Technology refusal and the organizational culture of schools. In R. Kling (Ed.), *Computerization and controversy: Value conflicts and social choices* (2nd ed.). (pp. 197-218). New York, NY: Morgan Kaufmann.
- Horizon Report. (2006). *The New Media Consortium*. Retrieved from http://www.nmc.org/pdf/2006_Horizon_Report.pdf
- Horizon Report. (2010). *The New Media Consortium*. Retrieved from <http://www.nmc.org/pdf/2010-Horizon-Report.pdf>
- Hou, J. (2011). The research and development of modern teaching physical environment. *Advanced Materials Research*, 271–273, 1417–1421. doi:10.4028/www.scientific.net/AMR.271-273.1417
- Johnson, K. E. (1997). Comments on Karen E. Johnson’s “The role of theory in L2 teacher education”: The author responds. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31, 779-782.
- Khan, B. H. (1998). Web-based instruction (WBI): an introduction. *Educational Media International*, 35(2), 63–71.
- Khan, B. H. (2000). A framework for web-based learning. *TechTrends*, 44(3), 51.
- Kim, D. (2009). Podcasting and online journals: ESOL resources. In G. Strong & A. Smith (Eds.), *Adult learners: Context and innovation* (pp. 31–38). Alexandria, VA: TESOL.
- Kim, D. (2011). Incorporating podcasting and blogging into a core task for ESOL teacher candidates. *Computers and Education*, 56(3), 632–641.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (1994). The post-method condition: Emerging strategies for second/foreign language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28, 27–47.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). TESOL Methods: Changing tracks, challenging trends. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40, 59–81.
- Kwo, O. (1996). Learning to teach English in Hong Kong classrooms: Patterns of reflections. In D. A. Freeman & J. C. Richards (Eds.), *Teacher learning in language teaching* (pp. 295-319). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Lasky, S. (2005). A sociocultural approach to understanding teacher identity, agency and professional vulnerability in a context of secondary school reform. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(18), 899-916.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Linden Labs. (2004). *Second Life* (Version 1.2) [Computer software]. San Francisco, CA: Linden Labs.
- Lingard, B. (2003). Where to in gender policy in education after recuperative masculinity politics? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 7, 33-56.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Wiley.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Oncu, S. (2007). The relationship between instructor practices and student engagement: What engages students in blended learning environments? Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.

- Oncu, S. & Cakir, H. (2011). Research in online learning environments: Priorities and methodologies. *Computers & Education*, 57(1), 1098-1108.
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Collins, K. M. (2007). A typology of mixed methods sampling designs in social science research. *The Qualitative Report*, 12, 281-316.
- Pérez-García, M. (2009). MUVEnation: A European peer-to-peer learning programme for teacher training in the use of MUVES in education. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 40(3), 561-567.
- Prensky, M. (2004). *A lesson for parents: How kids learn to cooperate in video games*. Retrieved from http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky_How_Kids_Learn_to_Cooperate_in_Video.games.pdf.
- Prensky, M. (2010). *Teaching digital natives: Partnering for real learning*. New York, NY: Corwin Press.
- Ringstaff, C., & Kelley, L. (2002). *The learning return on our educational technology investment: A review of findings from research*. San Francisco, CA: WestEd RTEC. Retrieved from http://www.wested.org/online_pubs/learning_return.pdf
- Rosen, L. (2010). *Rewired: Understanding the igeneration and the way we learn*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Shulman, L. S., & Hutchins, P. (2004). *Teaching as community property: Essays on higher education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Skype Limited. (2009). Skype [Computer software]. Luxembourg: Skype Technologies.
- Veletsianos, G., & Miller, C. (2008). Conversing with pedagogical agents: A Phenomenological exploration of interacting with digital entities. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 39(6), 969-986.
- Wallace, M. (1996). Structured reflection: The role of the professional project in training ESL teachers. In D. Freeman & J. C. Richards (Eds.), *Teacher learning in language teaching* (pp. 281-294). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wells, G. (2007). The mediating role of discoursing in activity. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 14, 160-177.
- Windschitl, M. A., & Joseph, P. B. (2000) Confronting the dominant order. In P. B. Joseph, S. Bravmann, M. A. Windschitl, W. R. Mikel, & N. S. Green. (Eds.), *Cultures of curriculum* (pp. 137-160). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Yin, R. K. (2008). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Zembylas, M. (2003). Emotions and teacher identity: A poststructural perspective. *Teachers and Teaching Theories and Practice*, 9, 213-238.

Implementing SDL As Professional Development In K-12

Krista Steinke

Florida Atlantic University, Jupiter, FL USA

[Abstract] This article features a discussion comparing the effectiveness of self-directed learning as a form of professional development and as an alternative to pedagogical models of training. Five journal articles related to various aspects of self-directed learning are synthesized. Ideas from these articles are taken into consideration in the argument that K-12 schools would benefit from implementing SDL as a primary source of learning for school faculty. Also included in this article is the discussion of SDL as a brain-based method of learning, a method of workplace learning, relation to mentoring, cultural challenges, and the increased responsibilities and independence of workers as self-directed learners. Connections between SDL and adult learning theory including Maslow and McClusky are additionally discussed. Lastly, the implications of SDL in the K-12 setting are discussed. Overall, this article argues that an increase in SDL as professional development will develop a workforce of teachers that can increase their competence through self-direction.

[Keywords] Professional development; self-directed learning; brain-based method; pedagogical model; andragogy; teacher competency

Introduction

While pedagogical training has been used in the workplace for years, the birth of andragogy as a form of teaching and learning in the workplace has opened up new possibilities for self-directed learning in the workplace. This is not to say that pedagogy should be eliminated altogether. There is a time and place for traditional methods, for instance, when teaching someone, step by step, how to use a computer program and allowing the learner to practice each step. It takes an effective leader to determine the appropriate amount of pedagogy and andragogy for his or her organization. SDL provides a way for teachers to improve their competence through a psychology-based method that takes into consideration the individual's experiences and cultural background. This article will discuss the following research question: Is self-directed learning more effective in improving teacher competency than pedagogical training? If so, why is it more effective and what are the implications of implementing SDL in the K-12 setting?

Theoretical Framework

Self-directed learning is a psychology-based method of learning. SDL is unique in that it gives the individual an opportunity to become an involved learner. Rather than waiting to be told what they need to learn, self-directed learners figure out what they need to learn and work towards mastery of skills that are relevant to their positions. This requires the self-directed learner to take on more responsibilities than a learner in a traditional setting.

The danger of continuing to use pedagogical training is that it has created a culture of dependence on top-down instructional processes. Many learners are not self-directed because they are accustomed to being explicitly taught everything that they need to know. The challenge for administrators and training developers is to help these employees to become more self-sufficient in acquiring information as they need it. This paper will discuss the many obstacles faced in the effort to implement self-directed learning as a form of professional development in the K-12 setting and how they can be overcome. In many K-12 schools and districts, pedagogy is the sole method of professional development for teachers. Lucas (2005) argues that the pedagogical model is ineffective for the following reasons:

...the traditional deficit-based, teacher-centered model that predominates in the majority of programs leaves much to be desired. Workers seldom have a say in program planning, which is generally limited to specific work-related subject

matters... Gallo suggests that they can better serve their students, as well as the organization, by adopting a learner-centered approach” (pp. 316-317).

In order to encourage self-directed learning for teachers, schools must begin to use this “learner-centered approach” (pp. 317). With programs such as PD 360, an online program that allows teachers to study topics of their choice at their own pace, the world of self-directed learning is becoming accessible for K-12 teachers. However, programs like this are limited and most professional development occurs in the format of workshops rather than individualized online courses.

In addition to the practical benefits of SDL, there are several theoretical connections to SDL. Both Knowles and McClusky provide the theoretical framework for SDL. Knowles’s six assumptions of andragogy are clearly present in SDL. According to Malcolm Knowles (as cited in Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007), there are six “assumptions” of andragogy that are important for adult learners:

1. As a person matures, his or her self-concept moves from that of a dependent personality toward one of a self-directing human being.
2. An adult accumulates a growing reservoir of experience, which is a rich resource for learning.
3. The readiness of an adult to learn is closely related to the developmental tasks of his or her social role.
4. There is a change in time perspective as people mature—from future application of knowledge to immediacy of application. Thus, an adult is more problem centered than subject centered in learning [Knowles, 1980, pp. 44-45]...
5. The most potent motivations are internal rather than external (Knowles & Associates, 1984, pp. 12).
6. Adults need to know why they need to learn something (Knowles, 1984, p. 84)

It is these six traits of an adult learner that comprise the need for self-directed learning. The first and last assumptions are perhaps the most important assumptions that can be seen in SDL. The first assumption describes how learners become more independent (p. 84). Unlike traditional pedagogy, self-directed learning allows for adults to pursue unique learning opportunities that encompass and enhance their “growing reservoir of experience” mentioned in the second principle (p. 84). The natural flexibility of self-directed learning allows it to be individualized to each learner’s needs. When implementing self-directed learning, one of the most important principles to consider is the connection between learning and problem solving mentioned in the fifth assumption. In other words, adults seek knowledge as part of the problem-solving

The last assumption and perhaps the most pertinent to the idea of self-directed adult learners is that “adults need to know why they need to learn something” (Merriam, *et al.*, 2007, pp. 84). Andragogy, unlike pedagogy, allows for adults to have a say in what they are learning (Lucas, 2005, pp. 316-317). When learners are allowed to participate in their own development of their training, they must have a solid understanding of the purpose for learning process.

While Knowles’ theory of andragogy explains what needs to be taken into consideration when teaching adults, McClusky’s theory of margin more explicitly states how adults function through “margin in life,” which Merriam, *et al.* (2007) define the as “the ratio of load to power” (p. 93). Due to the heavy “load” that teachers often carry (particularly those new to the career), SDL allows teachers to complete learning activities on their own time when they are able to fit it into their “margin in life” (p. 93). The effect of too many training sessions for newer teachers can result in overwhelming teachers rather than helping them. When professional development interferes with the time that it takes a teacher to fulfill his or her duties, it can cause more harm than good. Opting to utilize an SDL approach allows teachers to complete coursework when they have enough “power” to handle the “load” (p. 93).

Independent learners need to be able to solve problems as they arise without having to consult others. Learning how to problem solve is an important step that learners need to take in order to increase both their competency and productivity. The question that we must ask ourselves is whether or not teachers are

developing their own tools for problem solving. Having the ability to solve problems independently sets apart self-directed learners from learners who have not yet reached self-directedness.

Lucas (2005) states (in reference to Gallo), “she strongly advocates moving beyond the workplace to include learners’ personal stories and experience to advance literacy” (p. 317). In other words, as Knowles and Associates (as cited in Merriam, *et al.*, 2007, p. 84) argue, workers learn valuable lessons from experience (Knowles and Associates, as cited in Merriam, *et al.*, 2007, p. 84). In practical terms for teachers, this indicates that teachers can learn from their own mistakes as well as the mistakes of others. Gallo’s idea that literacy does not have to be limited to the workplace emphasizes the value of life experience as a means of learning. The emphasis on experience is related to Szwed’s idea of “literacy cycles” (1981), which he defines as “individual variations in abilities and activities that are conditioned by one’s stage and position in life” (p. 423).

