TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHER EDUCATION:

A MEANINGFUL DEGREE OF UNDERSTANDING

A Dissertation
Submitted To The Faculty Of The Graduate School
Of The University Of Minnesota

By

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In Partial Fulfillment
Of The Requirements For The Degree Of
Doctor Of Education

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September 2005
UMI Number: 3188558

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Transformative Understanding

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Dr. Frank Gulbrandsen, Advisor

December 2005

GRADUATE SCHOOL
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to my dissertation committee: Dr. Tom Peacock, Dr. Linda Miller-Cleary, Dr. Frank Guldbrandsen, Dr. Alice Thomas, and Dr. Bill Ammentorp. Through scholarly mentoring and constructive critique you’ve allowed the transformation to be mine.

Thank you to my family: Janice, Meaghan, Flannery, Ben, Harper, and Greta. Your love is my greatest joy.

Thank you to my parents: Cheryl and Thomas. You have taught me how to be prepared for just about anything that may happen and just about everything that matters.

Thank you to my editor: Chris Godsey. Your sharp mind and skilled feedback have pointed me toward greater clarity in thoughts and words. I value your writing, teaching, and friendship.

Thank you to this study’s generous participants and collaborators: students and faculty at Fond du Lac Tribal College, the College of St. Scholastica, and the University of Minnesota Duluth. You have given me the pleasure of sharing what you know about transformative learning.

And thank you to transformative learning scholars: Dr. Kathleen King, Dr. Patricia Cranton, and Dr. Steven Brookfield for kindly directing me in my search for transformative understanding.
ABSTRACT

Living in America is simultaneously enriching and impoverishing. Despite its richness of information and capital, American society suffers from a poverty of understanding. This dichotomy is evident in higher education, through which most students earn degrees by amassing credits rather than necessarily demonstrating the ability to critically examine complex ideas, relationships, problems, and opportunities.

But hope exists. It is found in college mission statements professing commitment to the search for truth and pursuit of meaning. These mission statements point to learning that may transform students as well as the communities and institutions in which they interact.

Using a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative research tools, this study found that 35% of participating prospective teachers reported experiencing transformative learning as a result of coursework, interaction with peers outside of the classroom, and cross-cultural field experiences. The majority of participants’ transformative learning experiences involved both interpersonal and intrapersonal perspective reframing. Transformative learning experiences had powerful effects on participants’ self awareness, openness to other viewpoints, critical reflection, and emotional capability to change. Transformative learning developed participants’: (a) confidence in being dual citizens of often disparate worlds; (b) ability to seek contextual understanding in the midst of disorienting experiences; and (c) interest in sojourning into further transformative learning experiences for themselves, their peers, and their students.
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A RITUAL TO READ TO EACH OTHER

If you don't know the kind of person I am
and I don't know the kind of person you are
a pattern that others have made may prevail in the world
and following the wrong god home, we may miss our star.

For there is many a small betrayal in the mind,
a shrug that lets the fragile sequence break
sending with shouts the horrible errors of childhood
storming out to play through the broken dyke.

As elephants parade holding each elephant's tail,
but if one wanders the circus won't find the park,
I call it cruel and maybe the root of all cruelty
to know what occurs but not recognize the fact.

And so I appeal to a voice, to something shadowy,
a remote important region in all who talk:
though we could fool each other, we should consider—
lest the parade of our mutual life get lost in the dark.

For it is important that awake people be awake,
or a breaking line may discourage them back to sleep;
the signals we give—yes or no, or maybe—should be clear:
the darkness around us is deep.

--William Stafford
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

The Poverty of Contemporary American Society

Living today in America is simultaneously a rich and impoverishing experience. Despite its richness of information and resources, American society suffers from a poverty of understanding.

The United States is economically the wealthiest nation on Earth (Seidel, 2003). And yet it invests very little in developing human potential. American society spends more time and effort pursuing cultural capital than developing human capital. Cultural capital looks and sounds like saying, doing, and possessing all the right things—as determined by mainstream commerce, media, politics, and education institutions. Investing in human capital, in contrast, means dedicating words, energy, and resources to supporting the possibilities each individual possesses. Critical discourse on the merits and roles of cultural capital and human capital is marginalized in American society (Apple, 1995). Worse still, critical discourse is even largely absent from American institutions such as commerce, media, politics, and education.

As college degrees have become required cultural capital for mainstream societal ascendancy, institutions of higher education have proliferated. The Chronicle of Higher Education identified over four thousand colleges in the United States (2002). This is an average of more than 80 colleges per state. And outside of colleges, information access has similarly proliferated. “A weekday edition of the New York Times,” according to Wurman (1989), “contains more information than the average person was likely to come across in a lifetime in seventeenth-century England” (p. 32).
Yet, despite all the access to higher education and information, Willimon (2002) asserted American society is not growing convincingly wiser. Higher education continues to measure learning in predominantly quantitative terms—granting degrees when students have accumulated sufficient stores of information, measured by credits earned. And yet the disconnect with such a system of measurement is that understanding in today’s postmodern world requires not only knowledge and comprehension but also what Wiggins and McTighe (1998) called perspective, empathy, self knowledge—which require learners to analyze and explain information from a variety of points of view, explain another person’s situation, and act on this learning in one’s own life. Despite the presence of so much information and so much higher education, the American populace suffers Americans from a poverty of genuine understanding.

The above conditions suggest that the citizens of the United States enjoy a quantitative plentitude of resources. Yet in relationship to themselves and each other, Americans suffer from a poverty of understanding.

The Poverty of American Higher Education

The dichotomy of informational richness but poverty of understanding is particularly evident in colleges and universities—the apex of formal education in American society. Before issuing academic degrees, institutions verify that students have amassed large stocks of course credits. Whether or not college graduates understand how to critically engage complex ideas, relationships, problems, and opportunities is a more difficult proposition for institutions to assess.
While it is clear that college graduates have amassed rich stocks of college credits, there is little evidence that college graduates are equally rich in critical thinking abilities. Moreover, there is little evidence that higher education is doing more than simply reinforcing patterns which enable students to assimilate new experiences into what Belenky & Stanton (2000) referred to as inherited “mental maps”—conditioned frames of reference through which individuals filter and diminish ostensible learning experiences (p. 71).

Cranton and King (2003) asserted that in its simplest form, higher education today may be generating little more than obedient citizens who are prepared to work within society’s institutions, professions, and organizations. Learning that merely equips students with information and skills needed to function within society’s existing paradigms contributes to the poverty of understanding in American society. Mistaking knowledge for understanding erodes a culture’s capacity to distinguish between information and insight; between facticity and fertility.

Habermas (1984) described learning that equips students with information and skills as “instrumental learning,” as it is necessary for existing and oriented toward mastering tasks, solving problems, and learning how to manipulate environments and people toward specific ends.

Mezirow (2000) suggested that instrumental learning supports a society’s “cultural canon, socioeconomic structures, ideologies, and beliefs about self [that] often conspire to foster conformity, and impede development of a sense of responsible agency” (p. 8). Instrumental learning does little to address the poverty of understanding in
American society. When learners are reduced to replicators, they follow inherited mental maps—which are linear and unreliable for navigating the current dynamics of postmodern society.

Warning about the dangers of mere instrumental learning, Tillich (1987) explained, “A self which has become a matter of calculation and management has ceased to be a self. It has become a thing.” Higher education that fails to develop learners beyond instrumental knowledge acquisition contributes to the poverty of American society. Individuals must be able to think and act dynamically—rather than linearly—in postmodern society.

“Postmodernists,” explained Brookfield (2000), “reject [the] idea of linear progress” (p. 134). They maintain that learning in postmodern society is best characterized by constant states of change and flux—in which merely instrumental knowledge is less valuable than deeper and more expansive understandings of self and society.

Instrumental learning in higher education typically comes at the cost of the priceless understanding that, while learners will have amassed a wealth of instrumental knowledge from earning an academic degree, the very environment that produces the degree is unlikely to confer either the understanding and experience to be truly masterful or the breadth of understanding to recognize one’s own ignorance. Higher education is highly effective in conferring cultural capital. It is comparatively less skilled in developing human capital.
Transformative Understanding 5

Does higher education conspire to fool students with this situational irony? Such intentional deception seems implausible, especially when one ventures to a college campus and meets the faculty and staff who work well beyond what is required of them in order to support student learning.

“If there is a conspiracy here,” offered Brookfield (2000), “it is a conspiracy of the normal” (p. 138). Brookfield’s observation echoed Maslow’s (1971) assertion that “Normalcy would be rather the kind of sickness or crippling that we share with everybody else and therefore don’t notice” (p. 25). If higher education contributes to such a conspiracy, it is a conspiracy of the normalized and socialized.

Brookfield (2000) suggested a conspiracy of the normalized is similar to what Gramsci (1998) called “hegemony, or the process whereby ideas, structures, and actions come to be seen by the majority of people as wholly natural, preordained, and working toward their common good, when in fact they are constructed and transmitted by powerful minority interests to protect the status quo that serves these interests so well” (p. 138). Powerful minority interests include political officials who determine higher education funding and regulation, education decision makers who implement policy, and educators themselves—who perpetuate education tradition.

The instrumental curriculum that prevails in higher education is viewed by many to be a wholly natural way to learn. Instrumental curriculum is a long-standing tradition. The opportunity to consume, compartmentalize, and regurgitate information is, in many cases, all learners have been taught to expect from school.
Maslow (1971) said although instrumental learning need not be eschewed, it must not be used exclusively. Furthermore, Kegan (2000) suggested that in order to accurately reflect the etymological meaning of education as a “leading out,” education must engage learners in an epistemological shift of the foundations of knowledge (p. 26). Learners must be supported in understanding not only what they know, but also what they don’t know, including epistemological questions of how they arrive at knowledge. While education that fills learners with knowledge may be said to inform, education that leads learners out of existing frames of reference may, in fact, transform.

Transformative learning theory offers critical reflection as an instrument through which learners may transcend the limitations of mere instrumental learning. Mezirow (2000) explained that through critical reflection, erroneous frames of reference—or inaccurate assumptions and points of view—become apparent. Once such inaccuracies are identified, they may be replaced by more accurate and critically aware frames of reference. If not identified, they’ll remain and continue to direct one’s perception.

Freire (1970) observed that “conscientization,” or the development of critical and dialogical consciousness, is the difference between instrumental and transformative learning (p. 20). Freire courageously and aptly named the limitations of instrumental education models—calling these a “banking style” of schooling, whereby “anti-dialogical educators” deposit instrumental knowledge in the minds of students in order to “impose on [students] the model of the good man” who inherits ideas and structures knowledge handed down to him without asking why or to what end (pp. 81-82).
Higher education attracts many good men and good women. Higher education turns good men and good women into good citizens who strive to meet the challenges of the instrumental learning tasks before them. When good men and good women meet these challenges, they are rewarded with economic and cultural capital. Good men and good women view such rewards as indicators of the good life—rich in information, material resources, and culturally pragmatic knowledge.

And yet for all this goodness and prosperity, the good men and good women of American society still endure crises of unrealized human potential such as investing more in cultural capital than in human capital, settling for systems that promulgate knowledge instead of assess understanding, and existing within a culture which boasts the longest life expectancy known to human history without learning much from the wisdom of this society’s elders. These missed opportunities to invest in people, possibility, understanding, and wisdom, contribute to America’s current state of economic injustice, political polarization, cultural imperialism, perfunctory relationships, and hegemonic education. These crises reveal the poverty of understanding that exists in American society and is perpetuated by American higher education.

Responding to the Poverty of American Society

Higher education has the potential to sow the seeds of conscientization, understanding, insight, and transformation. Transformative learning, according to Mezirow (2000), is a process through which learners’ perspectives become “more inclusive, differentiating, open to other view points, critically reflective of assumptions,
emotionally capable of change, and integrative of experience” (pp. 7-8). Mezirow explained that transformative learning involves a deep shift in a learner’s perspective.

Boyd (1991) identified two dimensions of deep shifts in learner perspectives. His analysis reflects Jung’s (1971) concept of “individuation” or “coming to selfhood and self-realization” (p. 105). The first of these dimensions is objective reframing. This requires the learner to critically reflect upon other people’s assumptions, which may be encountered by interacting with other people’s ideas, behavior, and choices. Boyd’s second dimension is subjective reframing, in which an individual critically reflects upon his or her own assumptions about ideas, behavior, and choices. Subjective reframing involves individuals making critically reflective assessments of their own internalized frames of reference.

Boyd’s observations may serve as a directive for transforming learning in higher education. Engaging learners in “critical analysis of the concepts, beliefs, feelings, or actions,” evident in one’s society as well as in one’s self, is truly “counterhegemonic” and self-authoring learning behavior (Brookfield, 2003, pp. 131, 138).

Self-authoring learning behavior, according to K. Taylor (2000) helps learners recognize their critically reflective role in constructing knowledge. Through this, K. Taylor explained, learners become “more effective members of a pluralistic, changing society; such outcomes might well be considered the meta-objectives of higher education” (153).

Mezirow (2000) observed that transformative learning potential is found in democratic societies with a “tradition that depends ultimately on faith in informed, free
human choice and social justice [in which] rationality, self awareness, and empathy are assumed values” (p. xiv).

Institutional Rationale

Where is it written that higher education should transform learners? In the mission statements of American colleges and universities. A review of the mission statements of three institutions in northeastern Minnesota illuminates the transformative aims of higher education. Of these three institutions, the first is a public university, the second is a private college, and the third is a tribal college.

The University of Minnesota’s stated mission is dedication to: “the advancement of learning and the search for truth; the sharing of this knowledge through education for a diverse community; and the application of this knowledge to benefit the people of the state, the nation, and the world” (http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/boardoperations/MissionStatement.html). The College of St. Scholastica’s stated mission is “intellectual and moral preparation for responsible living and meaningful work” (http://news.css.edu.about/principles). And Fond du Lac Tribal College’s stated mission is to “celebrate the cultural diversity of our community and promote global understanding” (http://www.fdl.cc.mn.us.webmission).

Transformation toward understanding and meaning are the overarching objectives of these institutions, according to their own mission statements. Each of these mission statements reflects democratic and transformative learning aims. These are forms of what Mezirow (2000) called, “self emancipation through self-understanding, the
overcoming of systematically distorted communication, and the strengthening of the capacity for self-determination through rational discourse” (p. xiv).

Because these and other colleges and universities have been founded with the stated purpose of accomplishing transformative and emancipatory objectives, stakeholders in higher education, and citizens of the cultures in which these institutions exist, are right to critically consider the degree to which higher education curricula actualize these institutional missions. Otherwise, perfunctory knowledge acquisition can prevent transformative learning, and hegemonic educational systems will pervade. “A considerable body of research,” explained K. Taylor (2000) “suggests that learners can fulfill the requirements in many traditional learning environments yet fail to integrate the learning in a way that challenges their existing ideas” (p. 157).

In contrast, transformation may be developed by enabling proactive thinking, incorporating multiple perspectives, and encouraging dialogue and construction of knowledge (Daloz, 1990). Learning of this nature has the potential to transform worldview and behavior. Transformative learning may produce significant, far-reaching, and drastic changes in the learner (Perry, 2000).

Belenky and Stanton (2000) emphasized that “not only would participation and reflective dialogue support [students’] development as individuals, it could also support the development of a more inclusive, just, and democratic society” (p. 74).

The transformative educational experience may contain the power to actualize institutional mission into reality. Institutions of higher education are uniquely positioned to facilitate transformative experiences in learners, who may, through critical
examination of the norms within their environment, develop heightened consciousness of their conditions. Actualizing higher education’s mission objectives is a powerful counterhegemonic response to the poverty of understanding in American society.

*Developmental Rationale*

Daloz (2000) explained that students in late adolescence are beginning to metacognate—to critically reflect on their own perspectives. In this formal operations stage, students can abstractly reason about their own assumptions (Piaget, 1970). Kegan (2000) added that transformation away from less sophisticated and dependable forms of thought toward more accurate and dependable forms of thought “ordinarily takes the first two decades of living . . . and some people have not developed them even by then” (p. 61).

The arrival on college campuses of students who are developmentally prepared to engage in critical reflection provides a critical intersection of the learner and potential for deep and meaningful learning. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* (2000) identified that learners in their late teens constitute the most common demographic in higher education. They are primed to experience the self-actualizing power of perspective transformation, but to do so, they must become engaged in critically reflecting on assumptions—their own and others’.

Not only would such an education benefit students, but it would also benefit local and global communities, as Maslow (1971) concluded, “Self-actualizing people have, to a large extent, transcended the values of their culture. They are not so much Americans as they are world citizens, members of the human species first and foremost. They are able
to regard their own society objectively, liking some aspects of it, disliking others” (p. 177). Self actualizing people honor their responsibility to humanity by advancing the effort of perspective transformation in the learners, institutions, and societies that they value. From a developmental perspective, transformative learning is an experience with reciprocal benefits for the development of individuals as well as their societies. Informed and insightful individuals can create increasingly informed and humane societies.

Programmatic Rationale: Teacher Education

Teacher education programs have the potential to be particularly hopeful environments—as graduates of teacher education programs go forth to shape the lives of society’s youngest generations. Teacher education programs have immense potential to address the poverty of understanding in American culture by increasing the degree to which educators are able to “think proactively, incorporate multiple perspectives, and encourage dialogue between multiple perspectives” (Daloz, 1990, p. 4). When teacher education programs transform future educators, these programs have a geometric effect on the transformative potential in society. Because teachers teach as much by actions as by words, actions that support democratic habits of mind will have democratic effects on the youngest generations in American classrooms. Conversely, hegemonic habits are unlikely to create a meaningful future.

Gandhi (1957) taught individuals to be the change they want to see in the world. In a very real sense, transformative teacher education can be the democratic change that transformative learning theory offers to the world. Establishing equitable relationships in young learners’ present perspectives means that young learners may arrive at a
metacognitive or formal operations age with democratic habits of mind. A greater
presence of democratic habits of mind may bring a lesser degree of hegemonic habits in
American classrooms, neighborhoods, and society. Instead of a minority of individuals
engaging in counterhegemonic behavior, society may become more accustomed to
discussing liberty, equity, and responsibility.

This geometric pattern of expanding transformation contains the potential to
transform the poverty of understanding in American culture into a richness of
understanding for not only American society, but also global postmodern society.

Problem Statement

The dichotomy of richness and poverty of American culture is particularly evident
in higher education, wherein the majority of students earn degrees by amassing
instrumental credits rather than by demonstrating the ability to critically examine
complex ideas, relationships, problems, and opportunities.

But hope for individual and societal transformation exists. It is found in higher
education mission statements professing commitment to the search for truth and pursuit
of meaning—for the benefit of the world. These mission statements point to learning that
transforms individuals and societies.

While a great deal has been written regarding transformative learning theory,
seldom does the literature address transformative learning experiences in teacher
education programs at institutions of higher education. Little is known about the degree
to which teacher education programs are transforming future educators into individuals
capable of searching for truth, pursuing meaning, and guiding others into respect for and
participation in that search. This study explores the extent to which transformative learning is taking place in teacher education programs in higher education.