In other words, whether teachers are experienced or inexperienced, each individual has a different background in terms of previous life experience and job experience. A middle-aged teacher who is married with a family does not have the same life experience as a recent graduate who does not yet have his or her own family, much like a teacher who is pursuing a graduate degree does not have the same perspective as a teacher who does not have the additional knowledge. While they may come from a variety of backgrounds, each is able to transfer skills from previous life experiences. A teacher who has previously worked in the pre-school setting has classroom management skills that can be transferred to any grade; a teacher who has previously worked in retail has people skills that can be utilized when communicating with the public.

The objective of workplace learning should be to increase workers’ workplace literacy. In order for this to happen, workers move through these “literacy-cycles” until they have reached “mastery” (Szwed, 1981, p. 423). One cannot become a master teacher overnight. It takes time for teachers to learn what does and does not work in terms of the subject and grade he or she is teaching, which may change over time. The many variables in the equation create a challenge for teachers. One year, a teacher may be teaching fourth grade writing, the next year fifth grade science. The unpredictability of the field of education requires flexibility on the part of the learner and the facilitator. Some learners may need to work through several different “literacy cycles” (Szwed, 1981, p. 423) for each situation in which he or she works; others may catch on more quickly. Adaptability is a skill that must be mastered in order for a teacher to become productive in such an environment.

While SDL allows for opportunities that pedagogical training does not, it is not new. According to Merriam, *et al.* (2007), “Nearly forty years ago Malcolm Knowles (1968, p. 351) proposed “a new label and a new technology” of adult learning to distinguish it from pre-adult schooling” (p. 84). Like any other skill, there is a learning curve involved in becoming a self-directed learner. It takes time for an individual to begin to become efficient in the process. It also takes time for an institution to implement SDL for its employees; perhaps this is why it has not been implemented prevalently in many schools in the past.

Literature Review

McNamara (2007), as cited in Guglielmino and Guglielmino (2008) state three benefits of utilizing SDL (p. 297). They argue that self-directed learning programs:

- accommodate employees’ learning styles and objectives...
- save substantial training costs” and
- “..achieve increased employee effectiveness” (paragraph 8).

While these ideas explain what SDL can accomplish, it is also important to understand what makes SDL so effective from a psychological perspective. According to Weiss (2000), “the brain has everything to do with learning” (p. 50). The problem with the pedagogical model is that often more effort is required on the part of the trainer than the learner. Every teacher knows that when the teacher is working harder than the student, little learning takes place. Self-directed learning reverses this trend so that the trainer becomes the facilitator who serves as a guide to direct the learner through the learning process. Hattie (2009), as cited in Jossenberger (2010), advocates for the role of teachers as “activators rather than

facilitators” (p. 429) and describes the importance of “teaching students metacognitive strategies” (p. 429). In other words, when adults learn to plan and assess their own learning, they can individually determine whether or not they have mastered a skill when they try to implement it for the first time. This is an essential skill for teachers who are working towards the improvement of their competence in specific skills.

The following is an example that I have observed from personal experience in which pedagogical training proved ineffective for the majority of participants. A school district implements a new gradebook system. Teachers sit through an hour-long training where the facilitator from the district quickly goes over the basics of the program. Participants feverishly take notes but cannot keep up with the pace of the instructor, who must keep the training brief so that the next session can take place due in the computer lab. Teachers are given a handout that explains how to perform certain functions in the program, but it is far from extensive. As a result, when teachers attempt to apply the skills that they have supposedly learned through the training, there is mass chaos. Teachers run around the school asking each other if they remember how to perform certain functions in the program. It takes each teacher hours to figure out how to use the program again, and they lose the most precious resource that a teacher can lose: valuable time. This occurs every time that grades are due, up until the end of the year. The cost of the time that is lost to the forgetting and re-learning phenomenon is immeasurable.

The logical solution? An online program that each teacher must complete in order to utilize the gradebook would have been a more logical solution than a training. A tutorial on the computer would have given teachers the opportunity to practice creating and setting up a gradebook as well as entering grades. What is the difference between this method and the first method? The first method is pedagogical rather than self-directed. The self-directed method would have allowed each teacher to complete the program at his or her own pace. When utilizing electronic SDL, there are fewer barriers to work around, such as time and space. The rushed pace of the training that was due to the limited space for teachers in the computer lab. Some teachers even had to share computers during the training, thus not allowing them to practice the skills that they needed to learn individually. Providing an extensive manual (electronic or hard copy) for each teacher would also allow each teacher to find answers to his or her questions without having to leave his or her classroom. In this example, SDL would have been much more effective than the pedagogical method.

Schenck (as cited in Weiss, 2000) points out a weakness of traditional instruction: “Often when learners get something correct, the instructor stops” (p. 50). This premature cessation of instruction in traditional training makes it difficult for workers to learn anything long enough for it to be transferred from short term to long term memory: Weiss (2000) explains the psychological reason for forgetting new skills: new information is “either discarded or planted in the long-term memory” (p. 48). This explains why so much information is so easily forgotten by learners. Without opportunities to practice, it is easy for learners to forget what they learned (or what they thought they had learned). Schenck (as cited in Weiss, 2000) suggests repetition to reinforce concepts even after learners appear to have an understanding (p. 50). SDL allows for more of this repetition than traditional training. There is no time limit to SDL, which allows for further repetition of concepts for mastery.

The flaw of the one-size-fits-all approach assumes that everyone learns at the same pace. This is where SDL diverges from pedagogy: the student is in control of determining how much practice he or she needs in order to master a skill. While many adults are prepared to take on this responsibility, some who have become accustomed to traditional methods may have difficulty making the transition to independence. Knowles (as cited in Jossenberger, *et al.*, 2010) states “Those who take initiative (1) learn more, and learn better, than those who wait passively to be taught; (2) enter into learning more purposefully and with greater motivation, and (3) tend to retain and make use of what they learn better and longer than do the reactive learners” (p. 429). Herein lies perhaps the most difficult challenge in SDL, that is guiding teachers from their ingrained, dependent attitudes towards an attitude of learning and thinking for themselves.

Zimmerman and Schunk (as cited in Jossenberger, *et al.*, 2010) also emphasize the importance of repetition in learning: “Students need to have opportunities...to rehearse and practice in order to routinise

their skills” (p. 420). The key word in this phrase is “routinise.” In order to improve efficiency and autonomy, workers must work at skills until they are able to perform them without having to consciously think about each step involved in the process. There is simply not enough time in a formal training session for each individual to practice a concept for mastery. How many times have you attended a training session, taken notes, and committed a skill to memory (or so you thought) before digging out the handout and starting from square one? Schenck (as cited in Weiss, 2000), explains this phenomenon as follows: “...after two to three weeks, memory decay stabilizes...the more active a student is in the learning process, the greater the long-term memory is” (p. 50). This positive correlation between self-involvement and retention of learning is a breakthrough in the world of workplace learning that indicates that repetition is the key to learning new skills and ideas. Putting learners in charge of their own learning may allow them to increase their competence through independent repetition.

Jossberger, Brand-Gruwel, Boshuizen, and van de Wiel (2010) describe self-directed learning as a “whole” (p. 419). This definition of SDL may be overwhelming for a teacher who is trying to accomplish the goal of becoming a more self-directed learner. Because it is so encompassing, we must break down this definition to figure out exactly what this means for teachers in the classroom. A careful examination of these definitions can help us to pinpoint exactly what actions teachers need to take to improve self-awareness and what administrators can do to support them. Self-directed learning has been defined by several different theorists. Guglielmino (2008), quotes Knowles’ definition of SDL as follows:

a process in which individuals take initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes” (p. 295)

In the same article, Guglielmino (2008) quotes another definition of SDL by Merriam, *et al.* (2007):

A highly self-directed learner...is one who exhibits initiative, independence, and persistence in learning; one who accepts responsibility for his or her own learning, and views problems as challenges, not obstacles; one who is capable of self-discipline and has a high degree of curiosity; one who has a strong desire to learn or change and is self-confident; one who is able to use basic study skills, organize his or her time and set an appropriate pace for learning, and to develop a plan for completing work; one who enjoys learning and has a tendency to be goal-oriented” (p. 295).

According to Jossenberger, *et al.* (2000), there are two components that teachers need to discover: “what needs to be learned next and how one’s learning is best accomplished” (p. 419). In order to determine their needs, teachers need to be willing to use a variety of tools for self-assessment to increase self-awareness. Given a list of skills and teaching strategies, many teachers are able to pick out the skills that he or she most needs to work on. However, it is sometimes difficult for a person to self-assess his or her own competencies. This is where classroom evaluations come into play. An important duty of administrators is to facilitate the growth of the teachers by providing them with feedback. Therefore, it is important for administrators to observe and provide feedback so teachers can know which skills to focus on for improvement.

The second component is perhaps more important than the first, as becoming a more independent learner requires a level of self-understanding. Weiss (2000) discusses the importance of this self-understanding (p. 49). Van Eekelen, Vermunt, and Boshuisen, as cited in Jossberger *et al.* (2010), describe the challenge facing many teachers in terms of learning: “others do not see a need or they do not know how to learn” (p. 423). The challenge is for adults to discover how they learn best. There are a variety of factors in determining how an adult learns. The book *Peak Learning: A Master Course in Learning How to Learn*, written by Ronald Gross, is an excellent tool for self-discovery and includes several instruments for determining how a person best learns based upon a variety of factors. The Myers-Briggs personality test and the Holland Self-Directed Search inventory are popular means of self-assessment. Swanson (2011) utilized the latter in a study that measured the effectiveness of teachers who

completed alternate certification programs (p.119).

In addition to passive learning, the practice of inundating workers with a plethora of information is also ineffective. Weiss (2000) indicates the importance of the brain's capacity to learn new things. (p. 48). When planning and developing training materials, planners must keep in mind that the goals and pace must be realistic for the learners. The amount of material to be covered and the timeline in which it is covered are vital considerations. Facilitators must cover a realistic amount of information for workers to remember and devote enough time so that the information can be thoroughly processed. Weiss introduces Sprenger's path analogy, which likens learning a new skill to creating a path in the woods, as it becomes increasingly apparent every time it is used (p. 48). In other words, learners need multiple opportunities to practice a skill before they can become fluent in that skill.

In contrast to pedagogy, self-directed learning allows learners to take on the responsibility of learning. The learner gets out of the learning what he or she puts into it. Much like the second principle of Knowles's theory of andragogy, Kosik, as cited in Weiss (2000), argues that experience is important to adults' learning (p. 48). SDL allows adult learners to have more experiences in their learning than learners who are just going through the motions.

Jossenberger (2010) defines self-regulated learning as "the micro level that deals with the execution of a task" (p. 418). Jossenberger *et al.* (2010), state that there are several "prerequisites" for adult learning to take place. Among these they list "a will to learn" and Brockett's idea of "the possibility to choose" (p. 423). In other words the worker needs to want to learn in order to learn effectively. Nearly all teachers have at some point experienced what it is like to teach someone who does not have the motivation to learn. In the traditional training model, learners do not have much choice in what they are learning. Because SDL differs so greatly from the pedagogical model, it takes time for a learner to learn to make the decisions that will help him or her to learn what needs to be learned.

Weiss (2000) explains that it is important to consider "multiple modalities" when planning and delivering instruction (p. 49). In instructing a group of teachers, a facilitator must keep in mind that he or she will be working with a variety of experience from novice to veteran teachers as well as those from different backgrounds such as public or private school experience, other states and nationalities. Nah (1999) suggests that employees still possess the traditions from their home (p. 25). It is important for administrators and facilitators to keep this in mind when developing training in terms of the expectations for students. Jossenberger *et al.* (2010) argues that pedagogy lacks individual considerations: "The traditional practical-learning environment does not resemble the future workplace setting and all students are dealing with identical study material (tasks out of context) at the same time, which leaves little room for the individual needs" (p. 425).

Methods

The methods used in this research project included the review of five journal articles related to SDL. The following issues have been discussed in the above literature review: reasons for the implementation of SDL, how to effectively implement SDL, and how to face challenges to SDL in the workplace.

- What are the psychology-based reasons for implementing SDL? (Weiss, 2000)
- How has SDL changed the workforce? (Packer, 2000)
- How can mentoring develop employees as self-directed learners? (Galbraith, 2003)
- What are the cultural considerations involved in self-directed learning? (Nah, 1999)
- How do adults become efficient self-directed learners? (Jossenberger, *et al.*, 2010)

The following analysis is based on the review of five journal articles that discuss self-directed learning in various contexts. Although each article discusses self-directed learning from a different angle, each article supports the argument for the implementation of SDL in the K-12 setting.

Discussion

In addition to being brain-based, self-directed learning has opened up new avenues for learners. Many learners are utilizing the technique of self-directed learning outside of the workplace in order to improve

their knowledge of future career interests as well as personal interests. The rise of self-directed learning as a method of voluntary self-teaching has made it possible for workers to teach themselves about things that they would not have the opportunity to learn about in traditional training sessions. The ability to individualize the learning experience has given way to a new type of learning known as “free agent learning” (Packer, 2000, p. 39). Workers who practice this type of learning are different from the workers of the past. According to Packer (2000), these self-directed learners are likely to switch from job to job frequently (p. 41). This is not a negative trait, but demonstrates they want to become versatile employees by gaining experience in different positions and various fields. This occurs in the field of education just like it occurs everywhere else. A teacher with a bachelor’s degree may start out as a classroom teacher, go on to earn his or her Master’s and Specialist degrees, and move into a leadership or administrative position. While in the administrative position, the employee may earn a doctoral degree and decide to leave the K-12 system to share their expertise in the college setting.

What is the difference between a self-directed learner and a “free agent” (p. 41)? According to Packer (2000), “free agents” learn because they want to, not simply out of necessity (p. 41). While SDL is utilized for the good of an organization, “free agent learning” is utilized by learners in order for an employee to achieve his or her “career goals” (p. 41). Packer (2000) offers two different definitions for the term “free agent learner” (p. 41). The first refers to “people who take responsibility for their own learning for any purpose” while the other refers to those who are “engaged in self-directed learning that is career specific and develops competencies that can promote employability and career success” (p. 41). Regardless of how one defines these two forms of SDL, the bottom line remains the same: SDL is changing the workforce in unexpected ways. Because workers are so likely to leave professions after a short time, employers are faced with the challenge of retaining these employees. The increase in the amount of education has contributed to a workforce that is more educated than before. Higher degrees are more easily attainable due to technology and SDL. Workers who used to stay in the classroom for thirty years are now looking for the next step up in their career as they obtain higher degrees.

Packer (2000) argues that the emergence of SDL is “a result of the changing employment contract and new educational technologies” (p. 39). It is no secret that technology has had an immense impact on the expansion of SDL both in the workplace and outside the workplace. Workers have more immediate access to an endless amount of information through the Internet than ever. Online databases now contain more information than libraries themselves. Books are now available electronically, and handbooks can be downloaded as PDFs. The growth of online learning, both formal and informal, has had an impact on the learning of workers. For example, the availability of online college classes make it possible for teachers to complete their Master’s degrees online. While adults who are working towards higher degrees formerly had to attend classes, online learning has made it possible for those who may not have chosen to complete a degree in the past due to work schedules to complete one now. Many beginning teachers are enrolling in graduate school immediately after the completion of their teaching degrees, making it possible for them to complete their Master’s degrees while they are working full time.

Perhaps it is this increase in the accessibility of further education by full time employees that has led to a decrease in teachers who remain in the profession. According to Alliance for Excellent Education (2005), “...nearly half of all teachers who enter the field leave it within a mere five years, and the best and brightest teachers are often the first to leave” (p. 2). Packer (2000) argues that “...employees often leave because they feel unappreciated, don’t see a clear career path, or both” and suggests that leaders “Encourage, acknowledge, and reward employees who acquire additional skills” (p. 40). In many schools, teachers who have completed Master’s degrees are not compensated for this additional education. This is one factor that may be contributing to the high rates of teacher attrition.

What are the implications of SDL in the workforce? As mentioned by Packer (2000), employees are no longer staying with one employer for a lifetime. He cites the following statistics from *New York Times Magazine*: “The average 32-year old American has already worked for nine different companies” (p. 41). and goes on to state that out of a group of Generation X workers that he knows personally stayed no more than a year at each job that they held (p. 40). When speaking with these workers, he determined that the types of jobs that workers are seeking are those that will help them to better themselves professionally

rather than those with the highest pay or best benefits. He tells a story of a conversation with these Generation X workers who were spending a surprising amount of their own time in SDL for the purpose of advancing to the next level or the next better career.

Galbraith discusses the importance of mentoring in relation to SDL: "A true and complete mentoring process (a) promotes the enhancement of self-directedness in learners, (b) fosters transformational change in the way they view their world in which they live, work, and play, and (c) encourages autonomy, creativity, and independence" (p. 9). While mentoring is an effective technique for improving workers' SDL skills, it is often underused in the field of education. In some counties, teachers are only assigned mentors during their first year of teaching. Often these mentors are other full time teachers with their own responsibilities or district-wide mentors who have several mentees across the district. It is difficult in either situation for these mentors to spend an adequate amount of time with each mentee to discuss strategies for the improvement of their teaching skills. As a result, first-year teachers must find others to speak with when questions arise.

Galbraith (2000) describes two types of mentoring: formal and informal. In reality, the formal mentor-mentee relationship is usually not the teacher's main source of information; these teachers often end up creating informal mentor-mentee relationships with those who are available to assist them at the times when they need assistance. While formal meetings and observations with mentors are helpful, a scheduled meeting with a mentor does not provide the daily guidance that most new teachers need. New teachers who wish to become more effective must learn to combine SDL with informal mentoring.

Howe (as cited in Quarter and Midha, 2001), states the following regarding formal and informal training: "... 80 per cent of learning occurs outside the formal classroom" (p. 1). What does this mean for beginning teachers? They must be self-directed in forming relationships with those who can assist them when they need assistance. It is not practical to learn everything they need to know in the formal traditional workshop setting. In addition to creating effective informal mentoring partnerships, beginning teachers, just like novices in any career, must be able to find information on their own as much as possible.

While self-directed learning has begun to transform the workplace and the current generation of entry-level workers, there are several challenges to this method of learning. Often, issues such as cultural barriers, resistance to change, and lack of self-understanding make it difficult to implement the practice of SDL in the workplace. This is one of the reasons why it is so important for learners to become self-directed so that they can improve their skills independently.

According to Nah (1999), independence is interpreted as "threatening" rather than as a virtue (p. 18). For some workers, these cultural barriers pose a challenge to becoming self-directed learners. Nah uses the example of Korean culture, in which interdependence is valued equally with independence: "Becoming independent without being interdependent passes for immaturity or self centeredness" (p. 18).

Because the teaching population is diverse, it is important to keep in mind the original cultures of the teachers as workers in the workplace and how one's primary discourse (Gee, 1989, p. 527) may pose problems for them. Nah (1999) argues that the concept of self-directed learning may be foreign to workers who come from backgrounds where this is not the norm: "...the essence of self-directed learning is not as highly valued in other cultures as in America" (p. 18). According to Nah (1999), Korean women particularly have difficulties with the idea of SDL. She explains that in a research study,

Self-directed learning processes did not lead the women to become independent of their mentors or other learning resources. Nor were their self-directed learning processes wholly dedicated to personal growth or interests, but instead to the well being of other people. One of the characteristics of these self-directed learners may be interdependence, a virtue that Korean culture appraises highly." (p. 19)

The significance of this study in terms of workplace learning is that workers come with a variety of backgrounds that must be considered when they are learning a new skill such as self-directed learning. Like the workers in this example, many workers also come with traditions from their home countries. In

the workplace, it can be a challenge to teach these workers a set of new expectations. These sets of expectations make up what Gee (1989) refers to as “primary discourse” which “constitutes our original and home-based sense of identity” (p. 527). Most importantly, Gee points out, “primary discourses differ significantly across various social (cultural, ethnic, regional, and economic) groups in the United States (p. 527). The problem that the Korean workers were experiencing in Nah’s article was what Gee (1989) describes as “conflict” between two discourses. The workers’ “primary discourse” conflicted with their “secondary discourses”—those that come from “home-based institutions” (Gee, 1989, p. 527). While this problem may be prevalent in education (as well as other fields), it can be overcome. Workers must be guided through the process of learning the “secondary discourse” in order to effectively learn a skill, while administration must also respect the workers’ “primary discourses” (p. 527). This variety of backgrounds is all the more reason to implement SDL in the workplace due to flexibility and differences in background knowledge.

According to Jossenberger *et al.* (2000), “it is a misconception to believe that learners are automatically self-directed” (p. 419). What can be done regarding learners who are in the workplace but are not self-directed? Administrators and upper level staff need to work with these learners to guide them towards self-direction. Jossenberger *et al.* (2000) suggest the following: “We propose that a first step in learning to self-direct one’s learning is the skill to self-regulate learning activities and task performances, because the quality of performed tasks and activities will be input for future learning” (p. 419). Jossenberger *et al.* (2010) explain that learning to self-regulate requires discipline on the part of the worker. It is only after this discipline is acquired that a worker can truly become a self-directed learner.