Teachers who experience transformative learning are well positioned to support the next generations in becoming more democratic, equitable, resourceful, analytic, insightful, and wise. Through a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods, this study inquires about the presence, experience of theoretical components, and phenomenology of transformative learning in higher education teacher preparation programs.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to better understand transformative learning experiences in post-secondary teacher education programs. In order to do this, this study assessed the extent to which teacher education students were experiencing perspective transformation in northeastern Minnesota. Particular attention was paid to the demographic variables reported by participants. The participating institutions included one public university—the University of Minnesota Duluth, one private college—the College of St. Scholastica, and one tribal college—Fond du Lac Tribal College.

This study also analyzed interpersonal (critical examination of others’ assumptions) and intrapersonal (critical self-examination of assumptions) aspects of perspective transformation in higher education.

Finally, this study analyzed how transformative learning affected teacher education students’ current behavior.
Research Questions

1. To what extent are teacher education students—representing a variety of demographic variables—experiencing transformative learning, and what does this suggest about the current state of teacher education?

2. What is taking place in teacher education students’ experiences with transformative learning—in terms of the intrapersonal and interpersonal components of transformative learning theory?

3. How do transformative learning experiences affect teacher education students’ present behavior?

Research Overview

Creswell (2003) noted that all methods of research have strengths and limitations. In order to benefit from the strengths of quantitative and qualitative research, this study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods. This study’s mixed methodological strategy is what Creswell called a “concurrent triangulated strategy, or two different methods in an attempt to confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate findings within a single study” (p. 217). This concurrent triangulated strategy featured the empirical generalizability of quantitative methods and the contextual depth of qualitative methods. The quantitative method used was a transformative learning survey administered to teacher education students at three northeastern Minnesota colleges. The qualitative method used was in-depth phenomenological interviews with selected participants from the same population. The data collected was examined and organized into quantitative correlational findings as well as a qualitative narrative. This triangulated methodology
was designed for better understanding of transformative learning in teacher education programs. This study also analyzed interpersonal (objective) and intrapersonal (subjective) perspective reframing—about which much has been theorized but less has been measured.

Significance of the Study

This study was designed to meet several needs of stakeholders in higher education. Stakeholders include students, faculty, staff, administrators, and citizens—who all benefit from the presence of institutions that develop dependable, justifiable, and informed understandings of self and the world.

This study explored the extent to which students’ learning experiences embodied the aims of institutional mission statements, which articulate search for truth and the pursuit of meaning as many institutions’ purpose for existing. Institutions that successfully transform learners’ perspectives have realized their mission to produce more dependable, equitable, and informed thinking in postmodern and globally interconnected society.

During the school year, teachers spend as much or even more time with students than families do. Teachers, therefore, exert considerable influence on what and how students learn. Educators who have experienced perspective transformation are in a position to support students’ transformative learning. And yet, there are presently gaps in understanding the extent to which teachers themselves experience perspective transformation. The context in which this study investigated the extent to which teachers experience transformative learning is higher education teacher preparation programs.
This study owed much of its significance to E. Taylor’s (2000) exhaustive analysis of more than 45 transformative learning research studies. In his broad and deep review, Taylor recommended that new research on transformative learning research should: (a) “utilize innovative research designs, (b) conduct in-depth theoretical component analysis, and (c) seek to understand what acting on a new perspective looks like” (p. 318).

In order to investigate these unknowns, this research set forth to analyze the extent to which students in teacher education experience transformative learning. This study conducted theoretical component analysis of transformative learning experiences, in order to understand the nature of transformative learning in teacher education. Moreover, this study’s mixed methodological approach was designed to access—from multiple perspectives—the texture and nuances of perspective transformation.

Assumptions of the Study

This study has been driven by a commitment to actualizing higher education’s mission statements—for the benefit of institutions and their learners. These statements identify democratic aims such as enabling students to develop understanding, preparing students for civic responsibility, and broadening students’ perspective, outlook, or worldview. This study’s assumption was that stakeholders value “democratic habits [including] respect for others, self-respect, willingness to accept responsibility for the common good, willingness to welcome diversity, and approaching others with openness” (Bellah, 1995, cited in Mezirow, 2000, p. 14). Democratic habits of mind enable learners
to make respectful, responsive, and informed choices that embody the stated missions of institutions of higher education across this nation.

This study also assumed that the experience of perspective transformation could be validly operationalized through quantitative variables. It further assumed that the language of transformative learning theory could be validly converted into students’ language, in order to evoke description of transformative learning experiences. Additionally, this study assumed that the experience of perspective transformation could be recognized and described by learners still actively involved in higher education.

Limitations of the Study

This study was conducted by a University of Minnesota graduate student who also taught at the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD), which was one of the three populations studied. While the researcher did not administer the quantitative data collection at any of the three participating institutions, the data supplied by the UMD participants may have been influenced by their perceptions of him as an instructor. For this reason, this study’s quantitative data was collected by a third party.

UMD student perceptions of the researcher as an instructor may have also influence students’ willingness to volunteer for follow-up phenomenological interviews. For this reason, participating in interviews was voluntary. A third party informed the researcher whether or not a particular survey participant volunteered for follow-up interviews.

Additionally, the experience of perspective transformation was not easily operationalized as a variable for quantitative data collection. The difficulty of
operationalizing the theoretical components of transformative learning revealed the imperfect nature of quantitative analysis of perspective transformation. For this reason, this study proceeded from an established, field-tested, and research-based survey instrument designed by King (1997). Modifications made to King’s instrument were based upon this study’s research questions. While King approved the use and modification of her survey, the changes made to her survey were not reviewed by King or her expert panel of reviewers. In order to further address the limitations inherent in operationalizing perspective transformation for quantitative analysis, this study triangulated the quantitative methodology with qualitative phenomenological methodology. This enabled the researcher to use qualitative methods to verify quantitative findings and to use quantitative methods to verify qualitative findings.

**Delimitations of the Study**

While this study was designed to gather and analyze data from learners enrolled in public, private, and tribal teacher education institutions in northeastern Minnesota, it did not endeavor to generalize findings toward all teacher education students in northeastern Minnesota or beyond.

Furthermore, this study collected and analyzed data regarding teacher education students’ experiences with transformative learning. This data was analyzed along selected demographic variables and selected theoretical components—such as interpersonal and intrapersonal perspective reframing. This study did not attempt analysis of all demographic variables, nor did it attempt to analyze all theoretical components associated with transformative learning.
Additionally, this study was designed for qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis—in order to more completely understand transformative learner experiences in teacher education. Despite this innovative design, this study was nonetheless limited to triangulating this data temporally, rather than as a longitudinal study. While this study gathered and analyzed data regarding the behavior that results from perspective transformation, the behavior considered was limited to students’ current behavior.

Of note was the study’s design to allow learners to state, through a third party survey administrator, their interest in being contacted for in-depth interviews. These interviews included a question regarding the possibility of future contact, which would allow for longitudinal data gathering and analysis of the effects of transformative learning on graduates’ behavior as professional educators.

Definitions of Terms and Concepts

Transformative learning theory has grown rich in terminology that at times seem to form a meta-language unique to this body of literature. This section sought to define and simplify transformative learning theory’s language.

Critical reflection: “Examining the validity of one’s . . . perspectives” (Vogelsang, 1993, p. 3).

Communicative learning: “Learning to understand the meaning of what others communicate and to make one’s self understood; learning the conditions in which an assertion is valid” (Vogelsang, 1993, p. 9).
Disorienting dilemma: Ranges from “an acute internal and personal crisis” (Mezirow, 2000), to “indefinite periods in which persons consciously or unconsciously search for something which is missing in their life; when they find this missing piece, the transformative process is catalyzed” (Clark 1991, 1993, cited in E. Taylor, 2000, pp. 298-299).

Dual citizenship: Simultaneously existing as a constructive member of multiple, often conflicting cultures (Glisczinski, 2005).


Frame of reference: A “meaning perspective” that reflects the structure of assumptions and expectations through which individuals filter sense impressions (Mezirow, 2000, p. 8). Frames of reference are the results of interpretations of experience, and frames of reference are composed of two dimensions. The first is a habit of mind—or a set of assumptions that as a guide for interpreting experience. The second is a point of view, which is made of aggregations of meaning schemes or sets of immediate and specific expectations, beliefs, attitudes that commonly operate outside of one’s awareness (Mezirow, 2000, p. 8).

Habit of mind: “A set of assumptions that act as a guide for interpreting experience” (Mezirow, 2000, p. 8).
Individuation: Forming a unique identity based on one’s own lived experience (E. Taylor, 1998).

Instrumental learning: Learning oriented toward task effectiveness.

Interpersonal reframing: Also called objective reframing, which requires the learner to critically reflect upon others’ assumptions, as encountered in reading, interacting, approaching tasks, observing, and in listening. Brookfield (2000) explains that objective reframing “focuses on learners doing critical analysis of the concepts, beliefs, feelings, or actions communicated to them” (p. 131).

Intrapersonal reframing: Also called subjective reframing, or critically reflecting upon one’s own assumptions about relationships with people, power, and resources. In doing so, individuals are positioned to make critically reflective assessments of their own internalized frames of reference. Brookfield (2000) calls this “critical self reflection on assumptions” in order to understand the “culturally contingent... tacit, and unproblematized” assumptions, which are “socially created and learned” (pp. 131-33).

Intentional sojourners: Transformed individuals who, empowered by dual citizenship in often disparate worlds, are unable to turn away from further transformative exploration of the myriad, complex cultures present in postmodern society (Gliszczinski, 2005).

Hegemony: “The process whereby ideas, structures, and actions come to be seen by the majority of people as wholly natural, preordained, and working toward their common good, when in fact they are constructed and transmitted by powerful minority
interests to protect the status quo that serves these interests so well” (Brookfield, 2000, p. 138).

*Meaning perspectives:* The set of habitual expectations and assumptions that represent an orienting frame of reference which people use to interpret and evaluate the meaning of experiences. Meaning perspectives not only determine what an individual sees at any given time, but also what an individual perceives to be future possibilities (Weisberger, 1995). “Each meaning perspective contains a number of meaning schemes” (Vogelsang, 1993, p.9).

*Meaning schemes:* “The particular knowledge, beliefs, value judgments, and feelings articulated in an interpretation” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 44). Meaning schemes offer criteria for judging right and wrong, bad and good, true and false. They also determine our self-image and the way we feel about ourselves.

*Objective reframing:* Objective reframing requires the learner to critically reflect upon others’ assumptions, as encountered in reading, interacting, approaching tasks, observing, and in listening. Brookfield (2000) explains that objective reframing “focuses on learners doing critical analysis of the concepts, beliefs, feelings, or actions communicated to them” (p. 131).

*Perspective transformation:* “The process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative perspective; and finally, making choices
or otherwise acting upon these new understandings” (Mezirow, 1991, cited in Vogelsang, 1993, p. 9).

Point of View: “Made of aggregations of meaning schemes—or sets of immediate and specific expectations, beliefs, attitudes which commonly operate outside of one’s awareness” (Mezirow, 2000, p. 8).

Self-authoring learners: “Learners who are able to examine themselves, their culture, and their milieu in order to understand how to separate what they feel from what they should feel, what they value from what they should value, and what they want from what they should want. They develop critical thinking, individual initiative, and a sense of themselves of co-creators of the culture which shapes them” (Kegan, 2000, p. 66).

Stakeholders: All individuals directly and indirectly involved in a process—in this case the process of higher education. Stakeholders include students, faculty, staff, administrators, and citizens who are affected by the outcomes of higher education.

Subjective reframing: Critically reflecting upon one’s own assumptions about relationships with people, power, and resources. In doing so, individuals are positioned to make critically reflective assessments of their own internalized frames of reference. Brookfield (2000) calls this “critical self reflection on assumptions” in order to understand the “culturally contingent. . . . tacit, and unproblematised” assumptions, which are “socially created and learned” (pp. 131-33).

Teacher education students: College students pursuing licensure as professional educators. Known as licensure candidates or preservice teachers in professional jargon.
Transformative learning: "The process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action... Transformative Theory’s focus is on how we learn to negotiate and act on our own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those we have uncritically assimilated from others—to gain greater control over our lives as socially responsible, clear-thinking decision makers” (Mezirow, 2000, p. 8).

Summary

Postmodern America is the home of a crisis of simultaneous richness and poverty. While material wealth and information abound, American society remains poor in understanding. This dichotomy prevails in higher education—the apex of American schooling. The preponderance of higher education measures success by information amassed rather than understanding actualized.

Yet transformative possibilities exist in higher education’s mission statements, which aim toward the search for truth and pursuit of meaning—for the benefit of the world.

In the following chapter, this study explores the extensive literature of consciousness and perspective transformation. It proceeds to explore the rich literature regarding transformative learning. Then it reviews the little which is known about transformative learning in teacher education programs. A better understanding of transformative learning in teacher education is significant for American society because
teachers who experience transformative learning are well positioned to support learning experiences that foster democracy, equity, and understanding.
CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Little is known about transformative learning experiences in teacher education. In order to better understand transformative teacher education, the following review explores the relationship between a variety of bodies of literature and transformative learning theory. These bodies of literature include the traditional literature of transformative consciousness, the literature of critical theory and conscientization, transformative learning theory literature, and transformative teacher education literature.

Subsequent to reviewing the literature, this study outlines a mixed methodology research design in order to better understand: (a) the extent to which transformative learning is taking place in teacher education, (b) which selected theoretical components are taking place, and (c) the effects of transformative learning on teacher education students’ current behavior.

Traditions of Transformative Consciousness

Because transformative learning theory’s aim is construction of critically aware thought, the roots of transformative learning theory may be traced back to philosophical and psychological traditions engaging the ontological question, “What is the nature of being?”

Descartes (1637/1980) responded to this question with firm assertion that the nature of one’s being comes to be understood through cognition. Through thought, explained Descartes, the individual comes to affirm the existence of the self. Descartes’ claim, “I think, therefore I am” implied that in the absence of cognition, existence cannot
be known (p. 61). While Descartes’ view of existence bore the limitations of a cognition-centric epistemology, Descartes’ contribution to transformative thought was his claim that awareness involves metacognition.

Heidegger (1927/1962) developed Descartes’ assertion regarding the experience of the mind as the instrument that affirms only the elements of being that have been recognized by an individual’s subjective experience. Like Berkeley’s (1710/1961) empiricist claim that human knowledge proceeds from what is “actually imprinted on the senses,” Heidegger asserted that ideas about the nature of being in the world are only meaningful as they are experienced (p. 151).

Heidegger’s solipsistic claims implied that subjective and personal experiences are all that humans are able to know with certainty. Heidegger’s overarching contribution to transformative thought was the radical possibility that being is utter freedom. Heidegger suggested the only authentic response to the angst-inspiring possibility of utter freedom is deliberate reflection about one’s values, goals, and choices.

Developing Heidegger’s existential worldview, Sartre (1957) contended that an individual’s choices actually author the world. According to Sartre, every choice that an individual makes or refrains from making creates the very world in which one exists. Herein, Sartre explained, is the nature of existence; through one’s choices, one authors the world in which self and others live. Sartre contended that individuals are not only entirely free, but also entirely responsible for the choices they make.

Sartre’s existentialist response to the question, “What is the nature of being?” was that being can only be understood through individual critical reflection on personal and
societal assumptions. Critical reflection, according to existentialists such as Sartre, frees
the individual from unsubstantiated notions and traditions. Existentialism requires
individuals to take responsibility for their own actions and shape their own destinies.
Here existentialism provided grounding for transformative learning theory, as
transformation cannot occur without an individual’s volition.

Sartre exemplified this in his writings on the central role of an individual’s
choices in authoring events and objects. To this end, Sartre (1957) explained, “What is
not possible is not to choose. I can always choose, but I ought to know that if I do not
choose, I am still choosing. . . . [I] cannot avoid making a choice” (p. 41). Conscious
choice making, according to Sartre, is imperative, because in making choices, an
individual makes the world for both self and others. “The other is indispensable to my
own existence, as well as to my knowledge about myself,” explained Sartre, “In
discovering my own inner being, I discover the other person at the same time” (pp. 38-
39).

Buber (1970) explained the existential importance of choices in the following
way, “What is required is a deed that man does with his whole being: if he commits it and
speaks with his being, the basic word to the form that appears, then the creative power is
released and the work comes into being” (60). He continued, “If I do not serve it
properly, it breaks, or it breaks me” (p. 61). In these words, Buber suggested that a
choice’s creative power constructs the world in which people exist, in which relationships
are supported, and through which cultures are established.
The premise that choices create reality is found in transformative learning theory, which explains a type of learning that develops when choices are critically examined and directed by more comprehensive habits of mind. Transformative learning leverages power to move individuals from less aware behavior to greater consciousness. Transformed consciousness is fostered through critical reflection on the values and perspectives encountered in experiences.

Similar to existentialism, humanism is an intellectual and cultural framework of thought that maintains nothing can be understood but through the lens of thought and experience. Like existentialism, humanism is an ontological stance that insists the world is met and created in each individual’s choices. Yet humanism, according to Maslow (1971) is “an appreciation of high possibilities, and simultaneously, a deep disappointment that these possibilities are so infrequently actualized” (p. 25). Unlike existential thought, humanism embraces each individual’s possibility for self-actualization as the essence of being. Humanism’s contribution to transformative learning theory is the conviction that perspective transformation is indelibly bound to developing one’s potential for living a conscientious and meaningful life.

Echoing existential choice and humanistic possibility, Frankl (1963) insisted, “Each man is questioned by life; and he can only answer to life by answering for his own life; to life he can only respond by being responsible” (p. 172). However, dissimilar from Heidegger’s bleak contention that the individual is forlorn in the world without a whither and a whence, Frankl stated that a human is a “being whose main concern consists in fulfilling a meaning and in actualizing values” (p. 164). Frankl contended that the
defining characteristics of individuals in the world are not what happens to them, but instead what they choose in response to what others choose.

This is the self-authoring dimension of transformative learning. Frankl suggested that “What man actually needs is not a tensionless state but rather the striving and struggling for some goal worthy of him. What he needs is not the discharge of tension at any cost, but the call of a potential meaning waiting to be fulfilled by him” (p. 166).

Frankl’s experiences and observations revealed the charged nature of transformative learning. Often, transformational possibilities exist at the intersection of conflicting interpretations. At this transformational juncture, critically reflective choices determine the degree to which a person will be successful in developing valid and reliable frames of reference, habits of mind, and points of view.

Regarding this transformational intersection, Tillich (1987) explained that the tension between one’s choice and another’s choice has the potential to be a transformative intersection of perspectives. Tillich called the intersection between contrasting world views a frontier. Of approaching the frontier, he explained:

Existence on the frontier, the boundary situation, is full of tension and movement. It is in truth not standing still, but rather a crossing and return, a repetition of return and crossing, a back and forth—the aim of which is to create a third area beyond the bounded territories, an area where one can stand for a time without being enclosed in something tightly bounded. The frontier situation is not yet what someone would call “peace,” and yet it is the portal through which every individual must pass, and through which nations must pass in order to achieve
peace. For peace is to stand in the comprehensive which is sought through
crossing and recrossing the frontiers. . . . Peace is not side-by-side existence
without tension. It is unity within that which comprehends, where there is no lack
of opposition of living forces and conflicts between the old and sometimes the
new—but in which they do not break out destructively, but are held in the peace
of the comprehensive. (p. 239)

Here Tillich used “peace” as a term for critical and mindful understanding. He
suggested that only by critical examination of choices can a state of understanding—or
peace—exist. Tillich’s model of approaching the frontier, engaging it in interaction, and
arriving at a deep understanding of it is a model familiar to transformative learning
theory.