A lack of self-direction in learners may occur for two reasons: the workers may be new to the workplace environment or they may be accustomed to an environment in which they are not required to take responsibility for their own learning. Either way, workplaces must encourage SDL in workers if they expect their workers to become more self-directed. Knowles and Associates (as cited in Merriam, *et al.*, 2007) argue that “intrinsic” motivation is more effective than “extrinsic” motivation (p. 84). In other words, workers must be willing to become self-directed in their learning. Self-direction cannot be effectively forced on learners who do not desire to take the initiative of a self-directed learner.

We have all heard the adage “You cannot teach an old dog new tricks.” In the world of education, it is sometimes more difficult to expect an experienced teacher to take on a new behavior than to expect a newer teacher to do the same. While new teachers are still becoming accustomed to the field and are accustomed to change, teachers who have been doing things the same way throughout their careers may see change as more of a challenge. To them, learning new ways of thinking and learning in the field is much like learning a “secondary discourse” (Gee, 1989, p. 527).

Jossenberger *et al.* (2000) list three phases in what they call “the learning cycle;” these phases consist of the “forethought phase,” the “performance phase,” and the “reflection phase” (pp. 420-423). They describe the first phase as the “preparation phase” (p. 420). The next phase emphasizes the importance of monitoring of learning. This is not an easy step in the process as it requires the worker’s attention to be spread in multiple directions at once. The third phase requires “assessing and evaluating” as mentioned above (p. 421). Without these two components, it is difficult to improve the other two steps in the process. School leaders need to ensure that each teacher is assessed and evaluated on a regular basis. However, this responsibility does not solely fall on the administration. Jossenberger *et al.* (2010) insist that “skillful learners seek opportunities to self-evaluate their learning progress and they strive to enhance their performance” (p. 421). While it is essential for teachers to have feedback from others, self-assessment can “systematically improve their performance based on adaptive strategies used” (p. 421). When broken down into three steps, the skills that one must learn in order to become a self-directed learner can be used as guidelines for teachers who are moving towards self-directedness.

Implementing SDL as a form of professional development in K-12 schools allows for teachers, as learners, to focus on individual needs. While it has been a challenge to implement self-directed learning for the purposes of professional development in the K-12 setting, these challenges can be overcome if both teachers and administrators work together by practicing the strategies suggested in the five articles. Failure to practice these strategies places schools at risk for problems such as continued lack of self-

directedness and low teacher competence. An increase in independence occurs through repeated “learning cycles” (Jossenberger et al., 2010, pp. 420-423). This continuous addition of “new information” (Weiss, 2000, p. 48) is what allows and helps teachers to improve their performance. If these strategies are followed, perhaps someday all teachers will become what Packer (2000) describes as “free agent learners” (p. 39).

References

- Alliance for Excellent Education. (2005). Teacher attrition: A costly loss to the profession and to the states. *Issue Brief*. Retrieved from, <http://www.all4ed.org/files/archive/publications/TeacherAttrition.pdf>.
- Galbraith, M.W. (2003). Mentoring toward self-directedness. *Adult Learning*, 14(4), 9-11.
- Gee, J. P. (1989). Literacy, discourse, and linguistics: Introduction and What is literacy? *Journal of Education*, 171(1), 5-25.
- Howe, W. A. (1991). Factors that facilitate or impede workplace learning among managers in a chapter of the American Red Cross. Ed.D. Dissertation. *Columbia University Teachers College*.
- Guglielmino, L. M., & Guglielmino, P. J. (2008). Productivity in the workplace: The role of self-directed learning and the implications for human resource management. *International Journal of Human Resources Management*, 8(4), 293-305.
- Knowles, M. (1975). *Self-directed learning: A guide for learners and teachers*. Chicago: Follet Publishing Company.
- Jossberger, H., Brand-Gruwel, S., Boshuizen, H., & van de Wiel, M. (2010). The challenge of self-directed and self-regulated learning in vocational education: a theoretical analysis and synthesis of requirements. *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 62(4), 415-440.
- Lucas, T. (2005). Reading the world of work: A learner-centered approach to workplace literacy and ESL. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 55(4), 316-318.
- Merriam, S. B., Caffarella, R. S., & Baumgartner, L. M. (2007). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- McNamara, C. (2007). Strong value of self-directed learning in the workplace. *Free Management Library*, Retrieved from, http://www.managementhelp.org/trng_dev/methods/slf_drct.htm#anchor1751893.
- Nah, Y. N.Y. (1999). Can a self-directed learner be independent, autonomous and interdependent?: Implications for practice. *Adult Learning*, 11(1), 18-19.
- Packer, A. (2000). Getting to know the employee of the future: What does the free agent learner phenomenon mean for your organization? *Training & Development*, 54(8), 39-43.
- Sprenger, M. (1999). *The brain in action*. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Szwed, (1981). The ethnography of literacy. In Cushman, E., Kintgen, E.R., Kroll, B.M., & Rose, M., et al. *Literacy: A Critical Source Book*. (pp. 421-429). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Swanson, P. B. (2011). Georgia's grow-your-own teacher programs attract the right stuff. *High School Journal*, 94(3), 119-133.
- Quarter, J., & Midha, H. (2001). Informal learning processes in a worker cooperative. SSHRC Research Network, NALL Working Paper Number 37. Retrieved from, <http://uwcc.wisc.edu/info/worker/nall37.pdf>.
- Weiss, R. P. (2000). Memory and learning. *Training & Development*, 46-50.

The Impact of Addressee on the Form of Language Used by the Speaker

Hamzeh Mohammad Al-Zghoul and Abdel-Rahman Abu-Melhim

Department of English, Irbid University College, Al- Balqa' Applied University, Jordan

[Abstract] This paper seeks to address the effect of the addressee on the form of language used by the speaker (formal and Informal) in certain Jordanian speech communities, where people speak differently according to whom they are addressing. The aim of this study is to investigate the social factors that affect our speech such as, age, gender and educational background. The results of this study revealed that the older the addressee is, the more the standard variety of the language is used; the younger the addressee is, the more the colloquial variety of language is used. Moreover, the standard variety of Arabic was used more often than the colloquial variety when people speak with female compared to male speakers. Finally, It also demonstrated that the standard variety tend to be used more with people of a high level of education.

[Keywords] addressee; standard language; social factors; language style; language variety; colloquial variety

Introduction

Language varies according to the place where it is used and with whom we are using it as well as the person who is using it. All of these factors can affect the choice of language form. The topic of the conversation, the place, and the addressee are important factors that can affect our choice of language form. To illustrate that, consider the following conversations:

First Conversation

A. Could you loan me your pen, please?

B. Yes, sure.

Context (Between two strangers at the library)

Second Conversation

A. Give me your pen, please?

B. Take it.

Context (Between two friends at the library)

The above two examples express the effect of addressee on the form of language used by the speakers. The speech in both conversations is affected by the social context of the conversation. So, we can observe that the same message can be conveyed or expressed differently to various people.

Review of Related Literature

Discussing language use, Morgan (1986) comments that language is gendered. This means that there is a lack of neutrality in the terms and expressions of men and women in language. Keith and Shuttleworth (2000, p. 222) suggested that women talk more than men, talk too much, are more polite, are indecisive/hesitant, complain and nag, ask more questions, support each other, are more co-operative, whereas men swear more, don't talk about emotions, talk about sport more, talk about women and machines in the same way, insult each other frequently, are competitive in conversation, dominate conversation, speak with more authority, give more commands, interrupt more.

Brown and Dell (1987) tested how addressees' needs affect utterance planning by having speakers read stories silently and then retell them to confederate addressees. "Language varies according to use and users and according to where it is used and to whom, as well as according to who is using it. The addresses and the context affect our choice of code or variety, whether language, dialect or style" (Holmes, 1992, p. 245). However, speakers appear to use gender stereotypes to assess what addressees are

likely to know and adjust what they say accordingly (Fussell & Krauss, 1992).

In terms of language use, the social constructionist theory assumes that males and females are not using one particular language style all the time, but they exchange styles based on the social context the interactions (Coates & Johnson, 2001). The level of formality in the language used by speakers plays a significant role in determining the type of language variety used by interlocutors. This is illustrated in Lobov's study regarding language variation (1966). This means that speakers have an awareness of the role of situational context when adjusting their speech. Furthermore, factors like conversational partner and other speech conditions (e.g., speech versus writing) can affect a speaker's degree of vernacular use (Rickford & McNair-Knox, 1994; Ervin-Tripp, 2001). In spontaneous conversation, speakers *appear* to tailor their utterances to the needs of their addressees. For example, adult speakers produce short and simplified utterances with exaggerated prosodic contours when speaking to infants (Fernald & Simon, 1984). A study dealing with the type of language used by children in conversational interactions revealed that even four-year-olds use simpler language with younger children than they do with adults or with each other (Shatz & Gelman, 1973).

It may be added that some facial expressions by the addressee can affect the style of conversation. For example, speakers talking to a smiling audience are found to process the communicated information in a global manner, whereas speakers talking to a frowning audience tune to analytic processing (Soldat & Sinclair, 2001). A number of other related studies have found stronger differences in same-sex interactions with higher levels of positive social behavior and lower levels of task behavior directed at female partners. (Aries, 1976; Carli, 1989; Johnson et al., 1996).

Statement of the Problem

The main problem addressed in this study is the insufficient knowledge base available about the influence of addressee on the form of language used by the speakers in the Jordanian speech community.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine how the use of language changes according to the addressee in the Jordanian speech community and to provide insights into the effects of age, gender and educational background on the form of language used whether standard or vernacular since language varies and is affected by different social factors in determining our choice of variety.

Sample of the Study

This study is applied directly to some Jordanian speakers including instructors and students of Jordan University of Science and Technology, Yarmouk University, Al – Balqa' Applied University and other subjects residing in Irbid and Ajloun regions. The level of education of these people varies accordingly. Some of them are PhD holders, others M.A. holders; some others are B.A holders, apart from those educated at the secondary level and illiterate individuals.

Methodology

The data of the study were collected by using a questionnaire. The first section of the comprehensive questionnaire was designed to elicit demographic data such as, age, sex, occupation, educational background and place of residence. The second section was designed to elicit data on language use among the speakers in Jordanian community. The study sample consisted of 100 Jordanian subjects, 65 males and 35 females, who were chosen randomly ranging from in age from 18 to 30.

Discussion and Analysis

Formality of the style of speaking depends primarily on the addressee; if one knows someone else he/she will more likely use a relaxed and casual variety with the interlocutor. So people tend to use more standardized varieties with those they don't know and more vernacular varieties with their friends. The speakers and addressees relationship is very important in determining the appropriate style of speaking

used in the conversation. Also, how well you know someone or how close you feel to them, this relative social distance and solidarity are important dimensions in the style of speech. People may converge or adapt their speed of speech, the grammatical patterns, their intonation and the length of their utterances according to their addressees (Holmes, 1992, p. 247).

Speaking of the role of context in conversation among children and their interlocutors, (Youssef, 1993, p. 257) argues that "audience-oriented speech is not always conditioned by the addressee, but by the child's discernment of which person was of primary importance for him or her among the group of listeners". Moreover, many other factors can affect the form of speech like, solidarity between people, whether people work together or not, social roles, whether they are cousins or not, social distance and people's social status.(Janet Holmes, 1992, p. 247). This paper discusses the most important factors that can be used in changing the form of speech in Jordanian speech community namely Age, Gender and Educational Background.

Age Factor

Kemper et al. (1995) found that younger speakers simplified their speech for elderly addressees by talking more slowly, using shorter sentences and fewer subordinate clauses. Our Jordanian speech community can be divided into three age groups (children, adults, and the elderly) this study focuses on the differences between children and elderly people. When talking to a child our form of speech will be different from that used when talking with an adult or elderly person, when talking to children we are going to use a simplified form of speech to convey a message.

Eighty-five percent (85 %) of the subjects tested in the questionnaire reported that they are going to change their form of speech when talking to older people use simple vocabulary, grammatical construction and formal form of speech because they are older than us and we are expected to respect them according to our religion and culture. Whereas, 15% of the subjects reported that they are not going to change their form of speech when talking to older people or children stating that the nature of the topic being talked about affects the style of speech rather than the age of addressee. Accordingly, it may be inferred that as people get older our form of speech will be different and more formal. Figure 1 below represents such relationship between changing the form of speech according to the age of addressee in the Jordanian speech community.

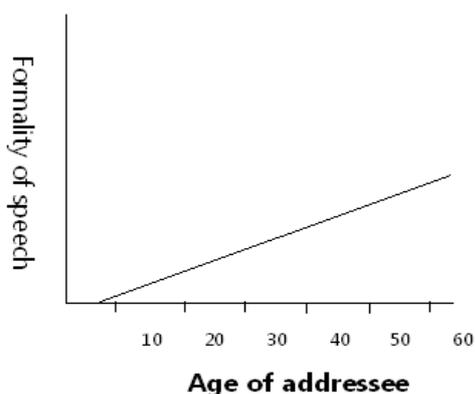


Figure 1: Relationship between age of addressee and formality of language used by the speaker

Gender Factor

Barrie Thorne et al. (1975) point out that "interest in the different relations of genders to their language dates back at least to 1665, the year of the publication of a report which cites different women's and men's forms in speech... while the cataloguing of gender differences in language has seemed the primary task to most investigators, and the whole task to some." The gender of the addressee whether you are talking to male or female speakers will affect your style of speech whether you speak formally or informally. Ninety-three percent of the subjects surveyed in the questionnaire reported that they are going to change their

form of speech when they talk with female speakers because of the social distance between them and will use formal language as opposed to male speakers. Whereas, 7 % of the subjects stated that they are not going to change their form of speech when they talk with female or male speakers but there are other factors like the aim of the conversation, the social context, and topic of conversation that will affect change in the form of speech. Figure 2 below represents the relationship between changing the form of speech according to the gender of the addressee in the Jordanian speech community. It indicates clearly the effect of gender of addressee on the form of language used by the speakers in Jordanian speech community.

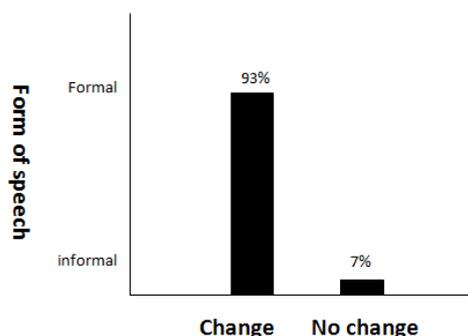


Figure 2: Gender Effects of addressee on the form of language used by the speakers in Jordanian

Educational Factor

Since there is an educational revolution in Jordan covering all academic fields and educational levels, this factor may be considered as one of the most important factors in the Jordanian speech community that affect the form of speech. After analyzing the questionnaire it was found that, as evidenced by 87 % of the subjects, that they will change their form of speech and use formal language with educated people because they have to respect them for their efforts and because our religion greatly values education and motivates people to be educated. Whereas, 13% of the subjects stated that they don't care about the educational background of the addressee and they will not change their form of speech when talking with them accordingly. Figure 3 below represents the relationship between the educational background and the form of speech in Jordanian speech community.

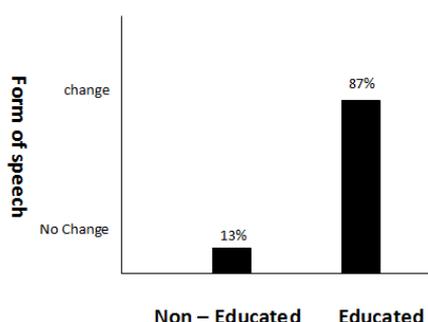


Figure 3: Relationship between the educational background and the form of speech in Jordanian

Conclusion

To sum up, and based on the analysis of the data collected for purposes of this study, it is worth mentioning that the addressee affects speech form in one way or another according to different social factors including age, gender and educational background. The major findings of this study may be summarized as follows:

- People speak less formally when talking with children and more formally when talking with adults.
- People tend to use more standard variety with female and less standard variety with male speakers.
- The setting affects our speech causing us to speak more formally at work and less formally at home.
- The topic affects our speech; we tend to speak more formally when discussing religious topics.
- Finally, People are likely to speak more formally with educated people and less formally with uneducated people.

References

- Aries, E. J. (1976). Interaction patterns and themes of male, female and mixed groups. *Small Group Behavior*, 7(1), 7-18.
- Brown, P., & Dell, G. S. (1987). Adapting production to comprehension: The explicit mention of instruments. *Cognitive Psychology*, 19(3), 441-472.
- Coates, L., & Johnson, T. (2001). Towards a social theory of gender. In W. Peter Robinson & Howard Giles (Eds.), *The new handbook of language and social psychology*. New York, NY: Wiley. P. Eckert.
- Carli, L. L. (1989). Gender Differences in Interaction Style and Influence. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 50(2), 565-76
- Ervin-Tripp, S. (2001). Variety, style-switching, and ideology. In P. Eckert and J. Rickford (Eds.), *Style and Variation*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Fussell, S. R., & Krauss, R. M. (1992). Coordination of knowledge in communication: Effects of speakers' assumptions about what others know. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 62(1), 378-391.
- Fernald, A., & Simon, T. (1984). Expanded intonation contours in mothers' speech to newborns. *Developmental Psychology*, 20(2), 104-113
- Holmes, J. (1992). *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. London, UK: Longman. pp. 245-282
- Johnson, C. C., Warner, J., & Funk, S. J. (1994). Effects of authority structures and gender on interaction in same sex groups. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 59(1), 221-36.
- Shuttleworth, J., & Keith, G. (2000). *Living language*. London, UK: Hodder Education
- Kemper, S., Vandeputte, D., Rice, K., Cheung, H., & Gubarchuk, J. (1995). Speech adjustments to aging during referential communication task. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 14(3), 40-59.
- Labov, W. (1966). *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*. Washington, D.C., Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Morgan, G. (1986). *Images of organisation*. London, UK: Sage.
- Rickford, J., & McNair-Knox, F. (1994). Addressee- and topic-influenced style shift: A quantitative sociolinguistic study. In D. Biber and E. Finegan (Eds), *Perspectives on Register*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. pp. 235-276
- Soldat, A. S., & Sinclair, R. C. (2001). Colors, smiles, and frowns: External affective cues can directly affect responses to persuasive communication in a mood-like manner without affecting mood. *Social Cognition*. 19(2), 469-490.
- Shatz, M., & Gelman, R. (1973). The development of communication skills: Modifications in the speech of young children as a function of listener. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 38(2), 1-37.
- Thorne, B., & Henly, N. (1975). Women's speech: Separate but unequal? *Language and Sex: Difference and Dominance*, Cambridge, MA: Newbury House Publishers.
- Youssef, V. (1993). Children's linguistic choices: Audience design and societal norms. *Language in Society*, 22(1), 257-274.

Appendix***Questions of the questionnaire*****• Age of the addressee**

1. Does your form of speech differ when talking to children or elderly people?
2. Do you use more formal language with children or with elderly people and why?
3. Do you use the same form of language with children and elderly people?

• Gender of the addressee

1. Does your form of speech differ when talking to males or females?
2. Do you use more formal language with males or with females and why?
3. Do you use the same form of language with males and females?

• Educational background of the addressee

1. Does your form of speech differ when talking to educated or uneducated people?
2. Do you use more formal language with educated or with uneducated people and why?
3. Do you use the same form of language with educated and uneducated people?

REPORT ON A SEMINAR Global Adult Education: Today and Tomorrow

DePaul University, Chicago, USA
February 25th, 2012

Marion Fleige and Gabriele Strohschen
with comments by Elio DeArrudah and Dennis Gregory

On Saturday, February 25th, 2012, adult education practitioner-scholars gathered at DePaul University's Loop campus to kick off a critical discourse on the state of adult education. The theme for our first gathering was *Global Adult Education: Today and Tomorrow*. Students, alumni, and professors from the University of Illinois at Chicago, National-Louis University, Chemnitz University of Technology (FRG), DePaul University's School for Public Service and School for New Learning, Kent State University, University of Oslo (Norway), and Universidad Popular (Chicago) joined to exchange their perspectives on the topic. This event was co-sponsored by SNL via faculty member Dr. Strohschen, Universidad Popular, and the Phyllis Cunningham Social Justice Institute (.

From the vantage point of researchers and practitioners and their praxes in Europe, Kenya, and USA, the discussion quickly turned to the purpose and the contemporary meaning of adult education. Discussants clearly saw this set apart from the very important practice of educating adults. Given the comparisons among the varying country's and culture's take on adult education, participants noted that the prevailing "quick fix" is not serving our constituents and profession well. Passionate discussion surfaced consensus that a more systematic analysis is needed to pose problems properly in an effort to work toward solutions. The notions of "voice" and "empowerment" of all stakeholders became an underlying theme of the discourse on that chilly Chicago Saturday morning. The event was the second in a series, which had been facilitated over the past few years at SNL and at community sites such as Universidad Popular. Our last event on issues of a social justice and education nature was held at Maya Essence – Casa Guatemala in June of 2011. Each event is meant to address a particular aspect of our adult education praxis that is of interest for both current political and theoretical debate in adult education and that may be addressed in comparative works for the purpose of identifying best practice and international/intercultural cooperation.

This report intends to amplify the voices of several participants that morning. These are expressed in this report with both a formal presentation content and with reflections of two participants. We invite the reader to respond with comments to gstrohsc@depaul.edu as we continue this discourse on the status of global adult education. We also invite suggestions for events we can collaboratively coordinate.

Presentation

In this gathering, Dr. Marion Fleige from the Chemnitz University of Technology in Germany, who was a Visiting Research Scholar at the University of Chicago, addressed issues of global adult education from the perspective of the interrelation of "*Participation, Program Design and Institutionalization*" The chosen topic of this opening statement of hers lies in the realm of learning interests over the life span and access to adult education as well as program design and institutionalization. Within this framework, different contexts of adult education - such as basic education, arts education, civic education, continuing professional education, worker's education in unions, religious education in congregations and different fields of credited and non-credited education in universities and community colleges as well as blended learning can be addressed.