To illustrate the existential and humanist importance of choice for not only an
individual but also the rest of society, Tillich explained that choices to avoid the frontier
result in the opposite of transformation. The opposite of transformation is habitual
entrenchment. Tillich illustrated this point by stating:

The aggression of the fanatic is the result of his weakness, his anxiety to cross
over his boundary and his incapacity to see realized in the other which he has
suppressed in himself. . . . Today, there are still battles that shatter the souls, in
which weapons of hate are used—namely lies, distortion, exclusion,
suppression—in order to eliminate the frontiers which one was too weak to cross
over. . . . The Philistine can be exactly characterized as someone who—because
of his anxiety at reaching his own frontier and seeing himself in the mirror of the
different—can never risk rising above the habitual, the recognized, the
established. He leaves unrealized the possibilities that are given to every person
from time to time to rise up out of himself. (1987, p. 242)

Transformative learning theory has developed from these experiences in which
individuals rise up out of themselves and create new selves that possess greater
understanding.

Regarding perspective transformation, Maslow (1971) explained what education
systems need to do is develop individuals who “are able to face tomorrow . . . with
confidence enough in [themselves, that they] will be able to improvise in that situation
which has never happened” (p. 57). Maslow concluded this statement with the warning
that societies lacking such systems will die out. For this reason, Maslow advocated
developing transformational education systems in support of learners rising up toward
actualization, in order to respond meaningfully to the surprises of the challenges ahead.

Yet the obstacles to transformation are not merely institutional, but also personal.
Maslow identified the “Jonah Complex” as a tool for understanding why individuals fear
self-actualization. This fear proceeds from an individual’s fear of discovering one’s own
greatness. The “Jonah Complex” is characterized by fear of being misinterpreted,
judged, and perceived as proud, self-indulgent, strange, or irrelevant. It is fear of losing
ease of control and being compelled to abandon previous habits in exchange for more
truthful ways of being. Maslow explained, “Certain truths carry automatic
responsibilities which may be anxiety-producing. One way to evade the responsibility
and the anxiety is to simply evade consciousness of the truth,” as did the Biblical figure
Jonah, when God called upon him to be a messenger to his contemporaries (p. 39). Instead, Jonah chose to continue on with his normal life. To this, Maslow responded, “Normalcy would be rather the kind of sickness or crippling that we share with everybody else and therefore don’t notice” (p. 25).

In contrast to the “Jonah Complex,” Maslow also offered a concept that he called “being needs” to describe what motivates highly actualized or authentic people. “Being needs” may be understood as healthy needs that spring from the need to live toward self-actualization. “Being needs,” Maslow noted, are a common denominator in individuals who search for transformative understanding despite the challenges of seeking self-actualization.

Maslow called the mechanistic, informational model of education a mistake, as it fails to develop individuals toward self-actualization. Maslow identified concentration camps and atomic bombs as evidence that mere instrumental knowledge is dangerous. One of the goals of education” explained Maslow, “should be to teach that life is precious” (1971, p. 180). While extrinsic learning, jobs, and careers are important, these ends would be better served by humanistic means—namely intrinsic development of self and possibility—which lead to meaningful learning in the context of following one’s life vocation.

Maslow’s humanistic philosophy of education constitutes not only rationale for, but also description of, the means and ends of transformative learning.
Akin to Maslow’s desire to see education accomplish transformative ends, May (1983) analyzed Heidegger’s existential claim that individuals must be responsible for their choices.

The significance of May’s analysis is in how he frames the individual’s responsibility to the possibility of making choices, through which individuals come to know themselves and others. May explained that the word *knowing* is etymologically rooted in the word *loving*. To know one’s self and others is to be prepared to love one’s self and others. Loving one’s self and others is an anxiety-riddled proposition, as love requires a degree of anxious vulnerability. Yet, as existentialist and humanist authors have noted, anxiety—or the energy of tension—is rich with transformative and excitable possibility.

May (1983) wrote, “One must have at least a readiness to love the other person, broadly speaking, if one is to be able to understand him” (p. 93). In knowing and loving, one is required to understand the perspective of the other. Understanding frequently requires the ability to consider another from a perspective outside of one’s usual frame of reference. This is an anxious proposition, again in the etymological sense that anxiety reflects *angere*—or to pain by pushing together (May, 1983, p.110).

Such an anxious proposition requires what Blasko and Mokwa (1986) called “Janusian” thinking, stemming from the Roman god Janus, who had two faces, to look in opposite directions at the same time. Janusian thinking involves the ability to understand two contradictory concepts at the same time. Blasko and Mokwa suggested that what
enables a Janusian encounter is the capacity to simultaneously manage both excitement and anxiety. Such experiences may facilitate perspective transformation.

May further explained, “Anxiety occurs at the point where some emerging potentiality or possibility faces the individual, some possibility of fulfilling his existence; but this very possibility involves the destroying of present security, which thereupon gives rise to the tendency to deny the new potentiality” (1983, p. 111).

Maslow (1971) addressed this situation by stating that if the aim of education is self-actualization, then education “ought to help people transcend the conditioning imposed on them by their own culture and become world citizens” (p. 177). Otherwise they remain strangers to the world, and the unknowing around them remains deep.

In his consideration of schools as institutions that acculturate students, Rogers (1994) suggested that entrenchment is a product of certain types of education systems—including the tradition most prevalent in the United States. On the basis of comparative studies of education systems, Rogers observed that American education “shouldn’t substitute tools for thinking, intellect for wisdom, and bureaucracy for action” (p. 4).

Still, American education more frequently assesses knowledge and recall rather than analysis and understanding. Because of this, it is not surprising that American society suffers from a poverty of understanding, despite having access to an ostensibly vast richness of information and schooling.

Regarding understanding in American schools, Rogers concluded, “We have been asking for something less [than understanding] and we have been getting something less”
In the context of current American national educational practice, there is little reason to anticipate different results from more of the same mechanistic behavior. Institutional assumptions must be critically examined in any course of action that aims to foster learner transformation.

In support of education that provides transformative possibilities, Kinget (1987) described individuals as “entities capable of pondering existence, of lending it meaning and direction” and so the humanistic decision maker has an “interest in furthering the growth and fulfillment of the person and an opposition to the mechanistic . . . philosophies of traditional approaches” (v-vi). Moreover, Kinget insisted:

If there is truth in the saying that being is determined by doing . . . that one becomes what one does . . . then Homo Sapiens is currently fast becoming Homo Mechanicus. . . . Thus equipped near-exclusively with a bag of tools—admittedly ‘miracle tools’—but barren of knowledge about the human condition, our contemporaries can actually be considered less educated than their forbears.

(1987, p. x)

Kinget’s observation rightly served as an imperative toward critical reflection of American society’s educational paradigms, which fall short of systemic support of perspective transformation. Existing paradigms fail to lead learners out of existing frames of reference. Existing frames of reference fail to meaningfully address the ontological question, “What is the nature of being?” Transformative learning, in contrast, provides a more mindful framework through which higher education may pursue truth and understanding.
Critical Theory and Conscientization

Creswell (2003) stated that critical theory is "concerned with empowering human beings to transcend the constraints placed on them by race, class, and gender" (p.10). Critical reflection on these constraints is one of the effects of transformative learning, which seeks to develop critical consciousness, discourse, and action. Central to consciousness building is critical reflection on one's own personal and societal assumptions. Sorting through assumptions requires an individual to reflect upon the discrepancy between justifiable and unjustifiable worldviews.

Sorting through discrepancies is an element of Jung's (1971) notion of being at variance with one's self. Being at variance with one's self suggests a constructive and potentially transformative internal dissonance that stirs the cognitive and affective processes within an individual—in order to more authentically self-author one's way of being in the world—a process of emancipation from uncritically assumed frames of reference.

Freire (1970) wrote passionately about emancipatory education through conscientization. Freire advocated for educators and students to share power by partnering in a process of generative inquiry.

Freire described this process of emancipatory learning as "thematic inquiry" in which power is shared because the educator as "co-ordinator" engages in dialectics of listening yet still challenging students to examine thematic topics, and then again drawing the students out to critically examine the answers these very same students produce (pp.110-111).
Freire asserted, "For the truly humanist educator and the authentic revolutionary, the object of action is the reality to be transformed by them together with other men" (p. 83).

Transformative Learning Theory

Perry (2000) characterized transformative learning as a specific type of learning experience that produces meaningful and enduring changes in a learner. A review of the recent history of transformative learning theory added clarity to this complex learning process.

Perspective transformation theory was originally identified in women re-entering higher education (Mezirow, 1978). In a later study, Mezirow (1991) described the adult learning experience: "Rather than merely adapting to changing circumstances . . . adults discover a need to acquire new perspectives in order to gain a more complete understanding of changing events." Mezirow (2000) identified ten phases that individuals experience in the process of transformative learning. While these vary from learner to learner, they represent a framework for understanding the process involved in this deep change. These phases are:

(a) a disorienting dilemma, (b) self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, or shame, (c) critical assessment of assumptions, (d) recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared, (e) exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions, (f) planning a course of action, (g) acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans, (h) provisional trying of new roles, (i) building competence and self-confidence in new roles and
relationships, and (j) reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions
dictated by one’s new perspective. (p. 22)

Herbers (1998) condensed Mezirow’s ten phases into: (a) disorienting dilemmas,
(b) critical reflection, (c) rational dialogue, and (d) action. Herbers’ distillation of
Mezirow’s ten phases clarified the foundational components of transformative learning.
These foundational components are akin to Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle,
which consists of cycles of concrete experiences, reflection, abstract conceptualization,
and active experimentation. Here, Mezirow, Herbers, and Kolb seemed to be addressing
the same process of action, critical reflection, and renewed action—which is informed,
reformed, tempered, and redirected by experience and expanding awareness.

Mezirow (2000) explained that learning occurs in one of four ways: (a)
elaborating existing frames of reference, (b) learning new frames of reference, (c)
transforming points of view, or (d) transforming habits of mind. Mezirow further
explained that transformative habits of mind may be “epochal—and sudden, dramatic,
and reorienting” in terms of insight, or they may be “incremental—involving a
progressive series of transformations in related points of view that culminate in a
transformed habit of mind” (p. 21). While these two experiences of transformation are
different in timing and may be dissimilar in terms of situational intensity, what they share
in common is critical reflection and awareness, which leave the learner forever changed.

Conceptions of transformational learning range from Freire’s notion of social
transformation to Boyd’s concept of individuation—or forming a unique identity based
on one’s own lived experience (cited in E. Taylor, 1998). To this end, Buber (1970)
noted, "Every actual relationship in the world rests upon individuation" (p. 148). The commonality between different types of transformation is the learner's personal journey of individuation and identity formation.

Boyd's view of transformative learning has been grounded in Jung's concept of individuation, which is the process by which individuals are formed and differentiated. Boyd's view of transformative learning invited learners to embrace a view of learning that deepens their sense of emotional and spiritual strength (Dirkx, 2000).

Central to this journey of individuation was Jung's (1971) notion of being at variance with one's self. This expression suggested a constructive and potentially transformative internal dissonance that stirs the cognitive and affective processes within an individual—in order to more authentically self-author one's way of being in the world—a process of transformation into one's self.

Tillich (1987) spoke of this journey of individuation as a consciousness of calling, "For the one who has found his identity and thereby the frontier of his nature does not need to lock himself in or to break out. He will bring to fruition what his nature is. Of course, in that realization, all the questions of the border crossings come back—but accompanied now by a consciousness of himself and his own potential" (245).

Heidegger (1927/1962) wrote about a related analysis of human existence. He addressed the human experience process of being toward choices and action. Transformation, in a Heideggerian sense, is choosing and acting enabled by critical reflection instead of acting from a basis of unexamined paradigms.
In contrast, Boyd’s notion of transformative education reflected a psyche or soul-centered psychology (Dirkx, 1997). Moreover, what matters most in learning, according to Sells (2000), is what matters to the deep ground of one’s being—the psyche or soul.

In both cases, according to Grabove (1997), the elements common to rational and extra-rational analyses of transformative learning include humanism, emancipatory learning, individuation, and critical awareness. Furthermore, Scott (1997) stated that a spectrum of emotions is necessary in the journey toward transformation. This includes the process of grieving the loss of easy answers, which Scott viewed as essential for transformation to take place. In Scott’s view, transformative learning is tied to the learner’s emotive process. Scott emphasized the psychological aspects of transformative learning. These psychological aspects, according to Scott, are connected to a spectrum of powerful thought processes.

Cushing and Henderson (1999) noted that proliferation of the term *transformative* has obscured the very meaning of perspective transformation in learning. Brookfield (2000) agreed and warned of the extinction of meaning that occurs when the term *transformative* is used in place of the term *meaningful*. Brookfield insisted that critical reflection on one’s assumptions is what distinguishes transformative learning from other types of powerful learning experiences.

Kitchener (1983 cited in Mezirow 2000) suggested that cognitive processing may be organized into memorization, metacognition, and epistemic cognition. Epistemic cognition is the process of reflecting on the limits of knowledge in absence of absolute or clear solutions. This type of cognition, which is transformational because of its critically
reflective nature, emerges in late adolescence. This suggests that learners in higher
education are developmentally capable of transformative learning—or using prior
interpretation to construct new interpretation of experience as a guide for further action.

Brookfield’s (2000) advocacy of transformative learning is in part due to its
foundation in ideology critique, which is emancipatory in nature. Brookfield explained:

Through ideology critique, what strikes us as the normal order of life is revealed
as a constructed reality that serves to protect the interests of the powerful. If what
Foucault (1980) called the “normalizing gaze” is socially constructed, it occurs to
us that it can be dismantled and remade by human effort (cited in Brookfield,
2000, p. 130).

The roots of ideology critique—aimed at understanding the way human behavior
is affected by powerful ideologies—may be traced back to Sartre’s (1957) premise that
human beings socially construct the world in which they live by making choices to act or
not act upon any given idea. Similar also to Descartes’ (1637/1980) emphasis on the
centrality of cognition in understanding existence, Brookfield contended cognitive
intentionality is the defining characteristic in critical reflection. The implications of
critical self-reflection on assumptions in the curricula of teacher education programs are
transformative, as they demand cognitive intentionality in reframing perspective and anti-
hegemonic decision-making.

The contention that perspective transformation is based upon cognitive
intentionality is a point of divergence among transformative learning theorists. The
divergent stances on this point have been organized into rational and extra-rational
conceptions of perspective transformation. This point of divergence suggests itself as a
topic of further dialogue, research, and theoretical advancement.

Kegan (2000) offered developmental analysis of the age at which learners are ready to engage in critical reflection. Kegan’s analysis contained refrains of Sartre’s emphasis on choices. Kegan described such a process as:

A shift away from being made up by the values and expectations of one’s surroundings that get uncritically internalized and with which one becomes identified, toward developing an internal authority that makes choices about these external values and experiences according to one’s own self-authored belief system. One goes from being psychologically “written by” the socializing process to “writing upon it,” a shift from a socialized self to a self authoring epistemology, in the lingo of constructive-developmental theory. (2000, p. 59)

Kegan (2000) offered a bridging metaphor to explain a learner’s experience with perspective transformation, explaining that perspective transformation is, “a gradual traversing of a succession of more elaborate bridges” (p. 61). Similarly, Vygotsky (1978) suggested a construction metaphor to explain a learner’s developmental needs. He suggested consciousness building requires scaffolding strong enough to support learners’ readiness and the difficulty of their learning task. Both metaphors point to the need for appropriate structure and space for movement.

K. Taylor (2000) expanded on Kegan’s metaphor of learning as bridge crossing identifying that for learners to cross instead of abandon these bridges, each bridge must
be “anchored both in a learner’s current frame of reference and in the one toward which he or she is growing” (p. 156).

Mezirow (1997), observed that andragogy—or adult education—constitutes precipitous conditions for perspective transformation, as learners are equipped with experience and metacognitive abilities to scrutinize uncritically assumed perspectives about the world.

Perry (1970) advanced understanding of andragogy—through his stage theory about the nature of learning among college students. The four main stages he found are dualism, multiplicity, relativism, and intellectuality. Dualism means thinking in either-or terms, which can be developed by engaging learners in the search for multiple valid choices. Multiplicity means viewing knowledge in subjective terms, which can be developed by asking learners to differentiate between well-supported and weakly-supported ideas. Relativism means constructing knowledge from a variety of perspectives, and can be developed by asking learners to engage in mindfully evaluating the consequences of ideas and choices. Intellectuality means journeying toward understanding of complex ideas and perspectives. In this stage, the learner is critically aware of the consequences of choices and each choice’s sphere of influence.

Buber (1970) emphasized the importance of the mind’s intellectual development. He asserted, “What matters in this sphere is that we should do justice with an open mind to the actuality that opens up before us” (p. 173). Perspective transformation is a form of open-minded journey toward justice in learning.
Despite much discussion of transformative learning theory, perspective transformation is arguably more often advanced in theory than it is actualized in practice. While perspective transformation is not solely the responsibility of higher education, college and university mission statements charge higher education with the responsibility for supporting its actualization.

Mezirow (1997) explained the theoretical basis of transformative learning as rooted in autonomous, responsible thinking. He also discussed the practical implications for educators, who must work as critically inquisitive facilitators, who engage students in dialectic inquiry in order to precipitate deeper reflection in learners. The facilitator models the critically reflective role expected of learners. This approach reflects elements of the Socratic method, existentialist thought, Freirian methodology, and contemporary critical pedagogy. Moreover, it reflects Frankl’s (1963) assertion that “Life ultimately means taking the responsibility to find the right answer to its problems and to fulfill the tasks which it constantly sets for each individual” (p. 122).

King (1997) designed an influential quantitative study to assess the presence of transformative learning, transformative curriculum, and transformative life factors among adult students. King’s survey instrument was piloted and revised according to feedback from adult learners and transformative theory scholars. Participant questionnaires and interviews were used to determine how much the facilitating factors promoted the students’ transformational learning. King found that factors promoting transformation in higher education, listed in order of significance, were people, learning activities, and life changes.
E. Taylor’s (2000) expansive analysis of research on transformative learning considered 45 transformative learning research studies. In this review, E. Taylor recommended that transformative learning be further studied by, among other things (a) innovative research designs, (b) in-depth theoretical component analysis, and (c) behavior that results from perspective transformation.

Transformative Teacher Education

In contrast to the extensive literature regarding transformative learning in higher education, less has been written about transformative learning in teacher education.

Teacher education programs typically view students as recipients of methodological and subject-specific instruction. Instead of developing professionals who model “independent judgment, training programs often produce technicians with competency in the necessary mechanics of school life: through more school learning, [educators] have only learned school” (Schaeffer, 1993 and Wenger, 1998 cited in Miller & Ramos, 1999, p. 2). As a result, teacher education programs perpetuate the existing cycle of instrumental task mastery.

Miller & Ramos (1999) observed that “no detailed design” exists for accomplishing transformative learning in teacher education (p. 25). Yet Miller & Ramos identified features present in selected teacher education programs from across the globe that support teacher transformation. A key feature is supporting future teachers in becoming “agents of hope and possibility,” confident that their work can generate new connections, new levels of awareness, and new possibilities (1999, p. 4).
Programs that view developing educators as agents of hope and possibility support educators in learning to adapt and learn in unpredictable situations. Hartwell (1997) asserted that, “In the future, educational systems will have value according to their capacity to enable a society to learn and adapt (cited in Miller & Ramos, 1999, p. 23). Historically, education systems have tended to be judged by their ability to produce respectable test scores, graduate students in an expeditious manner, and place graduates in degree-specific occupations.

Herbers (1998) studied methods associated with learning and adaptation in her study of transformative teacher education. Herbers’ study attempted to determine whether students involved in a college teacher education program experience perspective transformation as the result of a curriculum that is likely to produce a disorienting dilemma—as is advocated by Mezirow’s (2000) model of the phases involved in perspective transformation.

Herbers (1998) identified that through a Foundations of Urban Education course, curriculum that included visiting, viewing, and reading the material at the National Civil Rights Museum precipitated, in some students, a disorienting dilemma. Herbers found that transformative learning could be initiated in a five-week college course, and recommended that more studies are needed to identify other strategies, to help guide teachers and learners through the “land mines” often associated with transformative learning in the classroom (cited in E. Taylor, 2000, p. 319).

While other studies consider the transformative possibilities found in relationships between licensed education professionals and their colleagues, little is known about (a)
the extent to which transformative learning is taking place in teacher education, (b) the
close of transformative teacher education in light of theoretical model component
analysis, and (c) the effects of transformative learning in teacher education students’
present behavior.

Summary

Much has been written about transformative learning in higher education, yet little
is known about teacher education students’ transformative learning experiences in teacher
education. Transformative learning has the potential to transform an individual’s
worldview as well as the way individuals interact with the world. Transformative
learning may produce significant and far-reaching changes in the learner and the learner’s
world. Understanding students’ experiences with transformative learning has the
potential to be of great significance to stakeholders associated with colleges and
universities committed to fulfilling their institutional mission to transmit knowledge,
support democratic citizenship, and transform student perspectives. Understanding
transformation in teacher education holds the potential to more fully support the next
generations in becoming democratic, equitable, resourceful, analytic, insightful, and wise
consortiums of human beings.

In the following chapter, this study proceeds to gather data through
triangulated—or mixed methodology—research. The first method includes administering
a transformative learning survey to senior students at three colleges of teacher education.
The second method consists of phenomenological interviews with volunteers in teacher
education programs.
This study is significant in its aim to collect and analyze data that may inform higher education about the extent to which teacher education students are experiencing transformative learning, which fulfills each college’s mission statement promise to facilitate learning toward more valid understandings to serve the common good. This study is also significant in conducting theoretical component analysis, in order to better understand transformative learning. Finally, this study is significant in its aim of better understanding the effects of transformative learning experiences on teacher education students—who will help shape the consciousness of generations to follow.
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

Introduction and Methodological Overview

Through a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods, this study inquired about the presence, theoretical components, and effects of transformative learning.

In his review of over 45 transformative learning research studies, E. Taylor (2000) suggested that further research should employ innovative study designs. His recommendation—based on the scarcity of diverse transformative learning research methodologies—provided support for the mixed methodological design of this study.

“Recognizing that all methods have limitations,” explained Creswell (2003), “Researchers felt that the biases inherent in any single method could neutralize or cancel the biases of other methods” (p. 15). The mixed methodology of this study was a concurrent triangulation of quantitative method and qualitative method, in order to become informed by the breadth of quantitative analysis without sacrificing the depth offered by qualitative analysis. This, Creswell concluded, “can result in well-validated and substantiated findings” (2003, p. 217).

Research Questions

1. To what extent are teacher education students—representing a variety of demographic variables—experiencing transformative learning, and what does this suggest about the current state of teacher education?
2. What is taking place in teacher education students’ experiences with transformative learning—in terms of the intrapersonal and interpersonal components of transformative learning theory?

3. How do transformative learning experiences affect teacher education students’ present behavior?

Quantitative Method

Introduction

E. Taylor (2000), in his exhaustive review of transformative learning research, noted that few quantitative studies of transformative learning experiences exist. This study sought to address that shortage.

Survey Design

The purpose of this survey was consistent with Creswell’s (2003) recommendation to “generalize from a sample population so that inferences can be made about some characteristic, attitude, or behavior of this population” (p. 154). This study aimed to assess, describe, and infer about the transformative experiences of the sample population of students enrolled in teacher education programs in northeastern Minnesota.

This survey was designed to collect data from participants in a minimally intrusive manner, in order to remain inclusive of all individuals in the selected population. Furthermore, the survey was cross-sectional, with data being collected at one point in time rather than longitudinally. As this survey was a self-administered questionnaire, volunteers at each research site administered it.
Population and Sample

The population consisted of teacher education students in their final year at three neighboring institutions of teacher education. One institution was public, another was private, and another was tribal. These populations were chosen in order to study learners in three uniquely different institutional settings.

The quantitative data collection of this study was conducted as a single-stage sampling design, attempting to include all individuals enrolled in their final year of a teacher education program in three neighboring colleges. The quantitative component of this mixed-method study did not involve stratification of the population before selecting the sample.

The procedure for selecting the sample required receiving permission from each institution to survey teacher education students in their final year, then securing instructor permission and agreement to survey this population, and finally receiving informed consent from participants. The number of participants was designed to reflect the number of teacher education students enrolled in their final year at each of the three participating institutions. This study's quantitative design allowed for data collection from the largest sample size available at these three institutions, as Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) noted is the general rule in quantitative research. Among the 153 preservice teachers surveyed, 133 were enrolled at the University of Minnesota Duluth, and 20 were enrolled at the College of St. Scholastica. A more detailed analysis of participant demographic characteristics is presented in Tables 2-8 in Chapter IV: Findings. While 15 teacher education students at Fond du Lac Tribal College were visited and invited to participate
in the study, only two Fond du Lac teacher education students returned surveys.

Recommendations for increasing the participation of tribal college students are included in Chapter V: Discussion.

While this quantitative design was aimed at gathering and analyzing data called for by this study’s research questions, quantitative design alone could only provide a certain extent of the information needed to understand more accurately the frequency, nature, and effects of transformative learning among today’s teacher education students. The second part of this mixed-methods research design utilized qualitative inquiry, in order to learn more about the lived experiences of preservice teachers who have experienced transformative learning in higher education.

Instrumentation

As E. Taylor (2000) noted in his review of transformative learning research, few quantitative studies of transformative learning experiences exist. This lack of quantitative studies suggested an opportunity for more quantitative understanding of transformative learning. This study sought to address this opportunity.

King’s (1997) quantitative study of transformative learning experiences among adult learners in higher education was a carefully constructed, research-based design. King developed her survey in consultation with transformative learning scholars Brookfield, Mezirow, E. Taylor, K. Taylor, and Shaw for the purpose of gathering data to address the following research questions: What proportion of the sampled population of adult learners has experienced a perspective transformation within the context of their education? What are some of the demographic characteristics of adult learners in higher
education who have experienced this perspective transformation? What learning
activities do adult learners perceive as promoting this perspective transformation through
their educational experience? (p. 6)

Because this study’s research questions regarding transformative learning in
teacher education were similar to King’s research questions, King’s quantitative survey
instrument served as a field-tested foundation for this study’s quantitative data collection.

King’s survey instrument featured questions aligned with the first part of research
questions one and two of this study. These first two questions were:

1. To what extent are teacher education students—representing a variety of demographic
variables—experiencing transformative learning, and what does this suggest about the
current state of teacher education?

2. What is taking place in teacher education students’ experiences with transformative
learning—in terms of the intrapersonal and interpersonal components of
transformative learning theory?

Moreover, King’s quantitative survey enabled a researcher to gather data
regarding another of E. Taylor’s (2000) recommendations, which was analyzing
transformative learning experiences with learner demographic data as variables. King’s
questions followed Brookfield’s (2000) recommendation of non-exclusive variable
design, allowing participants to select multiple responses to each question.

In this modified instrument, participants who indicated that they had college
experiences which: (a) lead them to question their actions, (b) produced a realization that
they no longer agreed with their previous beliefs or expectations, (c) required
reconceptualization of behavior, and (d) produced behavior change were identified as experiencing transformative learning.

King addressed the threats to validity in her research design. King consulted an expert panel of scholars in order to achieve content and construct validity. While this study modified King’s instrument, all modifications were made in keeping with the structural framework of King’s instrument, and these modifications were based on transformative learning theory—as developed by Mezirow (2000), Brookfield (2000), Boyd (1991), and Jung (1971). Additionally, King identified participant anonymity as an action step toward protecting against threats to internal validity. This same precaution was taken in this study. Furthermore, proctor validity was addressed by designing and employing a proctor’s script for designated third party proctors (see Appendix D).

As the quantitative portion of this study modified King’s instrument, the data analysis portion of this study specified that methodological triangulation was used to reestablish the validity and reliability of this study.

In addition to King’s existing survey questions, this study’s survey instrument featured questions regarding learners’ experiences with selected components of transformative learning theoretical models, as well questions about how transformative learning experiences affect student’s present behavior. These supplemental, literature-based questions were added in order to learn more about learners’ experiences with this study’s second and third research questions:
1. What is taking place in teacher education students’ experiences with transformative learning—in terms of the intrapersonal and interpersonal components of transformative learning theory?

2. How do transformative learning experiences affect teacher education students’ present behavior?

In order to achieve meaningful results and facilitate smooth execution of this research, this survey featured pre-survey contact letters to instructors and student participants (see Appendixes A and B), a survey of learning experiences (see Appendix C), survey instructions (see Appendix D), a sign-up sheet for volunteer interviews (see Appendix E), and post-survey interview questions for selected volunteers (see Appendix F).

Summary

The quantitative portion of this mixed-methodology study was organized to collect data from participants regarding transformative learning experiences. The survey instrument was validated in a previous study and then adapted to reflect the research questions of this study. The adapted survey was designed to collect data regarding whether participants experienced transformative learning, what their demographic information was, the extent to which transformation was interpersonal or intrapersonal, and the effects of transformation their behavior.

The following section provided rationale and procedures for the qualitative portion of this mixed method approach to better understanding transformative learning in teacher education.
Qualitative Method

Introduction

King (1997) explained, “Perspective transformation has been studied primarily with qualitative methods; the subject matter truly lends itself to this methodology because of the central place of individual experience in perspective transformation” (p. 7). Moreover, Creswell (2003) noted that qualitative research is humanistic and deeply interested in fostering growth and development of individuals and society. Addressing the poverty of American culture through transformative teacher education reflects humanistic concern for individuals and society. This study sought to better understand the extent to which transformative learning was taking place in teacher education and how transformation affected learning on personal and institutional levels. Qualitative inquiry seemed to be a natural fit.

Strategy of Inquiry

The qualitative method selected for this portion of this mixed method study was phenomenological research, which is a pathway for understanding the “essence” of a phenomenon and the “lived experience” of participants in relationship to this phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994, cited in Creswell, 2003, p. 15).

This research featured phenomenological inquiry into transformative learning experiences because phenomenological inquiry allowed for participants to tell the story of their experiences with perspective transformation.

According to constructivist learning theory, “the basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community. The process of
qualitative research is largely inductive, with the inquirer generating meaning from the data collected in the field” (Creswell, 2003, p. 9). In participants’ narrative voices lies the potential for more accurately understanding the human experience of transformative learning.

Without the learners’ narratives, this study of transformative learning in teacher education would have been incomplete. While quantitative data valuably represents the landscape effect of a population’s experiences, qualitative narratives speak about context, essence, and depth. Deep listening to participant narratives is powerful on many levels. Narratives enable authentic voices to speak to researchers’ questions about participants’ experiences. Narratives reveal accounts of situated learning, generating understandings at times beyond the scope of research questions. And narratives also enable researchers to reflexively understand the dimensions of their own learning (Cohen & Piper, 2000).

Seidman (1998) explained, “In many cases research interests have many levels, and as a result multiple methods may be appropriate” (p. 5). What, however, seemed inappropriate was to attempt to understand students’ experiences with transformative learning without deeply and extensively studying their narratives of perspective transformation.

**Researcher’s Role**

As a citizen and a stakeholder in higher education, this researcher has become personally and professionally invested in education as an instrument for developing increasingly open, flexible, and justified habits of mind and frames of reference. Such
deeply democratic behavior contains the potential to transform American society into a
global society that flourishes amid a wealth of understanding.

Data Collection Procedures

This study was designed to increase understanding of the current state of
transformative learning in teacher education. The qualitative portion of this study
utilized phenomenological interviews with college seniors—three purposefully chosen
from each selected school—in teacher education programs in northeastern Minnesota. As
with the quantitative methodology, the population for phenomenological interviews was
teacher education students in their final year at three northeastern Minnesotan institutions
of teacher education. One institution was public, another was private, and another was
tribal. These populations were chosen in order to study students in three different
settings.

Phenomenological interviews regarding transformative learning may have served
students in making meaning of their own learning experiences. This may have taken
place through supporting learners in organizing, articulating, elucidating, and intensifying
their own awareness of their perspectives.

These phenomenological interviews took their shape from Seidman’s (1998)
recommendations for in-depth phenomenological interviewing. Seidman’s method was
based on the conviction that “people’s behavior becomes meaningful and understandable
when placed in the context of their lives and the lives around them” (p. 11). The first part
of the interview consisted of a focused life history, which asked the participant to tell
about her or his life up to the point of becoming a practicum teacher. The second part of
the interview invited the participant to tell stories of transforming learning experiences, and to speak about reconsidering their own assumptions as well as the assumptions of their peers, so that the dimensions of intrapersonal and interpersonal perspective reframing could emerge. Part three of the interview process focused on participants reflecting on the meaning of their perspective transformation experiences. During this part of the interview, participants explored the ways their transformative experiences affected their present choices as students, emerging teachers, and individuals.

To assist in this interview process, the researcher reviewed each participant’s quantitative survey responses, so that the quantitative survey data could both inform and be validated by the qualitative process.

While these interviews were semi structured in the interest of procedural consistency, the interviews themselves were sufficiently flexible to follow and document participant’s generative reflection on their transformative learning experiences (see Appendix H).

In order to build relationships of trust, the researcher used a combination of letters explaining the purpose of the study distributed by each participant’s college instructor, visits to each participant’s college classroom, follow-up telephone calls, and each participant’s choice of on or off campus interview locations ranging from a campus coffee shop to the researcher’s family residence.

Research Questions

These phenomenological interviews were designed to gather in-depth information regarding the following three research questions:
1. To what extent are teacher education students—representing a variety of demographic variables—experiencing transformative learning, and what does this suggest about the current state of teacher education?

2. What is taking place in teacher education students’ experiences with transformative learning—in terms of the intrapersonal and interpersonal components of transformative learning theory?

3. How do transformative learning experiences affect teacher education students’ present behavior?

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Based upon Creswell’s (2003) recommendations for data analysis and interpretation, this portion of the research consisted of: (a) organizing and preparing the data for analysis, (b) reading through all the data, (c) beginning detailed analysis with a coding process, (d) using the coding process to generate description, categories, and themes for analysis, (e) advancing how the description and themes will be represented, and (f) interpreting and making meaning of the data.

As phenomenological analysis seeks to understand “how individuals construct and are constructed by social reality,” data analysis in this qualitative portion sought to recognize themes in participants’ experiences with transformative learning (Gall et al., p. 481). Qualitative codes and themes, which emerged from phenomenological analysis, are featured in Appendix F.
Validating the Accuracy of Findings

Based upon Creswell’s (2003) suggestions for establishing the credibility of data, this study featured triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data sources, in order to “examine evidence from the sources and use it to build a coherent justification for themes” (p. 196).

The Qualitative Narrative

The phenomenological portion of this study incorporated participants’ words and quotations with the researcher’s interpretations of these words, in order for the researcher to note themes and metaphors in participants’ transformative experiences. The qualitative narrative also provided opportunity to better explain the implications of the quantitative findings.

Summary

The qualitative portion of this mixed-methodology study of transformative learning experiences in teacher education programs was organized to collect data from the voices of purposefully chosen participants regarding transformative learning experiences. The phenomenological interview instrument was aligned with the research questions and quantitative survey instrument used in this study. The semi-structured interview tool was designed to collect data regarding whether or not participants experienced transformative learning, what their demographic information was, the extent to which transformation was interpersonal or intrapersonal, and the effects of transformation upon behavior.
Transformative learning has the potential to transform one’s worldview as well as the way one interacts with the world. It may produce significant and far-reaching changes in the learner and the learner’s world. Understanding students’ experiences with transformative learning has the potential to be of great significance to stakeholders associated with colleges and universities committed to fulfilling their institutional mission to transmit knowledge, support democratic citizenship, and transform student perspectives. Understanding transformation in teacher education also has the potential to more fully support the next generations in becoming a democratic, equitable, resourceful, analytic, insightful, and wise consortium of human beings.
CHAPTER IV. FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to better understand the frequency, relationship dynamics, and behavioral effects of transformative learning experiences among participants in post-secondary teacher education programs in northeastern Minnesota. This study used both quantitative and qualitative analysis in order to better understand the experiences of teacher education students enrolled at one public university (the University of Minnesota Duluth) and one private college (the College of St. Scholastica). While teacher education students at Fond du Lac Tribal College were invited to take part in this study, only two did so. Because a subpopulation of this size is not sufficiently large for statistical analysis, Fond du Lac Tribal College has not been included in these findings. Recommendations for increasing participation among all students are present in the Recommendations section within Chapter V.

After the study’s volunteers were surveyed about their learning experiences, selected participants took part in in-depth phenomenological interviews regarding transformative learning. The surveys were quantitatively analyzed and the interviews were qualitatively analyzed in order to gather triangulated answers to the following research questions:

1. To what extent are teacher education students—representing a variety of demographic variables—experiencing transformative learning, and what does this suggest about the current state of teacher education?
2. What interpersonal and intrapersonal components of transformative learning theory are present in teacher education students’ learning?

3. How do transformative learning experiences affect teacher education students’ present behavior?

Throughout this chapter, quantitative and qualitative findings have been presented, in order to better explain general trends as well as participants’ collegiate transformative learning experiences.

Extent of Transformative Experiences

Quantitative Findings

Table 1 illustrates that out of 153 teacher education students surveyed, 35% (n=54) indicated experiencing transformative learning while enrolled in their teacher education programs. Slightly more than one out of every three preservice teachers surveyed reported a deep shift in their perspective, assumptions, concepts, attitudes, beliefs, and behavior.