So far, qualitative research on such interrelations (cf. Fleige 2011b and literature reviewed there) seems to suggest that learning interests encourage participation in adult education, that program and curriculum design are inspired by learning interests and participation and that organizations of adult education are being generated as frames for programs and curricula. This process referred to as

“institutionalization” can be seen as condition for stable supply – at least against the history of adult education in Germany after 1950. In the German discourse on adult education “institutionalization” (cf. *ibid.*) is therefore a theoretical category that points to the development of stable contexts and framework for participation.

In the discussion following this argument it became clear that depending on the different traditions of adult education among our countries this assumption may be rather disputable. Comparative discourse and research should take into consideration and shed light on such differences in order to explore what institutions and organizations can do for adult education. In doing so, further factors of learning activities and professional support, such as learning motivations, personal and organizational decision-making, pedagogical ethos and learning cultures, should come into the picture to so that causalities can be addressed thoroughly.

However, within the realm of these general assumptions, Fleige picked a particular angle, which shows to be of utmost interest in current discourse on adult education but has hardly been backed by pedagogical theory so far: the one of the ‘benefits’ of adult education. In her presentation she explored the basis of her postdoctoral research project, “Participation, Provision and Perceptions of Benefits in Adult Education.” Within this work in progress she is looking at perceptions (expectations) of benefits beforehand participation as well as at their impact on demand and supply of adult education. She is exploring these interdependencies with reference to both individuals (participants) and organizations (suppliers, professional adult educators) as well as to the fields of study mentioned above. Although her current study focuses on Germany, she is hoping to add observations from the US.¹ One aim of the study is to identify patterns of interdependency as well as types of perceptions. Another one is to identify and explain possible meanings of the term ‘benefit’ in adult education.

This is exactly where lively discussion started during the seminar because it is notable that not is only ‘benefit’ a mere economic, sociological and political term so far but that it also frequently appears in adult education literature detached from evidence of qualitative studies. The group agreed that, instead, a range of non-pedagogical assumptions determine participation and program design in a way that is not always in line with personal learning interests: Adult education seems to be more than ever perceived as an investment into a person’s or organization’s future – as quantitative studies from various countries suggest (cf. Schiersmann, 2006; Schröder/Schiel/Aust, 2004; Schuller, et. al., 2002). Programs/curricula seem to increasingly reflect on this development – as brochures and course calendars suggest by actually stating what the ‘benefits’ of classes are supposed to be. Building on the claim of equal chances and inclusion in adult education the group pointed to the highly problematic and ever more pressing aspects of capitalist exploitation and assessment of adult education that are built on the category of ‘benefits’ (as well as ‘effects’ and ‘returns’).

Against this background, Fleige suggested a temporary definition of the ‘benefits’ in adult education that both points to the notions of both rationality and inclusion stating that the perceptions of ‘benefits’ were tied to the “effective, instrumental, rational use of adult education (learning outcomes) in the interest of optimization of action in the realm of work and life (happiness, status ...).” Starting from there, Marion articulated some assumptions for research on this topic. She claimed that the degree to which adult education is perceived in an instrumentalist way traditionally depends on the field of study - but that even originally more non-instrumentalist fields like the arts were being used in an instrumentalist way. Moreover, perceptions of individuals and organizations (and society) to her mind seem to vary substantially in content but are each due to the need of optimization, especially against the background of market crises (life conditions). Also, it was assumed that the rationale behind individual participation was not completely calculated but had also to do with preferences that could be traced back to both individual

¹ The methods of the study comprises: case studies with focused/narrative interviews and program analyses and a questionnaire. Theory and literature include broad the works on learning interests and emotions; economics of education; decision-making, culture and negotiation in organizations; curriculum development and participation in adult education; institutionalization. The argument is based on neo-institutionalism (positive take on organizations) and philosophy of education.

learning interests and *emotions* (cf. Grotlüschen, 2010; Gieseke, 2009) as well as to organizational *uncertainty* and negotiation regards to determining required skills in the workplace (cf. Käßplinger, 2011; Heuer, 2009; Bardeleben, et. al., 1996). However, it was also assumed, that perceptions of benefits and actual benefits differ – an aspect of research that is not addressed in the current study. Finally, she assumed that the striking appearance of new innovative curricula and educational institutions was partly due to perceptions of benefits and consequent participation.

In order to provide further evidence for these assumptions from her current study, Fleige chose two cases of continuing vocational education in Germany in which an effective, instrumental, rational use of adult education in the interest of optimization of action in the realm of work and life can be observed: the cases of a) a credited course on economics and management for craftsmen/-women (off the job/ at the German chamber of handicrafts) and b) a non-credited training on communication and skills for bank managers (on the job). Comparison between the two cases shed light on different patterns of this use within perceptions prior to participation. First, the rational use of education follows very different ends: Whereas for craftsmen/-women it is foremost the notion of status and personal happiness but also securing livelihood, for bank managers it is status at work and relaxation. Second, the extent of invested personal time, money and challenge varies considerably between the two cases, given that the credited course on economics in craft takes three months of full-time schooling whereas the non-credited training of bank managers is restricted to occasional meetings. Moreover, in the case of the course for craftsmen/-women interview data show that personal struggle is turned into positive motivation and confidence that is incorporated into the rational decision to improve one's personal situation through participation. This attitude is even strengthened through the course. Accounting for these findings Fleige interpreted the case as an example for a highly developed and institutionalized program coming to terms with the complexity of perceived benefits.

Conclusion

Building on the theoretical argument and empirical evidence in the opening paper discussion in the room, the discussion brought about outlooks for global comparison. The ensuing debate tied to the very notion that "voice" and "empowerment" of all stakeholders in adult education is crucial to global education for all (Strohschen, 2009). The discussion and agreements by the group were summarized in the concluding remarks and addressed the following criteria:

- 'Benefit' and 'economy'
 - Whose 'benefit' matters most in adult education?
 - How do we avoid a capitalist approach to adult education and ought we? (An instrumental approach o.k. (i.e. in civic education) but not capitalist exploitation)
 - How do we avoid characterizing "understanding of learning" as substitute for occupation / a good life? Whose voice and values ought to prevail?
- 'Benefit' and 'institutionalization'
 - Learning activities outside an organizations are valuable(i.e. in the context of social movements)
 - Public funding needs to be guided by practitioners vs. getting caught in assessment, evaluation and audits determined by "outside" powers-that-be
 - Issues from 'developing' and 'transitional' countries are focused on improving basic education, with particular reference to gender issues and the use of basic knowledge for further studies; the international education community has an obligation to aid in improving the variety of programs and learning environments
 - Issues from 'transitional' countries ought to be centered on improving the variety of programs and learning environments
- 'Benefit' and 'methods'
 - The struggle with 'objective' or 'conclusive' evidence of benefit of ACE (cf. Bimrose/Barnes 2009) needs to be supported toward clarifying sound practices

- An in-depth comparative study for identifying common problems and best-practice is sorely needed.

Reflections

Elio deArrudah, Board Member, Universidad Popular, Chicago.

The thrust of my presentation on Universidad Popular's praxis was essentially to highlight the fact that the adult education discourse has been defined and controlled by the providers/funders, regardless of the geography. Whether we are talking about Afghanistan, Mississippi, Bulgaria, Little Village, China or Tunisia, providers/funders define and control the adult education discourse for the sake of their own benefits. Obviously, a certain level of concessions is made to the recipients of these services in order to retain their participation, whenever these providers/funders lack the authority to mandate or require people's participation in order to collect certain benefits. Mr. Gregory's remarks today about his adult education work in the West Side of Chicago reflected his degree of discomfit delivering there today an adult education product, i.e., the GED preparation, designed by the US War Department in the aftermath of WW II. The country's economic reality then, in view of a decimated world economy, was rather different than nowadays's jobmarket. "I am quite perplexed with all these people coming through the door looking for GED...I don't know what they have been told; I think they have been lied to: What do I do now? Perpetuate the lie that they have been told or put a stop to it and lose my job?" Both Kent State University's Johnie L. Reed and Dr. Kenneth Elazier stressed the need to be honest with the learners in order to secure their full participation in this learning process. At that point, University of Illinois' Dr. Eve Pinsker brought some legal/ethical considerations surrounding the issue of accountability. To whom is the adult educator accountable: to his employer, his employer's funder or to the learner? At that junction, I indicated Universidad Popular's commitment to doing its brand of education work **with--** instead of **for--** the people that seek its projects and programs as a way to stress its degree of accountability to its participants first and foremost.

Dennis Gregory, School for New Learning Alumn

My take on the seminar surrounds the passionate discussions on **real world issues** in adult education. I sum it up as follows: in my opinion, educators in the field of adult education need to realize that knowledge has little value *outside of application*. It is wholly possible for educators to spend their entire lives developing more and more elaborate theoretical perspectives on adult education; as the literature can be considered as almost endless and the resultant research can go on forever for all intents and purposes.

While I would not go quite this far, Plato once said that "knowledge becomes evil, if its aim be not virtuous." If there is some degree of truth in this, and I for one believe that there is, then educators must begin asking themselves a different set of questions. I was very pleased to hear one of the professors deciding to explore the question of what on earth do we really mean by 'benefits'? A marvelous question! I would like for her to go deeper and ask the question, "Are we ever truly justified to think that we can know what is good for another human being?" If yes, on what basis can we make that statement?

The more immediate observation that I got out of the seminar was the following:

There are those (I am among them) who believe that the **'food chain of thought'** in order of power /strength is as follows:

1. Theology
2. Philosophy
3. Economics
4. Politics
5. All Else

My point? Educators of adult education, in my humble opinion, need to realize that they are low on said totem pole and that unless they begin to focus on the holistic combination of **educating adults and adult education** there will be the same frustrations about what their hard efforts are truly accomplishing *for those in need*. I heard many such frustrations at the seminar and I believe that they all have this at the

core. In short, I see no real change in this ‘field’ until this is addressed. While I admit this is nothing new, I am convinced that the **HOW TO** escapes educators entirely. Educators and researchers know this, what you do for a living does not exist outside the complex world of economics and its success is wholly dependent upon it.

Comments

Clearly, as discussants agreed, comparison among different countries has to take into account differences with respect to organizational structures, funding schemes, and traditions of instrumentalist or non-instrumentalist perceptions of adult education. However, at the end of the day, adult educators in every country are challenged to design programs and to frame and encourage learning activities that are congruent with the learners’ needs and wishes. They are united in facing problems of finance, valuation and support of the – non-mandatory – field of adult education that are increasingly shaped by the political request to ‘prove’ benefits of adult education. Finding responses to that request that trigger inclusion rather than exclusion cannot be done without mutual support.