Table 1

Participants Indicating Transformative Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of participants surveyed</th>
<th>Frequency indicating transformative learning</th>
<th>Percent indicating transformative learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>153</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 illustrates that nearly twice as many women as men participated in this study. Thirty five percent of women and 37% of men experienced transformative learning.

Table 2

*Gender of Participants Indicating Transformative Learning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency in sample</th>
<th>Frequency indicating transformative learning</th>
<th>Percent of indicating transformative learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 illustrates that students of color constituted 7% of participants in this study, and 40% of students of color reported experiencing transformative learning. Among Native American, Hispanic, Black, and Asian/Pacific Islander students, no group of respondents contained five or more members. For statistical analysis, these participants were organized into a “Students of Color” category. White students constituted 93% of participants, and 35% of this group reported experiencing transformative learning. Due to the small number of students of color in this sample, this study did not attempt interpretation of these demographic findings.

Table 3

*Ethnicity of Participants Indicating Transformative Learning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Frequency in sample</th>
<th>Frequency indicating transformative learning</th>
<th>Percent indicating transformative learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students of Color*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*<5 Within Native American, Hispanic, Black, and Asian/Pacific Islander demographic categories. For statistical analysis, these participants were organized into a “Students of Color” category.*
Table 4 reports transformative learning experiences among preservice special education, elementary education, secondary education, and early childhood teachers. Because of the small number of special education and early childhood participants in this sample, this study did not attempt interpretation of these demographic findings.

Table 4

*Teaching Licensure of Participants Indicating Transformative Learning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching licensure</th>
<th>Frequency in sample</th>
<th>Frequency indicating transformative learning</th>
<th>Percentage indicating transformative learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Licensure</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Licensure</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Licensure</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Licensure</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 illustrates that 38% of participants whose highest earned degrees were associate’s or bachelor’s degrees reported experiencing transformative learning. Thirty three percent of students whose highest earned degree was a high school diploma reported experiencing transformative learning. Two participants indicated earning master’s degrees and four participants indicated other unspecified degrees. These six participants were grouped into the “Other Degree” category. Eighty three percent of these participants indicated experiencing transformative learning. Because of the small number of associate, bachelor, and other degree earners in this sample, this study did not attempt interpretation of these demographic findings.

Table 5

Highest Degree Earned by Participants Indicating Transformative Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest degree earned</th>
<th>Frequency in sample</th>
<th>Frequency indicating transformative learning</th>
<th>Percent indicating transformative learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HS Diploma</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s Degree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Degree*</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This group consisted of two participants with Master’s degrees and four participants with other unspecified degrees.
Table 6 reports preservice teachers’ transformative learning experiences in terms of semesters enrolled. Due to the small number participants enrolled for 3 to 6 semesters, this study did not attempt interpretation of these demographic findings.

Table 6

*Semesters Enrolled of Participants Indicating Transformative Learning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semesters enrolled*</th>
<th>Frequency in sample</th>
<th>Frequency indicating transformative learning*</th>
<th>Percent indicating transformative learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-14</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Three participants indicated having been enrolled at their current institution for fewer than three or greater than fourteen semesters. All three indicated transformative learning.*
Table 7 reports transformative learning experiences within age categories in preservice teachers. Because of the small number participants who were 25 years of age or older, this study did not attempt interpretation of these demographic findings.

Table 7

*Years of Age of Participants Indicating Transformative Learning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Age</th>
<th>Frequency in sample</th>
<th>Frequency indicating transformative learning</th>
<th>Percent indicating transformative learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-24</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 or more</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8 reports transformative learning experiences among single, married, divorced or separated preservice teachers. Due to the small number participants who were married, divorced, or separated, this study did not attempt interpretation of these demographic findings.

Table 8

*Marital Status of Participants Indicating Transformative Learning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Frequency in sample</th>
<th>Frequency indicating transformative learning</th>
<th>Percent indicating transformative learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced or Separated</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9 and Figure 1 suggest that while 35% of participants indicated that they experienced transformative learning, other notable types of learning were also taking place. The transformative learning quadrants contained in Table 9 and Figure 1 proceeded from Herbers' (1998) four-quadrant summary of Mezirow's (1970) phases of perspective learning. Herbers' four quadrants were (I) disorienting dilemmas, (II) critical reflection, (III) rational dialogue, and (IV) action.

While nearly two thirds of all participants did not experience transformative learning, almost three quarters of participants identified having disorienting dilemmas. More than one third of all participants identified critical reflection on the awareness that their assumptions don't fit current reality. Moreover, nearly half of all participants reported engaging in rational dialogue. Chapter IV of this study discusses the implications of these varied learning experiences and frequencies.

Table 9

*Frequency of All Respondents In Quadrants Leading Toward Transformative Learning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transformative learning quadrant, description</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I: Disorienting Dilemmas</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II: Critical Reflection</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III: Rational Dialogue</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV: Action</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1

*Participant Experiences Among Transformative Learning Quadrants*

**Transformative Learning Quadrants**
Mezirow (1970) and Herbers (1998)

* N=153

I. Disorienting Experiences:
   73% of respondents

II. Critical Reflection:
   43% of respondents

III. Rational Dialogue:
   47% of respondents

IV. Action:
   35% of respondents
Extent of Transformative Experiences

Qualitative Findings

Quantitative analysis revealed more than one third of all participants—representing all demographic characteristics involved in the study—experienced transformative learning in their teacher preparation program.

Yet alone, quantitative analysis was limited to gathering numerical data on learning experiences. In order to comprehensively understand preservice teachers’ experiences with transformative learning, this study collected and qualitatively analyzed preservice teachers’ experiences through phenomenological analysis of selected students’ interviews featuring focused life histories, perspective transformation experiences, and behavioral changes resulting from transformative learning. While initially the focused life histories which begin Seidman’s (1998) in-depth interview method seemed conceptually overambitious—perhaps inviting more information than would be necessary to answer this study’s research questions—the value of exploring focused life history became, in time, lucid. It enabled participants to articulate their transformative learning experiences in the context of their larger life story.

Six participants were selected, on the basis of their survey responses, to participate in three-part interviews, which revealed transformative learning taking place in college classrooms, outside classrooms in interactions with peers, and in cross-cultural field experiences. In the following sections, first, Jane and James told their stories about classroom learning that transformed their perspectives. Then Adam and Lila described
transformative experiences prompted by interactions with peers outside of the classroom. Finally, Norah and Eli shared their transformative cross-cultural field experiences.

_Transformative Classroom Experiences_

Jane, who was studying to be an elementary school educator, explained:

The first week of my first semester in college, I met up with a very passionate professor who I really liked. She invited me into her class, and I really respected her.

And then 9/11 happened. In the weeks and months after that, people on campus said all kinds of things like, “There is no truth, or two plus two could equal five, or the president is a maniac.” And 9/11 really affected the teacher too. Class became so radical that it was shocking and difficult. All of a sudden, I was thinking about things that I had never thought about before.

Coming from a conservative Baptist home, my parents are very much in favor of the president and what he stands for. As we discussed these issues in class, people began to label me a fundamentalist. I had never really even known what a fundamentalist was, or anything like that, so when a lot of my beliefs were being called fundamentalist, I was like, “What is a fundamentalist? I think I’m that, but maybe I’m not because I am not violent, or I am not wanting to kill people, you know.”

And the one person in class whose views were most similar to mine, the one guy I was closest to agreeing with, well he was not who I wanted to be lined
up with either. His motivations seemed really selfish. I didn’t want to be
associated with the negative parts of what he stood for. So it was very confusing.

And although I didn’t know how—because I was pretty shy and didn’t talk
in class or anything like that—I felt like I needed to let people know the truth
about how people like me think. And I really struggled. I felt like I didn’t know
how to say things when I was so confused by everything that was being said.

Throughout that semester, and really every semester since, I decided to
have many conversations with my classmates and professors about their beliefs
and my beliefs. I really had to have a lot of conversations with all kinds of people
in order to get past my shyness about discussing the issues that define and even
divide people. But just through the process of thinking things through, reading,
and talking to people that I can trust, I made it through. I learned how to express
my love for all kinds of people—liberal professors, angry classmates, and
students who believed in other gods than mine.

Most importantly, I learned ways to be true to my beliefs without getting
in the way of other people’s learning. Before, if something against what I
believed came up, I would start to panic and think, “Oh gosh, I have to say what I
believe.” I’ve learned to listen to people and not hold things against them, while
still being true to my own point of view.

Jane’s transformative learning experience helped her open her ears to diversity of
thought. She found a voice to engage diverse perspectives. She developed an
increasingly sophisticated thought process with which to focus on her enduring values.
The effects of Jane’s transformative learning are discussed in greater depth in the Effects of Transformative Learning section of this chapter.

James, a preservice science teacher, also told of experiencing deep perspective and behavior change as a result of his classroom learning. Here is his story:

I came from small, narrow-minded, working class community. When I went to college, all of a sudden it was like instant liberal education. New ideas were tossed around, and all these ideas were open forum. In classroom discussions, the professors were saying, “Well that’s an interesting thought, let’s hear about that.” Everything was fleshed out—whereas back home it was either, “Well you’re just kind of an egghead,” or you know, “You’re a fancy educated boy.”

So as a freshman, I was in school for about eight days, when 9/11 happened. I remember I was in a class taught by a nun. I’ll never forget it. She came in and told us that a terrorist had hit the World Trade Center. And she did some prompting to get us to speak. And I think that my open-mindedness was affected in the sense that perhaps I would have thought that all Arabs were terrorists had I not had those eight days of open-minded discussion. It made me think, “Well, you know everybody is from different religions, or not different religions, or not a religion at all.” And that really opened up my eyes to understand that everybody has different beliefs, and it’s okay. It’s not okay what they did, but all Arabs are not terrorists, all Muslims are not terrorists.
This method of open discussion in college also affected the way I thought about government. Before college, I was just a wholesale subscriber to my family's political party. And I think I didn't really use my mind to the fullest extent, or exercise my vote to the fullest extent. I just kind of did it. Whereas in this last election there was an absolute reason why I voted the way I did. I thought long and hard about it. I definitely took a more thoughtful, reasonable approach to it.

These classroom discussions affected my approach to religion as well. Before college, I went to church a lot. I even taught Sunday school. But it was more of a blind faith type thing. I believed what I was told; I never thought critically about it. Then, when I got to college, I didn't go to church that often—probably because I questioned religion. But then I had a philosophy class where we read Thomas Aquinas. And then the critical thinking from college really started, and forced me to think, "Well what's going to happen when I die? Am I just going to go into the ground and be there? Is my soul going to go anywhere? What's going to happen?" So I really started to think about that, and now I'm starting to come full circle again where indeed I do believe there is a divine person, divine thing.

As was the case for Jane, classroom learning experiences fostered James' perspective transformation—prompting him to think more inclusively and specifically about ethnicity, culture, politics, and religion. The effects of James' transformative
learning are explored in greater detail in the *Effects of Transformative Learning* section of this chapter.

*Transformative Peer Interaction*

Adam and Lila explained that their transformative learning took place as result of interaction with peers outside of the classroom. Both experiences caused these future teachers to confront their own stereotypes of the people they typically avoided. First is Adam’s account of his roommate who drew him outside of his comfort zone at home and on campus. Second is Lila’s story of journeying beyond her preconceptions of a troubling college roommate.

Adam met a woman in college who challenged his assumptions about other people as well as himself. After a concrete and disorienting experience, Adam observed and reflected on the narrowness of his assumptions. Realizing his assumptions were based on stereotypes, Adam confronted his fears of gay students. Finally, he experimented with behavior that he felt was more legitimate. Adam credits this experience with transforming his perspective about not only sexual orientation, but also the larger question of why he clings to his preconceptions. Here, Adam, who is studying to be an English teacher, tells the story of his transformative learning.

Early on in college, I had this very assertive friend and roommate named Sierra. I had a huge crush on her. When I told her this, she replied that she was “too much woman for me.” She was probably right.

One day Sierra saw me putting a note on the refrigerator—asking my roommates to do their dishes. I liked to leave notes for people—in order to avoid
confrontation. Sierra stopped me right there as I was putting it up. She was like, “Adam, you need to stop this passive aggressive bullshit.” And she said it in a stern, motherly tone. She wasn’t angry with me. She just looked at me, and she was just like, “This is not okay.” At first I went upstairs because I don’t like getting yelled at. But then I looked up what “passive aggressive” meant. As I thought about it, I realized it was true. I had done that for most of my life, and no one had ever called me on it.

Later that year, when Sierra heard me use the word “gay” as a negative adjective, she was like, “Well what exactly about that is offensive to you?” She made me think about it. And then she took me to the annual campus drag show. The drag show is something I would never have gone to on my own.

At the drag show, I was kind of nervous, and she put a dollar in my hand. I did not know what to do with it. So of course, someone came over and did their little dance, and I was extremely uncomfortable. But it got me into it, and I saw it. It happened, it was over, people had fun, and the dancer moved on to someone else.

It was really uncomfortable, but I learned that everybody is just there to have a good time, and I was not going to catch the gay disease or anything like that. That was important, because since then I have found out that some of my friends have been gay, just as other people in my life are gay.

I think it went beyond just, you know, dealing with gay people and beyond that into dealing with all kinds of people. I started to think about my stereotypes
and the people I hang out with and the people I don’t hang out with. And the
“why” was the big question. I learned there wasn’t really a good reason why I
didn’t hang out with gay people. And if there was, then it wasn’t very legitimate.
So just thinking about the “why” for everything else is really important to me
now.

So, the seed had been planted. I started thinking about that, and I started
thinking about myself a lot more. Sierra opened my eyes to seeing that differently,
and let me see other things differently—and good for me that I was able to. Since
then, I’ve really changed.

Adam went on to explain that this transformative experience led him to ask “why"
about many aspects of his life—from why he is drawn to or away from people,
experiences, and possessions. The effects of Adam’s transformative learning are
explained in greater detail in the Effects of Transformative Learning section of this
chapter.

Like Adam, Lila also was forced to confront her stereotypes of people while
studying to be an English teacher. What follows is Lila’s explanation of getting beyond
her early assumptions of her disconcerting college roommate.

There was a girl I had gone to high school with—her name is Jessie. She
was renowned in school because she was this redneck. She had a Confederate
Flag tattoo, and she badmouthed all minorities. One night at a party she ended up
trying to talk to me, and she was in my face. I was just automatically like, “I
don’t even want to talk to you; you have nothing to say that I want to hear.”
Well, two years later in college in an odd turn of events, Jessie and I ended up moving into the same house together. And I thought, “There is no way.” But I honestly didn’t have a choice. I had nowhere else to live. And so the first day I showed up, I thought, “Crap, I have to live with her?”

We ended up having to clean out this mess of a house before we could live in it, and as we cleaned up the mess, we started realizing that we kind of had the same sense of humor. That broke the ice a bit, but still I thought, “There is no way I can live with this girl.”

Well, one night I just sat down and I asked, “So what is the deal with your Confederate Flag tattoo?” And then she sat down and began to explain it.

She said that her biological dad had run out on them, and she had two biological sisters who were part black. She tried writing letters to them, but they never wrote back. They didn’t want anything to do with her. She always wanted to meet them and know them, but they wanted nothing to do with her. That was how I came to understand the family history behind her grudges.

And all of the sudden I was like, “Wow, I could’ve been totally wrong about this person.” Then, over time, we just kept on getting to know each other. She likes country music, she loves four wheeling, and I am the total opposite. So we are totally different, but after listening to where she was coming from, we ended up becoming really good friends. I never, never would’ve expected that.

Being forced into living with that person that made me think, “Maybe I should give this person a chance.” And then I did. It was a really big deal.
Lila’s dilemma of having no other option than to get to know a person she loathed required her to replace her assumptions with questions. As Lila listened, she discovered the complex and confusing frames of reference with which Jessie viewed her own family. Listening enabled Lila to learn more about not only her roommate, but also about her own preconceptions.

As a result of her transformative learning experience, Lila explained, “I think it’s so much more about questioning than it is about telling. Don’t sacrifice your beliefs, but listen to others. Subtlety and gentleness are such a strong way to convince people or persuade them. It’s much stronger than yelling.” More effects of Lila’s transformative learning experience follow in this chapter’s Effects of Transformative Learning findings.

Transformative Field Experiences

Two other teacher education students—Norah and Eli—described their transformative learning as resulting from cross-cultural exploration. Both students seized the opportunity to place themselves in the context of being members of a minority group. From these experiences, they discovered that their limited cross-cultural experience represented only a narrow segment of the larger world’s culture.

First is Norah’s account of making herself a guest in an African American Baptist Church. Nora, a preservice math teacher, explains:

In my human relations class, there was an assignment to go and do something where I was some kind of minority person—kind of the odd person out, or in a different environment than I am used to.
I decided to go to an African American Baptist church. And there I experienced being in the minority. The cities and places I had lived in had always been largely white populations. Or if not white folks, then Hispanic folks. But not a lot of diversity beyond that.

As soon as I went in, I noticed that I was different. I noticed that I stood out. Everybody else was black. Then, when I counted the people there, there might have been five white people. And it was interesting to reflect on that and see how their church was—compared to where I have been. Nobody was rude to me. Nobody. Everyone was completely wonderful to me. And I don’t know whether it is the same when things are the other way around. I mean there is always racism from all kinds of ends in those kinds of things. But I don’t know if they even notice it any more, or if they are used to it all the time.

You know, that experience pushed me outside of my box. It helped me gain awareness, connection, and understanding.

Norah’s transformative learning experience made her more aware of her assumptions and actions, so that she could behave in ways that are welcoming and inclusive.

Similarly, Eli’s international student teaching experience transformed his perspective on the role of dominant cultural and socialization in teaching. Here, in his own words, is Eli’s transformative learning story.

I was really looking forward to student teaching in Cameroon, Africa.

When I got there, I thought, “Dang, I can finally teach some history!” Because
most U.S. History is taught in such a western, patriotic, traditional way, a lot of what we learn is actually wrong.

So, when I arrived in Cameroon and had a look at a few of the textbooks, I said, “Hey, look, these are full of real African records. We will get some African perspectives on African history.” But oh no. As we are learning about the slave trade, we read the textbook authors’ explanation of the effects of the slave trade. They’ve listed nine positive effects of the slave trade, as well as nine negative effects of the slave trade. So the slave trade is apparently this balanced thing of goodness in history? I couldn’t believe it.

I was frustrated. I came thousands of miles to teach in Africa, and I am getting the same crap I was getting back home. And the teachers seemed oblivious to it. They had been raised within the system and didn’t notice otherwise. They hadn’t heard anything else. I was blown aback. Man, my marbles were rolling around from side to side on what to do about teaching history. Then I decided to try teaching from a heartfelt place.

So in my next teaching unit, I decided to make students develop their own views on history. Since we were studying the annexation of Cameroon, I got the students completely involved in a reenactment of the Berlin Conference. And I asked, “You know, when the Europeans were sitting up in Europe, at their conference deciding how they were going to carve up Africa and determine its destiny, guess how many black people were there?” Since the correct answer was “None,” I explained that we were going to have our own Berlin conference. And
this time, there are going to be Africans at the conference, because Cameroon is their country. So students took the roles of the Europeans, Africans, and coastal chiefs. Each played a part.

One class voted that the English should annex Cameroon. The other class decided that Cameroon belongs to no one. And one girl gave a great speech on why that should be. And so, in some respects, whatever choice they came to was theirs. At least they decided it, which was really powerful. That was a pretty transformative experience I would say.

Like Norah, Eli experienced transformative learning as a result of interaction outside of his home culture. Increasingly aware of the incomplete education his students were receiving, Eli experimented with helping his students critically examine Cameroon’s hegemonic past and present—in order to construct a more inclusive future. More effects of Eli’s transformative experience are explored in the Effects of Transformative Learning section later in this chapter.

Summary: Extent of Transformative Experiences

Quantitative analysis identified that 35% of preservice teachers who participated in this study reported experiencing transformative learning during their teacher education program. Among six selected interview participants, qualitative analysis suggested that perspective transformation was taking place within college classrooms, in interactions with peers outside of the classroom, and in cross-cultural field experiences.

Next, this study further explored students’ experiences with the interpersonal and intrapersonal components of transformative learning.
Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Experiences

Interpersonal perspective reframing produced a deep shift in one’s views of other people’s assumptions and actions. When interpersonal reframing was taking place, learners were critically reflective of other people’s assumptions and actions.

Alternatively, intrapersonal perspective reframing brought deep and personal change based upon critical reflection on one’s own concepts, beliefs, feelings, actions, or behavior. When intrapersonal reframing was taking place, learners were critically reflective of other of their own assumptions and actions.

Quantitative Findings

Among 153 survey participants enrolled in teacher education programs in northeastern Minnesota, 35% (n=54) reported experiencing transformative learning. The following analysis of the interpersonal and intrapersonal theoretical components of transformative learning focuses solely on the reported experiences of those 54 preservice teachers who indicated experiencing transformative learning.
Table 10 identifies how transformative learning affected transformed participants’ (n=54) thoughts about other people’s assumptions and actions.

**Table 10**

*Intrapersonal Perspective Reframing*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I think differently about other people’s</th>
<th>$f$</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly all of those who experienced transformative learning reported that due to these changes, they thought differently about other people’s assumptions. More than three quarters reported that due to these changes, they thought differently about other people’s actions. Transformative learning resulted in these participants rethinking their conceptions about those around them. Transformative learning enabled these individuals to reframe their perspectives about the assumptions held and actions taken by the people they encountered.
Table 11 identifies how transformative learning affected transformed participants’ (n=54) thoughts about their own assumptions and actions.

Table 11

_Intrapersonal Perspective Reframing As A Result Of Transformation_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think differently about my own</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost all of those who experienced transformative learning reported that they thought differently about their own assumptions. Most reported that due to this change, they thought differently about their own actions. For these participants, perspective transformation initiated a very complex process—recognizing that personal assumptions and behavior are at times incomplete, unreliable, and in need of reframing.
The findings in Table 12 illustrate similarities in how transformative learning affected people’s thoughts about assumptions and actions in other people as well as within themselves. Comparing these findings through statistical crosstabulation revealed a strong relationship between intrapersonal and interpersonal perspective reframing.

### Table 12

**Crosstabulation of Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Reframing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As a result of transformative learning, I think differently about</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>$X^2$</th>
<th>Lambda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My assumptions and others’ assumptions</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My actions and others’ actions</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of those who experienced perspective transformation, most thought differently about their own assumptions as well as other people’s assumptions.

What is the probability that this relationship could have occurred by chance? A Chi-Square Test of asymptomatic significance identified this probability as .001, suggesting there was a one in one thousand chance that this distribution could have occurred if the variables were independent of one another. So, there was significant evidence of a relationship between interpersonal and intrapersonal perspective reframing on assumptions.

How strong was the relationship between interpersonal and intrapersonal reframing on assumptions? In what direction did it go? This was answered by the
Lambda, which had a value of .063. Its positive number meant that the relationship ran from upper left to lower right on the crosstabulation table. Respondents who answered "No" to one question were likely to answer "No" to the other. Respondents who answered "Yes" to one were also likely to answer "Yes" to the other.

Similarly, learners who as a result of perspective transformation thought differently about other people's behavior also tended to think differently about their own behavior. Crosstabulation again suggested that the relationship between interpersonal and intrapersonal reframing of actions was strong. Of those who experienced perspective transformation, 78% thought differently about their own assumptions as well as other people's assumptions.

A Chi-Square Test of asymptomatic significance revealed this probability was .002. This means there was a two in one thousand chance that this distribution could have occurred if the variables were independent of one another. So, there was evidence of a relationship between interpersonal and intrapersonal perspective reframing on actions.

Quantitative Summary

Those who experienced perspective transformation reported changing their thinking not only about other people’s assumptions and behavior, but also changing their thinking about their own assumptions and behavior. These findings indicated that perspective transformation enabled individuals to think more openly about both themselves and others. These findings were consistent with not only the aims of transformative learning, but also with transformative learning theory’s assertion that
perspective transformation required thinking differently about one’s own assumptions and actions and enabled thinking differently about other people’s assumptions and actions.

Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Experiences

Qualitative Findings

As illustrated in Tables 10-12, survey participants reported that interpersonal and intrapersonal perspective reframing frequently co-occurred in transformative learning experiences.

Interview participants told a similar story. They spoke of perspective transformation that emerged from critical reflection on other people’s assumptions and behaviors and then led to critical reflection on their own assumptions and behaviors. This interpersonal-into-intrapersonal pattern became clearer upon revisiting interviewees’ transformative learning experiences.

Adam’s disorienting dilemma began in his kitchen when Sierra insisted he confront his passive aggressive rigidity. Reflecting on his behavior, he recognized that her point was valid. Deciding he had a lot to learn from stepping into Sierra’s world, Adam experimented with more open behavior by attending the campus drag show, at Sierra’s insistence. Despite his fears, Adam learned that not only did the drag show not harm him, but instead it actually helped him rethink his presumptions about sexual orientation. Adam discovered his ability to be more active in constructing knowledge about himself and his gay and lesbian classmates who would become his friends. He
began asking more questions about why he gravitated toward the people, possessions, and experiences that he did.

Critical reflection on Sierra’s actions changed Adam, who admired Sierra’s fearlessness and freedom in the face of complexity. Adam felt her concepts were more reliable than his, so he experimented with more inclusive thinking. In doing so, Adam had experiences that demanded critical reflection on his own assumptions and actions. Reconceptualization and rational, internal dialogue brought opportunities to revise his assumptions and behavior. This was Adam’s transformation.

Reflecting on how Sierra changed him, and then he changed himself, Adam observed, “I’m beginning to understand what people mean when they describe as the difference between being either the oak tree that splits under stress or becoming willow tree that is able to bend and change. But even so, the willow could just bend to let things pass. It takes something else to be able to deal with it.”

Lila’s story was similar to Adam’s. Lila had developed distaste for Jessie, who she described as the in-your-face, Confederate-Flag-tattooed “redneck” from her hometown. And after observing people like Jessie, Lila became even more greatly committed to rational, informed choices. Initially, Lila was alarmed to learn that she would have to share a college house with Jessie. But in time, observing the similarities between Jessie and herself caused Lila to engage Jessie in rational dialogue about the perspectives that shape their behavior. This enabled Lila to rethink her own assumptions about how to act when confronted with lamentable behavior.
Lila explained, “I’ve come to realize, I’m not going to persuade people by forcing them to think how I think. Asking questions is the key. I’ve actually told quite a few of my friends to take that tactic, and it’s worked for them.”

Jane’s transformation began interpersonally and then became intrapersonal. After initially exciting her, Jane’s college teachers and classmates distressed her. Their passion both enthralled and terrorized her—depending on the discussion. Their passion made Jane want to be more outgoing and develop a gregarious persona, in order to exchange ideas with everyone. And so Jane observed exemplars and thought about how she too could engage everyone and most everything. Jane explained:

I have a good friend from the same background as I was. He was home schooled all the way through. I would say he is one of the more social, better educated home schooled. He was very good at just talking to people and making time for people and listening to them and asking people how they were and actually wanting to know, stuff like that. I really admired him for that. I guess I learned that and changed a lot more to be like that.

Jane’s confidence in her new behavior grew until she found herself involved in discussions with all kinds of people—liberals, conservatives, independents, and international students whose worldviews were too novel for her to classify. Appreciative study of other people’s flair enabled Jane to develop her own engaging charm.

But Jane’s transformation also demanded deep intrapersonal reflection. Before college, she was always comfortably sure that her religion was the only way. However,
as Jane’s critical reflection developed, she questioned whether her convictions made her a fundamentalist.

“That was shocking and really difficult. But I think it made me grow a lot too because I was thinking about things that I had never thought about before,” said Jane, who pondered whether her fundamental beliefs made her bad. In time, Jane grew to understand her long-held concepts in a new light—one that was still resolute but less self-righteous. Critical reflection on her own beliefs, concepts, and behavior enabled Jane to simultaneously practice her faith and respect the divergent beliefs that surrounded her.

James also experienced a sequence of interpersonal and intrapersonal critical incidents. Observing his professor—a Benedictine nun—and college classmates changed the way he thought. His teacher’s and classmates’ open-minded inquiry made him aware that many of his preconceptions—including those about Arabs and Muslims—were unreliable. James critically reflected on his teacher’s and peers’ ability to differentiate between stereotypes and better-contextualized understandings. Directing his gaze inward, James experimented with critically examining his own assumptions. Previously he had never questioned his own religious beliefs and political affiliation. But these too he critically reviewed, and in doing so, became free to choose. James then realized he agreed with religious and political perspectives that he had never before considered. Finding himself free to act on these intrapersonal discoveries made James feel more able to think proactively than ever before.
James explained, “I’ve taken a more critical look but at the same time been open
minded. The roots of that can be seen in my four years of liberal education classes that
I’ve had in college.”

A college class required Norah to temporarily become an outsider, and so she
expected to feel awkward when she attended an African American Baptist church service.
Neither Black nor Baptist, she anticipated the discomfort of being treated as an outsider.
But it never happened. Instead, parishioners welcomed her as an equal. Reflecting on
the difference between her expectations and her experience caused Norah’s interpersonal
perspective reframing on other people’s behavior.

And then Norah engaged in intrapersonal perspective reframing. For the first
time in her life, she found herself in the religious and ethnic minority, and it enabled her
to realize how tough it must be to always be an outsider. From this, she developed
empathy and resolve to make her own behavior inclusive and welcoming to diversity.

She explained, “I see the kind of person I want to be versus the kind of person I
am.” And so Norah changed her behavior to be more aligned with her new
understanding.

Like Norah, Eli’s transformation began with an intercultural experience that
caused interpersonal perspective reframing. He arrived in Cameroon, Africa disoriented
by the seemingly colonial curriculum prevalent in the history classroom. Reflecting on
his perspective of his Cameroonain mentors, he realized that they were only teaching
what they had learned. Eli came to understand that they could not teach what they did
not know. Discussions with even the most progressive of his Cameroonain colleagues
illuminated that despite their constructivist pedagogy, they had not been taught to inquire about their own history. Trying out the role of an obedient student teacher, Eli taught what was in the textbook, and subsequently realized his conscience would not allow him to indoctrinate his students with what he viewed to be half-truths.

That’s when it became intrapersonal for Eli. His discontent with having taught status quo curriculum led him to introspection that spawned some intriguing alternatives. Eli honed these ideas into lessons and units in which he introduced his students to inquiry and generative learning.

He explained, “I still gave students the facts, but then I asked them ‘What should happen next? What would you do?’ I’ll make them think about it and come out with an answer that they are proud of. That’s what I’m going for. I’m excited you know.”

Summary

This study set out to better understand the extent to which interpersonal and intrapersonal perspective reframing is taking place in transformative learning experiences. Survey responses indicated that the majority of transformative experiences involve critical reflection on other people’s assumptions as well as critical reflection on one’s own assumptions. Interview findings revealed a consistent pattern of interpersonal and intrapersonal perspective reframing taking place in transformative learning experiences. The effects of these experiences on teacher education students’ present behavior are explored in the following section.
Behavioral Effects of Transformative Experiences

Quantitative Findings

Transformative learning had important behavioral effects on teacher education students. These effects were indicated on surveys and explained in interviews. The most frequent responses included being more self aware, open to other viewpoints, informed, critically reflective, and inclusive of multiple perspectives. Table 13 and Figure 2 illustrate transformed participants’ responses to survey questions regarding how transformation changed their behavior.
Table 13

*Effects Of Transformative Learning On Behavior*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior now more:</th>
<th>% of transformed population (n=54)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self Aware</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open to Other Viewpoints</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critically Reflective</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive of Multiple Perspectives</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotionally Capable of Change</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerate of Social Justice</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open to Dialogue</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directed toward Search for Truth</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free to Change</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active in Construction of Knowledge</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathetic</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rational</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justified</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrative of Experience</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactive</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Developing confidence in dual citizenship, seeking contextual understanding, and intentional self-reflection.

Figure 2. Effects of Transformative Learning on Behavior.

Transformative Understanding 102
Behavioral Effects of Transformative Experiences

Qualitative Findings

In-depth phenomenological interviews with Jane, James, Adam, Lila, Norah, and Eli revealed three major themes of behavioral effects from transformative learning: (a) developing respect for dual citizens of disparate worlds, (b) seeking contextual understanding, and (c) becoming intentional sojourners. Figure 3 synthesizes these findings with survey findings of behavior resulting from transformative learning.
Figure 3. Map of Behavioral Effects of Transformative Learning

In the following pages, these qualitative themes and quantitative findings will be explained through students’ stories and survey responses.
Dual Citizens

All interview participants said they gained confidence in their self-perceived status as outsiders. Some had felt such distance as children, others felt it as college students, but a palpable sense of distance from their peers existed for them all.

Adam, for example, explained, “Funny that when I talk about this stuff my stomach muscles get all twitchy.” But despite their discomfort, participants also mentioned an important realization: despite their outsider experiences, or perhaps even by virtue of their outsider experiences, they all learned to be successful border dwellers—both inside the classroom and out. Reflection on their transformative learning experiences led each to express a newfound respect for themselves and other dual citizens of often disparate worlds. Participants frequently expressed appreciation for their once-painful, but now-valuable experiences of being outsiders. Transformative learning helped them develop a richer self-awareness, consideration of social justice, and emotional ability to change as their worlds change. Participants grew to understand the purposefulness of being members of the dual and disparate worlds in which they had existed. What follows are their reflections on being self-conscious and then powerful border dwellers.

For years, Jane had been home schooled by her parents. Dissatisfied with the experience, her mother decided to send her to her town’s public school. Jane recalled, “I remember my first day. I was terribly nervous about associating with everyone at public school. A lot of home-schooled children are sometimes way too sheltered. They don’t even know how to function in the world.” Jane’s perception of herself as an outsider
followed her from public high school into her summer job and then into college. Looking back, Jane admitted, “I was very sheltered, which was both good and bad.” The good was her strong experience developing religious faith and family connections. The bad was that her faith and family development came at the cost of interpersonal relationships beyond her church and family.

Then one summer, Jane decided to challenge herself by working as a camp counselor. At camp, Jane observed and emulated the counselors she admired. She found herself increasingly able to meet and engage new people—without sacrificing her core values. “Growing up, I was always an introvert, “ she explained, “But when you are at camp, you kind of have to be an extrovert as a counselor. Now, for years, I’ve been a camp counselor, and I am going to work there again.”

As a college student, Jane was able to integrate her traditional values with her desires for exploratory, interpersonal relationships. As a college senior, Jane helped lead her campus’s Intervarsity Fellowship faith organization in addition to being a native Minnesotan member of her campus’s international club.

James also understood what it meant to be an outsider. As a first-year student, James awoke on the dormitory bathroom floor and had no idea how he got there. Despite considering himself a “picture of health,” later that day, he was diagnosed as an adult epileptic. He explained:

That really shifted up life a bit. It changed my lifestyle definitely. I have to be more responsible with taking care of myself. And now, I wish I knew some other people with epilepsy—we could have a barbeque or something. I don’t know if
you could classify it as mental health or what, but I haven’t seen any clubs or organizations for these things. That’s a tough way to be.

Despite what he perceived to be his mental health outsider’s experience, James recognized his success in academia. “I’ve done well in school, and gotten good grades, I’ve made the Dean’s List seven out of eight semesters. I can do it. I can pull myself up by my bootstraps and make things go well.”

Like James, Adam saw himself as a citizen of two worlds—as outsider and an insider. Adam explained:

Growing up, I had never really related to many of my peers. I didn’t feel like I could relate to them because of money issues after my dad died and my mom had to work full time just to keep us in school. Although I was active in Boy Scouts at the time—it was one thing I did very well in—even there I almost dropped out because I got picked on a lot. A boy in my troop actually knocked my front tooth out. I didn’t have very many friends.

But after my assertive roommate Sierra helped me to grow and become more of the person I want to be, I started taking pride in myself. I became president of the campus outdoor club, I’m a resident assistant in the dorms, and as an Eagle Scout part of my job is a counselor at a leadership camp, where I lead reflections. I do things that people used to make fun of me for and I’m all right with.

Adam continued to see himself as both an outsider and an insider. He credited his outsider’s experience with his comfort and success as a leader. He explained, “You
become stronger because of things like that. But you kind of still at the same time wish they didn’t happen. Especially stuff like that.”

Reflecting on her early years, Lila echoed Adam’s sentiment that being an outsider is both difficult and important. Lila’s parents were teachers who had taught in the southern United States. She explained:

My parents taught in schools that were like 90 percent black. So at school, we were the minority. And being that young, we were totally open minded and open eyed. Well, one day my best friend’s mom—she was also a teacher at the school—told us that when we were driving through the ghetto, “Don’t look those niggers in the eye, or they’ll pull out the gun.” And my mom was present when she said this and my mom just told her, “You don’t talk to my children like that.”

Even at that age, I just remember thinking, “How could you say that?” When we drove through there we were just like wide-eyed and all of this is life, I guess. There were some rough times down there.

Lila’s family’s world was very different than the world outside of their home. The outside world tried to poison her respect for all people. Her family’s world taught her that she would belong to many different worlds, and they could coexist without acrimony.

Later in college, Lila’s transformative learning experiences reminded her that although her family may have been outsiders in midst of a pernicious culture, the openness she had learned from her parents’ world was valuable and worth the cost of being perceived as an outsider. Lila added that some of her peers have experimented
with her approach to engaging people and situations with an open mind, and they’ve informed her that they think it actually works.

Eli also told of being an outsider—in multiple cultures. As a high school senior competing in the state track meet, everyone’s parents were in the stands cheering—except for Eli’s bipolar dad who was in jail for a driving incident.

After being recruited for college athletics, Eli found himself sitting out his freshman season as a red-shirted spectator. When he returned sophomore year, he was no longer in top form. Out of frustration and financial need, the former National Honor Society president quit running and worked double shifts at the gas station in order to pay for tuition. The following summer, Eli earned his tuition money laboring at the flourmill back home, and experienced how the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder lives. He explained:

I worked my butt off shoveling flour for eight hours a day in 90 degree heat. And when I talked with the lifers there, I thought “Man, this sucks, you’ve got to work in 90 degree heat every day and you are here for 40 years. This isn’t right.” So you kind of see the other side, working at the gas station and talking with the people there and at the mill. You’re no longer on top, and now you see the bottom—or what society views as the bottom. It makes you a little more empathetic.