Coming to terms with this task, the group in the end stated the wisdom of sustaining benefits to both ends: the individual’s – and through this society’s – as well as the economy’s. Within this framework, much can be done for grassroots activity and civic values. As Gabriele Strohschen put it in the end: “There are shared aims of sustainable personal, cultural, ecological and community development by means of education, training and collaborative/action research.”

References

- Bardeleben, R. v., Beicht, U., Herget, H., Krekel, E. M. (1996). *Individuelle Kosten und individueller Nutzen beruflicher Weiterbildung*. Unter Mitarbeit von Jörgen Holzschuh. Berichte zur Beruflichen Bildung 201. Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (Ed.). Bielefeld
- Bimrose, J., Barnes, S.-A. (2009). Measuring the effectiveness of career counseling in England: Who defines what is effective? In: Arnold, R., Gieseke, W., & Zeuner, C. (Eds.): *Bildungsberatung im Dialog 2*. Baltmannsweiler: Klinkhard, pp. 79-98
- Fleige, M. (2011a). Kulturen der Nutzenpositionierung. Durch Wissen zu veränderten Lernentscheidungen. In: *Report*, Heft 3, pp. 72-81
- Fleige, M. (2011b). *Lernkulturen in der öffentlichen Erwachsenenbildung. Theorieentwickelnde und empirische Betrachtungen am Beispiel evangelischer Träger*. Münster: Waxmann
- Gieseke, W. (Hrsg.) (2008). *Bedarfsorientierte Angebotsplanung in der Erwachsenenbildung*. Bielefeld: W. Bertelsmann
- Gieseke, W. (2009). *Lebenslanges Lernen und Emotionen. Wirkungen von Emotionen auf Bildungsprozesse aus beziehungstheoretischer Perspektive*. 2nd edition., Bielefeld: Wilhelm Bertelsmann
- Grotlüschen, A. (2010). *Erneuerung der Interessentheorie*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag
- Heuer, U. (2010). *Betriebliche Weiterbildungsentscheidungen: Aushandlungsprozesse und Bildungscontrolling. Fallstudienbericht*. Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (Ed.). Bonn
- Käpplinger, B. (2011). Kriterienraster für eine vergleichende Effekte- und Nutzenforschung in der beruflichen Weiterbildung für Betriebe und Beschäftigte. *Paper No. 1 from the research project, Effekte von nationalen Förderprogrammen der beruflichen Weiterbildung*. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (Ed.). Retrieved from www.effekte-projekt.de, abgerufen am 15.06.2011
- Kasworm, C.E., Rose, A.D., & Ross-Gordon, J. M. (Eds.) (2010a): *Handbook of adult and continuing education*. American Association for Adult and Continuing Education. 2010 Edition. Los Angeles: Sage
- Kasworm, C.E., Rose, A.D., & Ross-Gordon, J. M. (2010b). Introduction. In: *Ibid (Eds.): Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education*. American Association for Adult and Continuing Education. 2010 Edition. Los Angeles: Sage, pp. 1-10
- Merriam, S. B., & Brockett, R. G. (2007). *The profession and practice of adult education: An*

- introduction*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
Phyllis Cunningham Social Justice Institute.
<http://www.facebook.com/groups/phylliscunninghamsocialjusticeinstitute/>
- Schiersmann, C. (2006). *Profile lebenslangen Lernens*. Bielefeld: Wilhelm Bertelsmann
- Strohschen, G. (2009). *The handbook of blended shore education: Adult program development and delivery*. New York, NY: Springer Verlag.
- Schröder, H., Schiel, S., Aust, F. (2004). *Nichtteilnahme an beruflicher Weiterbildung. Motive, Beweggründe, Hindernisse*. Expertenkommission Finanzierung Lebenslangen Lernens (Eds.). Bielefeld: Wilhelm Bertelsmann
- Schuller, T., Bynner, J., & Green, A. (2001). *Modeling and measuring the wider benefits of learning. A synthesis*. London Institute of Education, University of London

A passionate defense of words

By **Jemene Shelton**
MPS 490



They are what we use to express ourselves daily, their sound and rhythm, the tip of the tongue, teeth and lips ... intonations and vibrations, accents and dialects. They are our communication. They create phrases and metaphors, colloquialisms, quick clichés, jargon and slang. Each syllable contains an emphasis, necessary for clarity and expression, which technology cannot replicate, repudiate or expunge. No formatting, bold, or italics can emulate or usurp their power. Once it has been said, it is already done.

Now we've reduced them to acronyms and Internet slangisms, or chat speak. We have WTH and LOL moments. I SMH at those who ROTFL at this phenomenon. BTW we must realize that we didn't take the time to ask them for their permission. Did they approve this reduction? Or did we forget? FYI, we do our best when we use them at length, romanticizing, passionately thinking and expressively sharing a thought or emotion. It is hard for us to

conceptualize how far we've gone to only travel backwards into oblivion by forsaking their use. We have replaced the dictionary with Wikipedia; a free-for-all that cares to share its definition or take upon a subject, however useful.

We abandoned actual books, and the pages I so loved to turn are brightly illuminated on a screen and orchestrated by a scrolling device. Here they sit, no longer appreciated.

They're devalued, a carnal corruption, catastrophic in a sense.

I shall retell their story to my children, how they once did exist, and rather eloquently arranged by Shakespeare, Emily Dickinson, Mark Twain and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. I'd be negligent if I failed to share the renowned magnificence of Maya Angelou, Nikki Giovanni, Gwendolyn Brooks, Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Laura Esquivel and so many

others. From the greatest orators, to the greatest lyricists, they were here, they were used. They once lived and breathed, giving life to impossibilities, making sound in measure, and they actualized fact finding. Their greatest gift was the replication of thought and emotion. Although some took issue with their ambiguity, I choose to stand in their defense, by stating to those who are inept at handling their wit and many stark euphemisms: "C'est la vie."

No matter the language, they are perfectly arranged, decorated with punctuation.

They were here once, an undeniable truth. They've made their point in serendipity, and shall never be erased.

They are ... words.

Dear IFOTS readers:

We proudly introduce six students from DePaul University's School of Public Service: Elizabeth Nolan, Haley Buzzard, Jemene Shelton, Karen Lucas, Maria Catalina Constain and Nourah Almansour. We present their essays, edited for space, from our latest "Write to Serve" journal, a quarterly publication of the school's "Writing Skills for Public Service Professionals" course.

We created the journal to showcase students' writing, emphasize the power of publishing and inspire continued work on students' craft and causes. We published the latest journal in March and shared it with students and faculty.

The course and the journal emphasize shorter sentences and strong, active verbs. The course urges students to maintain those principles regardless of platform – whether for school papers, business letters, emails, social media or publication.

The course emphasizes that we become better writers and forge a stronger impression when we uphold those principles in everything we write.

We hope you enjoy the essays from our "Write to Serve" journal.

Sincerely,

Pete Reinwald
Instructor
MPS 490, Writing Skills for Public Service Professionals
School of Public Service
DePaul University
Chicago, Illinois, USA

Cambodia: A gentle land of kindness

“Are we ever getting off this bus?” my companion whined.



At this point, we were on hour 12 of what was supposed to be a “quick six-hour” jaunt to Cambodia.

“Yes, of course, There will be air conditioning and a clean bathroom,” I responded, reiterating what people assured us when we bought our tickets in Ho Chi Minh City the night before. We failed to realize that “air conditioning” translated to open windows, and “clean bathrooms” meant we’d perhaps see them one day.

Of course, I, the experienced traveler, suggested this mode of transportation. “It will be great!” I promised my companions. “We’ll see the countryside and save some money.”

When the bus driver put on “Titanic” around hour 5, I thought to myself,

“Oh no, we don’t have enough time to watch the whole thing!”

When the credits rolled, even I found myself asking, “Was this really worth the \$20 we saved?”

Then we got a flat tire.

Everyone exited the bus. We encountered a family of five or six living in a shack. Each one greeted the passengers, offering a sympathetic smile. As the men helped fix the tire, we waited and watched the children chase chickens and scream with laughter.

Eventually, we got back on to the bus. I sat down next to the young woman with whom I shared a row. My stomach grumbled. Embarrassed, I politely smiled. She pulled out a small bag of green fruit and another bag of mysterious brown powder. She pushed them toward my face and made the international sign for “eat.” I politely declined, not wanting to take the little food she had. Again, she made the “eat” gesture and advanced the bags

toward my mouth.

I agreed and she showed me how to eat this delicacy. First, bite into the bitter green fruit, then take a pinch of brown powder and swallow. I found the combination delightful: bitter and tangy. It was a small offering, a bite of food. In many ways, though, it was much more.

Despite atrocities at the hands of the Khmer Rouge, Cambodians smile. They smile at foreign visitors, at one another and at themselves. They exude kindness. They routinely offer you what they have with no expectation in return. I have rarely come across a people so hospitable, so friendly.

As the time came to finally get off the bus, I had a strange feeling of sadness. Unable to communicate with her, I knew this is where our short friendship would end.

To this day, when I think of Cambodia, I see that young woman’s face, and I taste her tangy treat.

Maria Catalina Constain

Haiti: The world shows compassion

Many Latin American nations celebrated their bicentennials over the last several years, marking 200 years of independence. After years of battles, blood, and trauma, most of these countries still struggle today and depend on developed countries for economic support.



Weak democracies, human rights abuses and government corruption add to their difficulties. Poverty and other social problems seem to be part of the everyday news. Natural disasters create additional obstacles.

Sadly, Haiti’s story reflects all of the above. Haiti was the second country in the Americas and first in Latin America to gain its independence, with a unique revolutionary process that led

to a protracted war to abolish slavery. After more than 200 years as a free and independent nation, Haiti remains a slave of its own bad situation. Haiti is one of the poorest and most disadvantaged economies in the world. Some 80 percent of its population lives below the poverty line on less than \$2 a day. The rest depend on the weather and resources to fish and cultivate the land.

The country’s agricultural practices started a phenomenon of overexploitation and soil erosion because of intensive and uncontrolled deforestation. The industry and service sector also suffer due to a lack of sustained investment because of instability and violence. In 2008, devastating tropical storms affected Haiti’s poor communications infrastructure. On top of this, in 2010, the country suffered its most severe earthquake in 200 years, which

resulted in one of the worst humanitarian disasters in human history.

The recovery remains slow, even as Haiti continues to receive aid and support from the international community.

One of the humanitarian initiatives comes from DePaul University as part of the Vincentian challenge to raise money and help Haitians forge a new beginning. This initiative will benefit thousands of families in 2012 and will contribute to a better quality of life.

The global community should reflect with sadness that a pioneer country that won its independence and freedom more than 200 years ago suffers so terribly today. Fortunately, many in the global community react with compassion and support.

Haiti started from such a low point that it needs far more help if it is ever to experience another massive celebration. Maybe we’ll all live to see it.