A few semesters later, Eli arrived in Cameroon, Africa to student teach. There he experienced being singled out and admired for simply being a white male.
I still can’t say I know what it’s like to be the minority. I still don’t know what it’s like to be the black guy in any of my college classes because I only had to do it for three months. And I only had to do it when people were praising me, not judging me. Kind of like working at the flourmill—the same kind of situation. You develop some sort of empathy for the workers, but it can’t be complete because you are not going to do it for forty years. But the next time someone makes a comment about it, you are going to be a little more sensitive towards that person.

Being an outsider in multiple cultures led Eli to recognize his ability to adapt and learn in multiple, disparate worlds.

Norah too discovered she was an outsider among her peers. When her professor told her that she was valuably different from her peers, she was surprised, but also affirmed. She explained:

I remember the Intro to Philosophy course I had. At the end of the course, I took the final and I was walking out the door, and it’s like silent, during the final, but the professor took me aside and said, “You know, you are one of the best students I’ve had in thirty years for this course. I like the way that you think and the way that you analyze.” That was huge for me, because I had no idea that I was any different from anyone else.

But I guess I kind of do take things really seriously. For example, when a form says, “Read this before you sign it,” I always read it. I recognize not everybody does that. Or like, when I was asked to take part in this study, I
thought, “Well I bet I know why I was chosen for this, because most people probably didn’t write a lot for the survey.” And I mean, that is fine. That’s how I am. When someone says, “I’d like you to answer these questions,” first I think about the questions, and then I answer the questions. A lot of people probably don’t do that; they don’t put the thought in, and I naturally do that.

When Norah’s professor remarked that her analysis and reflection were among the best he had seen in 30 years of teaching, Norah didn’t mind hearing that she was not like everyone else. She gained a sense of confidence, purposefulness, and individuation in her critically reflective aloneness.

Norah, like Jane, James, Adam, Lila, and Eli found herself transformed by experiences during her teacher education. For each of these individuals, transformation meant they began to recognize the individuating value of being dual citizens of disparate worlds. They became self aware of their ability to change. They developed confidence in their ability to stand apart from dominant culture. What’s more, as both outsiders and insiders, they learned to seek contextual understanding of their dual worlds.

Seekers of Contextual Understanding

Another major theme in interview responses was respondents’ ability to seek contextual understanding amid conflicting experiences. Jane, James, Adam, Lila, Norah, and Eli all spoke of how perspective transformation enabled them to be more effective students and student teachers, because they learned to analyze the contexts of the often disparate worlds in which they study and teach. Each of these participants explained that contextual analysis enabled them not only to better understand what they are learning and
teaching, but also directed them in making more informed decisions. Here are their stories of studying context. Jane explained:

I remember sitting for hours and hours listening to a college classmate from Nepal. Because our cultures and beliefs are so different, I had so many questions for him. Well, when I invited him home to my family’s house for a weekend, it turned out to be really good, because I learned a lot about things that I just assume are the same in every culture. But they’re not. I think that was huge, because while at first I couldn’t even understand his language or his beliefs, eventually my ears adjusted and I came to understand him.

From experiences like this, I learned that as a teacher, I have to listen to my students and value what they say, even if sometimes I think they are wrong. Now I just listen to them because I value them as people. I’m no longer so concerned with points of disagreement or where someone needs to change. I’m still working toward that, but now I’m valuing them where they are right now.

If I were just to go out and be like, “Hey man you are a sinner,” people’s ears would turn off right away. Well I know I am a sinner too. And there is no room to build a relationship or no room to love people if I am just always in their face instead of listening to them and getting to know them instead of just judging them right away.

Though not one to compromise her views on religion and morality, Jane sought to understand the contexts that have produced other people’s perspectives. This freed her to value other people’s assumptions and actions without devaluing her own. As a student
and a teacher, Jane judged less and listened more—enabling her to deeply care for and shape her peers’ and students’ perspectives.

James also sought contextual understanding of others as a result of his own transformative learning experiences. He explained how his adult onset of epilepsy has changed the way he teaches.

Discovering I have epilepsy really broke down some barriers. Knowing I didn’t wake up one morning and choose to have epilepsy makes me more open-minded in teaching kids with learning disabilities and other stigmas. They don’t choose to have these things; these things just happen. They’ve got things going on inside their brains telling them that this is what’s going on, what’s going to happen.

For example, one day when I was student teaching about African Americans in American society, and this elementary school kid said, “I think we should put them back on the ship and send them back where they came from.” Well my first reaction was like, “Whoa, wait a minute,” but then I stopped because I thought, “I don’t think that he is cognitively capable of making those thoughts on his own. It’s coming from somewhere else—mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, brother, or sister.”

Recognizing that he did not choose epilepsy—in his mind a stigma—helped James to recognize that his students often don’t get to choose stigmas such as growing up in racist households. For this reason, James learned to check his first reaction and replace it with a more contextual response. He explained, “So when I see that narrow-
mindedness and racism coming into the classroom, I just try to talk to kids and help them form a more open sense of things.” Contextualizing his students’ narrow-mindedness as something often beyond their choosing, James decided to help broaden his students’ critical thinking through conversation.

Adam too told a story of learning to broaden his contextual understanding of student behavior.

Early one semester, my cooperating teacher sent a middle school student that had a bad reputation to the office because she thought he smelled like marijuana. Later that semester, after helping him with an after-school assignment, I asked him what he does outside of school. He replied, “Well, I spend most of the day after I get home chopping wood. We have a generator, and we don’t run it very often, so we heat our house with wood.”

He didn’t smell like marijuana; he smelled like a wood burning stove. So, shame on us for thinking that it was something more. Shame on me for not thinking that it could have been something else. How that must that have felt to that student, who had worked hard to get rid of reputation in school over the year. How much it must have set him back to be sent to the office and asked to search his locker.

Now in my teaching, instead of being confrontational with students who have not finished their homework, I’ll ask, “So how was your week? What have you been up to? What do you do after school?”
One high school kid who didn’t have his homework done told me he works until 11 o’clock every night after school at McDonalds. So I could have shamed the kid into maybe doing his homework, but then I would have lost him. He would have shut down for me in class. Because then I would’ve been just another teacher who has no idea that he holds this huge job after school and isn’t done with things until 2 a.m. and then gets up every morning for 7 a.m. class. How do you not take that into account?

Misjudging one student and being wrong taught Adam to seek contextual understanding of his students. As a teacher, he strove to understand his students’ lives, in order to keep their minds open to learning. Ashamed of his earliest assumptions, Adam found himself capable of a more socially just approach to teaching.

Lila’s transformative experiences also led her to be a tactful advocate for social justice. She developed her tact from critical reflection on her twin sister’s abrupt approach to the same ends. Lila explained:

My sister will come out and say her opinion, and she has a hard time believing that she could be wrong. So she’s one of the reasons that I’ve come to realize I’m not going to persuade people by forcing them to think how I think. I’ve seen people get very angry with my sister, and she’ll get very angry with the people she is talking to. And then it’s just horrible. No one is going to be convinced by getting yelled at and being told they’re wrong.

But I think most of it is just ignorance. And not meaning ignorance like they’re idiots, but ignorance like they just don’t know. I think that is half of all
disagreements. It’s just that people don’t have the facts or the basis or the experience. And if they don’t have that, of course they are going to just continue to argue.

I tell my friends, “The next time you are talking to someone who doesn’t get it, sit there and listen to them and tell them that that it’s okay and you don’t agree with them. Ask them if they want to know why.” It’s so much more about questioning than it is about telling.

Watching others engage in ideological battles without listening for other perspectives led Lila to advocate for newly contextualized exchanges of ideas—in which people can feel safe to seek more information about perspectives they don’t understand. Lila found that such self-awareness enabled her peers to be more emotionally capable of change and more directed in the pursuit of social justice.

Like Lila, Norah put her teaching energy into creating a more fruitful learning context for her students. After a transformative trip abroad, Norah recognized the importance of sincere relationships. She explained:

When I was in Japan, the culture was so genuine, so polite, so friendly.

And then I came back, and it hit me. Americans can be so rude to each other.

And I really saw it from a different perspective because I had gotten used to Japan’s welcoming culture. It’s amazing.

Soon finding herself making teaching decisions in an American classroom, Norah decided to work to create a more productive and sincere learning context, so she could
help bring about more genuine relationships in her classroom and her culture. Norah reflected:

That’s what my classroom can do. That’s what I’m working on as a teacher—being a teacher who helps her students relate to themselves, their classmates, and their teacher. If they don’t get into that somehow, they are never going to get the growth they need. I think I can help them see themselves where they are and develop respect for themselves. Oftentimes students have a narrow perspective on life. They just know what they know, and they’re not challenged to see the big picture, whether it is academics, or social skills, or life values. And so I accept these things and I want to work with them.

Norah recognized that education reflects the culture surrounding it. Having expanded her perception of what culture can be, Norah became diligent about creating a richer context in which her students might develop themselves and their society.

Eli’s transformative experiences also taught him to seek contextual understandings—as he discovered great variance between life in his conservative hometown, his progressive college town, and his international teaching experience in Cameroon. Eli explained:

Exposure to other ideas and perspectives is big—especially exposure to other people. When my professors are saying one thing and my friends and father back home are saying another, it makes my friends back home look like they’re arguing in favor of what they’ve always known. But they also bring up some
good points sometimes. So then I go onto this whirlwind tornado of pondering who is right. So I study some of it on my own and put pieces together from different things. I come out with some flexible scheme for understanding different situations, I guess.

Any new information, I used to automatically judge. But after I have a different experience, that means I change that way of thinking. Next time, I am going to say “I can’t really judge right now. I can’t judge, because I judged before, and then I had to adjust. So now I how am I supposed to judge?”

So instead of my first impulse being judging, for me it turned into more asking myself a series of questions, and after those questions I hold conversations with amenable people. I read something. Then I read something else. So now my first impulse isn’t to judge. It is more to understand. To really seek what it is coming from.

Jane, James, Adam, Lila, Norah, and Eli all perceived themselves as dual citizens of often disparate worlds. Because they frequently saw themselves as outsiders working within education institutions, they learned the value of seeking contextual understandings of the people and practices that they encountered in these various worlds. Seeking contextual understandings enabled these emerging educators to be more critically reflective, open to other view points, informed, inclusive of multiple perspectives, and open to dialogue. Such experiences compelled these emerging educators to become intentional sojourners into fresh, demanding learning and teaching experiences.
Intentional Sojourners

The third major theme that emerged from phenomenological interviews with preservice teachers was their common experiences as intentional sojourners. Jane, James, Adam, Lila, Norah, and Eli all revealed their experience and intention of continuing to journey into the often-ambiguous and ever-dynamic cycles of engaging perspective transformation. Directed in their search for truth, active in construction of knowledge, proactive in decision making, and integrative of experiences, these intentional sojourners explained that many of their poignant experiences and most significant aims as professional educators are associated with risking further development and sharing transformative understanding.

Jane described herself before college as a sheltered introvert who was frightened by the seemingly foreign culture of her own town’s public schools. Yet Jane’s transformative learning experiences so excited her that she journeyed to Mexico to study language and culture. And among her closest college friends were a group of Nepalese international students.

Jane grew exuberant about her classroom and campus discussions with diverse students, which produced newfound ability to journey into unfamiliar cultures, explaining, “I just really got an interest in learning about different cultures and just being part of cross-cultural friendships. I am still learning so much.” Jane’s teacher education program transformed her view of the world. As an elementary school teacher and global citizen, she enjoyed her ability to intentionally sojourn into change.

James arrived at college as a smart student seeking a teacher’s license. His
perspective transformation experiences made him initially disoriented and then deeply reflective about his journey toward truth and his work as a teacher. He explained:

College has caused me to be more reflective not just in academics and teaching, but in life, in general. I now attend lectures at the Center for Peace and Justice, where they talk about the world economy, the Patriot Act, civil rights of immigrants, and stuff like that. It mixes up the head a bit, but I want to learn more about the world. And now when my girlfriend says I’ve been a jackass, and I just stop, and think, “Was I a jackass? I think well you know I probably was.” So we go back and talk about things. It’s kind of painful at times, but I’ve become more open. In my teaching, it’s not easy, but I try to do a lot of the same with my students.

Adam entered college as a loner whose goal was to earn a computer science degree. But the perspectives of his lesbian roommate, his homophobic roommate, and his Chinese roommate had profound impacts on his journey toward developing his own perspective. As an emerging English teacher, he explained:

My role in life has now changed. I need to go beyond spending time with people who are going to have exactly the same views as me. I search for meaning in what I do. I need to ask the question, “why?” That is really important to me. I feel like the butterfly effect can happen. I can impact that one student who asks the question “why?” And that one will impact somebody else. I think it can grow.
I think I have to be idealistic to be a teacher. And the people that give me crap for that, I can’t listen to them. Its okay if they don’t agree with it, if they are too grounded in whatever they are doing, but I have to believe that I am making a difference. If I don’t do it, it’s not going to happen.

Lila arrived at college one fall semester to find herself stuck living with a roommate whose views on diversity were bigoted. But careful listening taught Lila that her roommate was masking a lifetime of anxiety in public bravado. Having learned the power of open-minded inquiry, Lila conducted her English classes with this transformative methodology. She explained how she prepared her students for the journey:

I think subtlety and gentleness are such a strong way to convince people or persuade them. What’s more, it’s much stronger than yelling. I have to keep finding ways to do that instead of getting people freaked out by confronting them with something that they don’t necessarily believe in. They don’t have to sacrifice what they believe—in order to listen to others. Being a teacher, I have a really good platform from which to do that.

Norah traveled alone across the country to attend college. As a mathematics teacher, she, like Lila, used her classroom to help her students find confidence in their ability to begin their own lifelong academic and personal journeys. She explained:

I try to help students discover themselves—using their strengths and addressing their weaknesses. I want to help them learn to overpower themselves into not always doing the easy or natural thing. You know, it’s easy to be
reactive, but I want them to see the kind of people they want to be versus the people they are. I also I think people maybe never fully arrive.

Like Norah, Eli described his transformative journey as long but rewarding. Since elementary school, he knew we would become a history teacher, but in college he for the first time recognized the many roads he would need to travel as a teacher. For Eli, it was a dreaded and seemingly useless college philosophy course that helped expand his perspective. He explained:

Because of that class when I’d see a philosophy flyer saying we are going to discuss this or that, I’d think, “Well, maybe this stuff has some clout. I’d like to go and have my thoughts challenged for an hour or two. The ideas may challenge my thoughts, but that’s okay, I can incorporate that new stuff too.”

So now, I step back, and say to myself, “Lose a little control.” To be successful I’ve got to be willing to learn. In the school years to come, I’ll be like, “This is it. This is a challenge. It is not going to wreck me; it will be rewarding.” So I’ve just got to jump in. I’m willing to learn, critique myself, and work with the other people around me even if I don’t agree with them. That is probably the main thing. That’s the kind of mindset I want to instill in my students. I want them coming out empowered and feeling like they have a say in history.

As Eli described his transformative journey—full of ambiguous and dynamic cycles of learning, he described characteristics common to himself, Jane, James, Adam, Lila, and Noah: an evolving search for truth, active construction of knowledge, proactive decision-making, and integrating experiences. He embraced the intentional sojourns that
are required of dual citizens in worlds that demand contextual understanding. Through
his intentional sojourns, Eli embraced the postmodern world in which he and his peers
live and teach.
CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Using a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative research tools, this study found 35% of participating preservice teachers in northeastern Minnesota experienced transformative learning while enrolled in their teacher education programs.

Transformative learning took place in the classroom, in campus life, in residential living, and in field experiences. The majority of transformed participants experienced interpersonal perspective reframing and intrapersonal perspective reframing.

Transformative learning experiences increased participants’ self awareness, openness to other viewpoints, critical reflection, and emotional capability to change. These effects were visible in transformed participants’: (a) efficacy as dual citizens of often disparate worlds, (b) search for contextual understandings, and (c) intentional sojourns into further transformative learning opportunities for themselves, their peers, and their students.

This chapter contains discussion of the pedagogical and philosophical implications of these findings, offers a theory and experience-based synthesized model for fostering transformative learning, and recommends considerations for further study of transformative learning.

Extent and Meaning of Transformative Experiences

More than one third of the preservice teachers who participated in this study experienced transformative learning as a result of their college experiences. These students identified disorienting dilemmas, critical reflection, rational dialogue, and taking better-informed action as the benchmarks of their perspective transformation. This
suggests that the current experience of teacher education has changed the lives of more
than one third of the public university and private college participants in this study in
northeastern Minnesota. Transformative learning experiences have prepared them for
“today’s realities and tomorrow’s surprises, in order to courageously yet confidently
engage the future’s unknowns” (Maslow, 1971).

More than one third of participating preservice teachers, across all demographic
categories, experienced actualization of their colleges’ mission statements—the search
for truth and pursuit of meaning.

Yet with just over one third of the survey population indicating transformation,
nearly two thirds had not yet experienced the transformative power of higher education.
This is illustrated in Figure 4, which represents quantitative findings among the four
major quadrants of experiences associated with transformative learning.
Figure 4. *Quadrants of Transformative Learning*

**Transformative Learning Quadrants**
*Mezirow (1970) and Herbers (1998)*

\[ N=153 \]

IV.
Action:
35% of respondents

I.
Disorienting Experiences:
73% of respondents

III.
Rational Dialogue:
47% of respondents

II.
Critical Reflection:
43% of respondents

Quadrant I of Figure 4 represents the first major stage in perspective transformation. Nearly three quarters of this study’s 153 participants reported disorienting experiences, in which their attitudes, values, beliefs, feelings, concepts, or actions were an insufficient match for a new reality. Typically encountered in coursework, interaction with peers outside of the classroom, and cross-cultural field experiences, these disorienting college experiences may be the beginning of future perspective transformation. Through the process of disorientation, nearly three quarters
of the all participants are well positioned to proceed to critical reflection, the next major stage toward transformative learning.

Forty three percent of all participants reported engaging in critical reflection on assumptions and actions, represented by Quadrant II. This surprisingly low percentage may be one of the greatest threats and opportunities in the entire cycle. Because critical reflection involves analysis of the gap between ideals and experience, this process enables individuals to make sense of disorientation by reevaluating attitudes, values, beliefs, feelings, concepts, and actions. As critical reflection is an essential component of rational dialogue, and rational dialogue an essential component of perspective transformation, only 43% of participants critically thinking about the disorienting dilemma means it is unlikely that more than this number will experience the challenges and rewards of Quadrants III and IV—rational dialogue and action. Moreover, the absence of critical reflection, may lead, it would seem, to a reduced likelihood of future transformation. That is, unless something changes; unless an intervention is made. A discussion of changes and interventions is found at the Changes in Approach section of this chapter.