Haley Buzzard

Learning, honoring native languages

Native American blood, Cherokee and Kickapoo, runs through my veins. I am a Cherokee Nation citizen,



a member of the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas and a U.S. citizen. That makes me a citizen of three sovereign nations.

I am thankful to know where I come from, and language plays an important part.

Natives exist in two worlds, two very different worlds. To understand the Cherokee language, the elders say, is to be able to see the world in color. Cherokee is a descriptive language. Consider the word ka-ma-ma. This means butterfly or elephant, depending on how you use it. It describes an insect with big wings that flap or a large animal with ears that flap. But, again, that's Cherokee. Hundreds of tribal languages still live in the U.S. Most tribal languages are transferred from generation to generation orally and, unlike Cherokee, not written.

Our traditional language allows

us to know our history, our family, our ceremonies, our medicines and our stories. Many times, I have sat in a community gathering with fluent Cherokee speakers and wished I could understand every word. They speak low, nod their heads, speak louder and laugh with great enthusiasm. I love to hold that picture in my mind, but more importantly, I would love to understand every word.

I find it equally heartening and interesting to listen to our youth. Take the Cherokee Nation Immersion School for three-year-olds, which I've visited. Students must speak no English in the classroom, which is the opposite of how we were once treated. Native Americans in the early 1900s received harsh punishment for speaking their traditional language at school.

The day I visited the school, the kids were full of spunk, and one little boy let me know it. He walked up to me and spoke in Cherokee. He began yelling at me in Cherokee and then started doing karate moves. I guess he wanted to fight with me, but instead we colored. I still wish I knew what he was trying to say to me.

I was not raised in a fluent speaking home, but I often heard the Cherokee language. I have attended Cherokee classes in college and taken community courses.

I hope one day I will be able to fully understand our Cherokee language and pass it along to others.

Have you ever thought about how you might communicate with your ancestors if you had the chance to meet them? I bet many would not be speaking English.

The Native American languages are beautiful to hear and to understand, but many are in danger of dying. The Cherokee Nation works hard to keep our language in the forefront. We can learn our language online, in community classrooms and college classrooms and on the iPhone and Google. You can learn more by visiting the Cherokee website, www.cherokee.org

Wa-do means thank you, as in Wa-do for taking the time to read about the importance of our native language.

Cherokees lack a word for goodbye. Instead we say di-da-yo-li-hv-ga-le-ne-s-gv, which means "Until we meet again."

Karen Lucas

Living and enjoying a life of service

I believe I am here to serve others.



I feel fulfilled when I see a person's life improve because of something I learned and shared that led to a better pathway.

I worked for a not-for-profit agency as a case manager and career coach in the Englewood Auburn Gresham community on Chicago's southwest side for four years. I assisted in resume creation, job search development, interviewing skills and career counseling. I also counseled clients on healthy food

choices that will enhance alertness and energy. I strive to reach less-fortunate, low-income communities on how they can deal with societal problems, like high unemployment, increased taxes on food and clothing, and to explain how these factors influence behavior and food choices.

I learned that personal experience is the best teacher for passing on to others. I have earned a low-income and tried to make ends meet while eating a healthy diet on a tight budget; it is not easy. So I can relate to the challenges that families and individuals in low-income communities face.

I had the privilege back in 1994 to purchase an existing health food

store in Chicago Old Towne. I reached out to the community with healthy-cooking classes, health talks, smoking-cessation seminars and optical health screenings. Now, I am pursuing a master's degree in Public Service Management at DePaul.

Many people, besides the less fortunate, need to know that others care about improving the environment for healthier living and sustainability. Improving lives is a rewarding sacrifice. I encourage everyone to take up a public service project in a less-fortunate community.

You might be surprised about who you might find in need of your help to survive.

Celebrating strength: Saudi women

An Arabic newspaper recently alleged that Saudi women are the most beautiful and pampered women in the world. The article asserted that princesses do not drive cars by themselves and neither do Saudi women.



But a Saudi woman will tell you that her life offers no luxury at all. Saudi women believe they suffer greatly because they are asked to play their role in society, just as men do, but without the same rights and authority.

Many found the newspaper statement offensive. Saudi women believe that society should describe them as determined, patient and ambitious, as they continue to fight for and slowly gain basic rights that women in many other countries take for granted.

I think the newspaper made the allegations against Saudi women to placate them so they would stop raising demands for their basic rights. As a Saudi woman who recently came to the U.S. to study, I can tell you that a pampered life is an impossible dream for Saudi women.

A pampered life is impossible for Saudi women unless they stop working, cooking, doing errands, carrying out chores outside the home, contributing financially and making the lives of Saudi men more comfortable. That's what they do now.

Yet Saudi women have strengthened their status over the years, and the world has noticed.

Journalist Samar Fatany wrote in 2003 that young Saudi women "are more aware of their strengths and capabilities. They are no longer intimidated by the male-dominated culture that continues to marginalize their role in society. The status of women in the Kingdom is slowly changing, and women remain determined to assert their position as contributing citizens in all fields: Socially, economically and politically."

Dan Murphy of the Christian Science Monitor wrote in 2007: "Just as in the West, Saudi women are graduating from universities at higher rates than men. They are taking jobs in education, medicine, and banking. Lately, the country's labor minister has been pushing for legal changes that would allow more women to work in retail jobs and factories – a sharp challenge to Saudi Arabia's sex segregation."

Today, according to a report by consulting firm Booz & Company, more than 90 percent of Saudi women who participate in the workforce hold a secondary qualification or bachelor's degree, but only 15 percent of Saudi women participate in the labor force. That's because they are forbidden to work or travel, among other things, without authorization of a male guardian, and not all guardians are willing to give such permission.

The number of working women is increasing, despite all the difficulties Saudi women must go through when applying for a job.

Saudi women are raised to be patient. They marry young, which gives them time to have many children, sometimes more than 10. The woman takes care of her children and her husband.

According to Saudi traditions, the good wife should manage all family and household responsibilities without complaining. Otherwise, the husband has the right to get another wife to take care of him. The well-trained Saudi wife will handle the situation easily, just like her mother did.

A woman in Saudi Arabia has as much responsibility as a woman in U.S. has -- and maybe more. Yet women must carry these responsibilities under the shadow of society rules: They are forbidden to drive, and they are forbidden to be alone with the driver if he is a stranger.

Consider what I needed to do to come to the U.S. last year. The Saudi government said it wouldn't sponsor

my scholarship to study here unless I brought a male guardian with me -- a condition that the government doesn't place on men. The government said the purpose of the male guardian is to keep an eye on me, protect me and make my life easier in the U.S. The male guardian is supposed to be a relative -- a brother, father, husband or nephew. My brothers have jobs and families, so I didn't want to ask them to leave their lives to guard a 30-year-old woman.

So I asked my nephew, who was 18. I used to change his diaper, and now he's my guardian. Isn't that ironic? He's supposed to be taking care of me, but I'm sure you can imagine who's taking care of whom.

Still, I consider myself lucky that I have a nephew old enough to fulfill this requirement; I know that hundreds of young Saudi women lost their scholarships because they couldn't provide a guardian.

Yet more and more women are pushing forward.

Some Saudi women recently decided to risk arrest by driving cars in defiance of a licensing ban that prohibits women from driving. That shows the courage and resiliency of Saudi women. They also have made it clear that they will work even if the environment around them doesn't approve.

Saudi women are slowly getting results. Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah announced last year that women would be able to vote and run in local elections beginning in 2015. Also, Saudi parents have become more interested in the education of their daughters, and they are eager to send them to study abroad to get a better education. This gives Saudi women the drive to keep aspiring a better life.

Saudi Arabia's women continue to change stereotypes. They are the most patient, determined and ambitious in the world.

That is what the newspaper article should have said.

Contributing Authors

Dr. Kathleen P. King, EdD, is professor of higher education at University of South Florida's College of Education in Tampa, FL. King's major areas of research and expertise include distance learning, transformative learning, faculty development, instructional technology, and diversity. The International Continuing and Adult Education Hall of Fame recognized Dr. King's outstanding contributions to adult and higher education with her 2011 induction. As an award winning author who has published 20 books, she is also a popular keynote and conference speaker, mentor, and professor. Dr King is widely recognized for her research, service, and contribution to education by other professional groups as AERA, POD, NYACCE and UCEA. Recent books include *The Professor's Guide to Taming Technology* (2011), *Global Models of Human Performance* (2009, with Wang); *Handbook of Evolving Research in Transformative Learning (10th anniv. ed.)* (2009); and *Podcasting for Teaching* (2nd ed) (2009, with Gura). Her professional associations also include WI Distance Teaching and Learning, AAHE, AERA Division I, FLDA, ISTE, Educause, WE LEARN, TextBook and Academic Authors Association (TAAA), ASJA, and National Speakers Assoc. KathleenKing@USF.edu

Devin W. Bercaw, MPA, RYT, has devoted the last several years to public service. He has worked in a variety of settings, including a local unemployment office and a juvenile detention facility, and currently works for the Illinois Department of Employment Security, Office of Service Delivery. Devin is also a Registered Yoga Teacher and has been teaching yoga since 2006. He has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, a Master of Public Administration from DePaul University, and will begin a Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology program in August 2012. Devin currently resides in Chicago, Illinois with his partner of nearly six years, Noah, and his two dogs, Dahlia and Befer.

Dr. Rebecca Blankenship is serving as Chair of Department of Foreign Languages, Brandon Senior High School, Brandon, Florida. Her fields of interest include discourse in social networking among native and non-native learners of Spanish; activity theory and social networking and the politics of language learning. She has been a teacher of Spanish and Italian for American public high schools for 11 years; and Department Chair of foreign languages for seven years.

Dr. Deoksoon Kim, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor of Foreign Language Education and Second Language Acquisition/Instructional Technology (SLA/IT) at the University of South Florida. Her research focuses on L2 literacy acquisition, socioculturally diverse learners, and incorporating instructional technologies into ESOL teacher education. She has published in *Computers and Education*, *TESOL Journal*, *English Leadership Quarterly*, *Journal of Reading Education*, *Essential Teacher*, and other TESOL publications among others. She delivered keynote speeches at the International Qualitative Research Conference in 2007 and 2010. She can be reached at deoksoonk@usf.edu

Mr. Hamzeh Mohammad Al-Zghoul holds a Master degree in English Language (Applied Linguistics) from Jordan University of Science and Technology. Jordan – Irbid. He is a lecturer of English Language at AL- Balqa Applied University / Irbid University College. He can be reached at hazghoul@hotmail.com

Dr. Abdel-Rahman Abu-Melhim is a Jordanian-American, currently teaching as an Assistant Professor of English and Literature at Al-Balqa'a Applied University in Jordan. He graduated from Texas A&M University, College Station in 1992, earning a PhD in English with emphasis on Socio-linguistics. His research interest include Socio-linguistics, Applied Linguistics, Psycho-Linguistics, and Cross-Cultural communication. He has recently developed a special research interest in the application of modern technology to new methods of teaching English to speakers of other languages.