As indicated in Quadrant III of Figure 4, forty seven percent of participants reported engaging in rational dialogue regarding the disorienting dilemmas they experienced in their college experience. While it is encouraging to find nearly half of all participants engaged in rational dialogue, the question “Rational dialogue on what?” also arises. When learners are discussing and reconceptualizing their assumptions and actions, it would be of greatest benefit to do so from a basis of broad yet deep critical
reflection. Perhaps learners are presently reconstructing new frames of reference with many of the same assumptions and actions with which less useful structures were founded. Reinvesting in observation and critical reflection may support valuable new structures of thought and action.

Quadrant IV, with which 35% of participants identified, represents perspective transformation—or behavior change based on proactive thinking, incorporating multiple perspectives, dialogue, and construction of knowledge (Daloz, 1990).

*Changes in Approach*

One set of options for better understanding students' experiences with transformative learning involves a longer-term commitment to assessing transformative learning. While Daloz (2000) and Kegan (200) noted that students are able to critically reflect on their own perspectives in late adolescence and abstractly reason about their own assumptions after two decades of living, the contemporary college experience may be filled with such an inundation of learning experiences that current students have not yet fully realized the effects of these events. For this reason, recognizing and being able to articulate the experience of perspective transformation may require more time than is provided in a study such as this—which surveys students in their last semester of college.

As an alternative to this exit survey and interview approach, a post-graduation assessment of transformative learning experiences may enable increased awareness of the extent to which transformative learning experiences were present in college. To this end, one consideration is the possibility of a longitudinal study of graduates. This may enable
participants to more fully attain the intellectual growth potential of their college experience.

_Pedagogical and Curricular Interventions_

A second set of changes involves pedagogical and curricular intervention. Like much of present-day education, teacher education programs typically include such an intense degree of professional standards-driven curriculum that reflective learning becomes a notion honored in theory but overlooked in daily practice. It is not uncommon for teachers and students alike to dedicate a great deal of learning time and energy to what Habermas (1984) called instrumental learning—which is focused on skill acquisition.

Clearly, postmodern teaching demands substantial instrumental skills. The complexity of learning to be a competent teacher—especially in undergraduate teacher education programs that compress liberal education requirements, pedagogy courses, and licensure area courses into a handful of years—is such that undergraduate teacher education programs can, in practice, become teacher training programs. Because assessment of learning often revolves around the “how to” of teaching, critical reflection on the “why” or “to what ends” of education remains a peripheral consideration. Preservice teachers are frequently taught how to be instrumentally effective at the cost of expansive learning experiences with what Habermas (1984) called the communicative and emancipatory dimensions of learning, which involve “critical assessment of assumptions supporting the justification of existing norms, context, history, social structures, and power structures which shape epistemological perspectives.”
Over time, preservice teachers—as well as their peers preparing for most other professions—who have been trained primarily in instrumental learning become professionals acculturated to focus primarily on task-oriented behavior. Foucault (1980) called this society’s “normalizing gaze,” or the learned disposition to avoid and discount inquiry into the communicative and emancipatory dimensions of learning. Its presence in teacher preparation programs—as with all education—acts an instrument of hegemony rather than transformation. The normalizing gaze and disposition is evident in the following statements written on the surveys of three individuals who were among the 27% of participants who indicated they did not experience disorienting dilemmas, critical reflection, rational dialogue, or transformed behavior in college:

The more time I spent in education classes, the more I doubted my desire to be an educator. However, I learned that my education classes had little reflection on what it is to be an educator. Luckily, I had previous experiences in authority roles with youth and close family members to remind me what the ends of this educational mean are. —Anonymous

I do not spend time thinking about other people’s assumptions. If they are about me, they should approach me. —Anonymous

I realize that it doesn’t matter what others think. We must focus on what we want. —Anonymous

The effect of the normalizing gaze, or disposition toward instrumental learning and away from communicative and emancipatory learning, shows itself in the surprisingly small 43% of participants who reported critically reflecting on disorienting
college experiences. It is even further evident in the 27% of all participants who did not identify with any of the ten phases of Mezirow’s transformative learning theory, which are for the purposes of this discussion represented in Herbers’ four stages or quadrants of transformative learning. See Figure 4.

Because instrumental learning is, according to K. Taylor (2000) “insufficient to the task” of fostering critically aware decision making and self-authoring in a complex, postmodern world (p. 157), a second set of changes involves pedagogical intervention, through which higher education faculty prepare preservice teachers to lead their students toward transformation. This requires higher education faculty to rethink, reform, and redesign their curriculum so that valuable instrumental curriculum exists within a framework of communicative and emancipatory critical reflection—or critical assessment of assumptions supporting the justification of existing norms context, history, social structures, and power structures which shape epistemological perspectives. Cranton (1994) suggests that faculty who do so choose the role of the “provokeur” in order to “challenge, stimulate, and provoke critical thinking” (p. 128).

An example of this in teacher education is Pelaez’s (2005) Biology 102 course for preservice elementary educators, in which learning is assessed through critical reflection of “biological phenomena using a scientific approach, and applying knowledge in evaluating social issues and [scientific] problems that have a social dimension.”

Pelaez’s approach to assessing critical reflection is grounded in Wiggins & McTighe’s (1998) Six Facets of Understanding, which is an assessment framework associated with Wiggins and McTighe’s Understanding By Design (UBD) model of
curriculum planning. The UBD model assists educators in: (a) identifying the enduring understandings that students will demonstrate as a result of the learning experience, (b) identifying a combination of critically reflective and instrumental assessment methods for measuring student learning, and (c) planning learning experiences designed to accomplish the critically reflective enduring understandings which the curriculum set out to develop. The Six Facets of Understanding assess explanation, interpretation, application, perspective, empathy, and self knowledge. Like Bloom’s (1976) taxonomy, the Six Facets of Understanding are tools for supporting sophisticated levels of critical reflection.

Within Bloom’s (1976) taxonomy, instrumental knowledge and comprehension are foundationally important for critically reflective application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Like Wiggins & McTighe’s Six Facets of Understanding, Bloom’s taxonomy may serve as a planning and assessment framework for educators to structure the study and assessment of student movement from uncritical acceptance to insightful evaluation of information—in order to construct understandings of broad foundations of perspectives.

Wiggins & McTighe’s and Bloom’s curricular frameworks for developing critical reflection in college students reflect Perry’s (1970) recommendations for supporting students in becoming more complex and dynamic thinkers. Perry’s recommendations include: (a) challenging dualists to compare, contrast, and justify ideas, (b) challenging multiplists to reconsider positions based on changing evidence, and (c) challenging relativists to intellectually reason the consequences of various choices.
Another intervention that may support and foster critical reflection among preservice teachers is critical reflection on their own dispositions as learners. While assessment of learner dispositions is not uncommon in teacher education programs, little is known about supporting students in critically assessing their own dispositions as learners. Establishing a common and descriptive metric to assess the dispositions an education program values would develop preservice teacher critical self-reflection on assumptions and actions. Using a descriptive instrument for preassessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment is another step toward assessing the dispositions programs value and helping learners develop the communicative abilities that will help them succeed in dynamic educational environments.

These curricular and pedagogical interventions move critical reflection from the periphery of daily classroom learning into a central framework for teaching as an act of intentionality and decision making. These interventions require a good deal of curriculum and assessment rethinking and redesign from faculty in teacher education programs—as well as faculty of all disciplines. Because the institutional experiences of present day educators support little critical reflection, it would not be surprising if these interventions were met with significant reluctance, as the normalizing disposition has powerful effects on faculty as well as students. However, investing in these and other theory and practice-based pedagogical and curricular interventions may support teacher education students in becoming more critically reflective about the disorienting dilemmas which are likely to mark their professional lives as educators in postmodern society and their personal lives as citizens in a postmodern world.
While any of these changes or interventions may be successful in fostering further critical awareness, combining these approaches may be the most significant investment in learning—as the opportunities to intervene and costs of failing to intervene are so significant.

Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Experiences

Figure 5 represents that the majority of participants experiencing transformative learning thought deeply and critically about their own perspectives as well as the perspectives of others. Among participants who indicated experiencing perspective transformation, more than 83% reported experiencing critical reflection on others’ assumptions and actions. And more than 87% reported experiencing critical reflection on their own assumptions and actions. Eighty-nine percent reported experiencing critical reflection on other peoples’ assumptions as well as their own assumptions. Seventy-seven percent reported experiencing critical reflection on other people’s actions as well as their own actions.
The statistical direction and power of what appears to be a strong relationship between interpersonal perspective reframing and intrapersonal perspective reframing could not be established by crosstabulation of these variables. While a Pearson Chi-Square analysis of two-sided asymptomatic significance yielded .001 and .002 chances of this relationship occurring by chance, the Lambda value for this relationship was .000. In order to better understand the larger relationship between interpersonal and intrapersonal perspective reframing, additional quantitative analysis may be useful.

Yet interview participants revealed a good deal of information about the relationship between these two types of critical reflection. Jane, James, Adam, Lila, Norah, and Eli indicated that they first engaged in interpersonal perspective reframing and then followed this with intrapersonal perspective reframing. For these preservice teachers, perspective transformation typically began with critical reflection on other people’s actions and assumptions and then resulted in critical reflection on their own actions and assumptions. As illustrated in Figure 5, the majority of those experiencing transformation appear to have engaged in both interpersonal and intrapersonal perspective reframing.

The utility of this finding for educators and other education stakeholders is that experiences that involve critical reflection of other people’s assumptions and actions are likely to produce intrapersonal critical reflection—a key component in transformative learning. Moreover, it directs those interested in fostering transformative learning to design experiences beginning with critical reflection on the assumptions and actions encountered in others, then proceeding to critical reflection on one’s own assumptions.
and actions. When learners have the very personal experience of critically rethinking their own behavior, they, like Jane, James, Adam, Lila, Norah, and Eli, may become intentional sojourners toward additional perspective transformation for their students, peers, and themselves. This is the butterfly effect of which Adam spoke.

One third of these preservice teachers are asking critically reflective questions which may produce far-reaching effects on the learning of countless other stakeholders and citizens. This geometric pattern in American schools cannot help but to increase the critical consciousness and richness of understanding in American society and beyond.

Effects of Transformative Learning

Transformative learning experiences have profound and far-reaching effects on participants’ sense of efficacy as dual citizens in often disparate worlds, seekers of contextual understanding, and sojourners into complex yet rewarding learning environments. The following section is a discussion of the pedagogical and philosophical meaning of these participants’ transformative learning experiences.

Efficacious Dual Citizens

As dual citizens of often-contradictory worlds, these individuals have developed experiential and ontological understanding of the complex nature of their being. They have personalized Descartes’ (1637/1980) “I think, therefore I am,” into its postmodern iteration—*I think dynamically, therefore I am global citizen*. Their global citizenship reflects Heidegger’s (1927/1962) and Sartre’s (1957) insistence that their choices do in fact author and create the worlds in which they live. And so they have gained confidence
and freedom from unsubstantiated notions and traditions. In these worlds, they direct their own futures.

These transformed learners have crossed what Tillich (1987) called “the frontiers of their own anxieties” and discovered new possibilities for being at once their genuine former selves as well as newly transformed, authentic beings who possess greater self-understanding (p. 242).

Where they once feared being misinterpreted, judged, or perceived as proud, self-indulgent, strange, or irrelevant, they have silenced such concerns and are instead directed by what Maslow (1971) called “being needs,” which spring from the need to live toward self-actualization.

The cognitive dissonance of disorienting dilemmas complicated their existence, and they responded to this complexity through critical reflection. They recognized the value of existing as outsiders on the periphery of the dominant culture. They experienced what Jung (1971) referred to as “being at variance with one’s self.” They engaged in critical assessment of their own affinities and aims. From problematized states of being, they discovered the emancipatory value of retaining an outsider’s perspective in their work as students, teachers, leaders, and citizens.

They developed the ability to be what Giroux (1992) called “border crossers,” choosing an empowered distance and revisionist commitment to their work as students, teachers, and citizens within society’s mainstream institutions. Their success as border crossers was enabled by developing “Janusian” perspectives on their dual worlds (Blasko & Mokwa, 1986). They directed their vision forward to the new worlds yet to be
understood as well as backward to the worlds in which their increasingly confident independence is rooted.

Seekers of Contextual Understanding

In their learning and teaching, these border crossers employed Janusian ability to make sense of the assumptions and actions they encountered in their peers, their teachers, and their students. Thinking contextually, they became dynamic learners and teachers who were able to consider not only their own, but also other people’s assumptions and actions from multiple perspectives. They learned to listen and ask questions of their peers, teachers, and students, in order to seek understanding of why people and institutions function as they do.

Their questions often generated powerful, teachable opportunities. Yet, teachable opportunities were both problematic and promising, as questioning and listening for contextual clues required patience and willingness to dialogue rationally about perspectives that at times were based upon unreliable assumptions. This pattern reflects what Freire (1985) described as “generative learning,” in which educators as “co-ordinators” engage students in dialectics of listening and drawing out of ideas in order to critically examine conclusions (pp.110-111).

In contrast to the all-too-common “banking model” of education, these border crossers practiced collaborative inquiry with their peers, teachers, and students (Freire, 1985). In doing this, they helped others cross from a classroom and societal culture of argumentation—in which opposing perspectives wield knowledge as a commodity rather than a communicative asset—into an environment of thematic inquiry and rational
dialogue well suited to support contextual understandings among citizens of a postmodern and "fundamentally interdependent" world (Daloz 2000, p. 120).

The contextual understandings that these border crossers sought through generative learning methods reflects Brookfield's (2000) view of transformative learning as "ideology critique," through which individuals "question assumptions and practices that seem to make [their] lives easier but that actually end up working against [their] own best long-term interests" (pp. 128-31).

By creating what Miller & Ramos (1999) called "new spaces for learning," which used questioning and listening as tools of ideology critique, these border crossers used the constructive power of trusting relationships to allow their peers, teachers, and students to become more aware of the contexts which produce their own assumptions and actions. Grow (1991) called this "self-authoring" behavior. He explained that such learning helps people:

examine themselves, their culture, and their milieu in order to understand how to separate what they feel from what they should feel, what they value from what they should value, and what they want from what they should want. They develop critical thinking, individual initiative, and a sense of themselves as co-creators of the culture that shapes them. (cited in Kegan, 2000, p. 66)

In these new spaces for learning that seeks contextual understanding for themselves and supports the search for contextual understanding in their peers, teachers, and students, these border crossers have experienced a certain degree of success with coordinating and generating communicative and emancipatory learning relationships among
peers, teachers, and students. However, these border crossers also experienced a
significant degree of resistance—exemplified by Adam’s statement, “I do things that
people used to make fun of me for and I’m all right with”—from the likes of the two
thirds of their peers who have not experienced the Janusian and emancipatory effects of
perspective transformation.

While Maslow (1971) suggested, “Education ought to help people transcend the
conditioning imposed on them by their own culture and become world citizens” (p. 177),
Rogers admitted, “We have been asking for something less, and we have been getting
something less” (p. 21).

*Intentional Sojourners*

Unsatisfactory results have not prevented these border crossers from continuing
their intentional sojourns into further transformative learning for their peers, students, and
selves. While the challenges these border crossers encountered reflect Kegan’s (2000)
admission that critical self reflection on one’s own assumptions about the world is often
“a long, often painful voyage, and one that, much of the time, may feel more like mutiny
than a merely exhilarating expedition to discover new lands” (p. 67), these transformed
learners have taken Descartes’ (1637/1980) statement, “I think, therefore I am,” and
directed it into behavior that communicates *I think transformatively; therefore, I act on
what I have learned. I think globally; therefore, I shall not cease seeking truth.*

Transformed learners described their frequent and intentional sojourns toward
further transformation for themselves, their peers, and their students with a resolve that
reflected Nelson Mandela’s explanation of why he continued his counter-hegemonic
efforts against Apartheid: “I simply found myself doing so, and I could not do otherwise” (Daloz, 2000, p. 121).

These transformed teacher education students spoke of a great sense of purpose and meaning in their intentional sojourns, echoing Frankl’s (1963) explanation that what people need “is not a tensionless state, but rather the striving and struggling for some worthy goal [and] the call of a potential meaning waiting to be fulfilled” (p. 166).

Transformative learners recognized that worthy goal taking shape in their emerging teaching professions. They became students and teachers of what Giroux (1992) called “border pedagogy,” or pedagogy which immerses learners in critical reflection and rational dialogue on the fundamental interdependence of their worlds, in order to expand learners’ awareness of not only the instrumental, but also communicative and emancipatory dimensions of understanding.

These border pedagogists focused their learning and teaching on bold and courageous pedagogy—such as Norah’s math classroom which supported developing self-knowledge and Eli’s history classroom which fosters self determination—in order to develop their peers, students, and selves into what Maslow (1971) described as “a new kind of human being who is comfortable with change, who enjoys change, who is able to improvise, who is able to face with confidence, strength, and courage a situation of which he has absolutely no forewarning” (p. 56).

Recognizing their abilities as what Miller & Ramos (1999) called “agents of hope and possibility,” these border pedagogists focused their energy toward Gandhi’s (1957)
directive to be the change they want to see in the world. So they set about to transform
the nature of teaching and learning in their often disparate worlds.

Conclusion

This study set forth to better understand the degree to which transformative
learning is taking place among preservice teachers in northeastern Minnesota. This study
found that 35% of participants reported experiencing transformative learning as a result
of coursework, interaction with peers outside of the classroom, and cross-cultural field
experiences.

Transformative experiences typically involved critical reflection on other people’s
assumptions and actions as well as critical reflection on participants’ own assumptions
and actions.

Transformative learning developed participants’: (a) confidence in being dual
citizens of often disparate worlds; (b) ability to seek contextual understanding in the
midst of disorienting experiences; and (c) interest in sojourning into further
transformative learning experiences for themselves, their peers, and their students.

Synthesized Theory of Transformative Action and Assessment

This study concludes by offering and explaining a synthesized Transformative
Learning Theory of Action and Assessment, based on the work of Mezirow (1970),
Habermas (1984), Bloom (1976), and Wiggins & McTighe (1998). See Figure 6.
Figure 6. Synthesized Transformative Learning Theory of Action and Assessment

Transformative Understanding

**Self Knowledge**
(Wiggins & McTighe, 1998)
- Prepare learners for present realities and future unknowns.
  (Maslow, 1971)

**Evaluation**
(Bloom, 1976)

**Explanation**
(Wiggins & McTighe, 1998)
- Knowledge, Comprehension
  (Bloom, 1976)

**Quadrant IV.**

**Action, Experimentation**
(Kolb, 1984; Mezirow, 1970; Herbers, 1998)
- 35% of population reported trying to figure out ways to adopt transformed ways of acting

**Quadrant I.**

**Concrete, Disorienting Experiences**
(Kolb, 1984; Mezirow, 1970; Herbers, 1998)
- 73% of population reported disorienting experiences

**Begin:**

**Instrumental Learning**
(Habermas, 1984)

**Critical Reflection, Observation**
(Kolb, 1984; Mezirow, 1970; Herbers, 1998)
- 47% of population reported experiencing rational dialogue and abstract conceptualization about more accurate assumptions
- 43% of population reported experiencing critical reflection that their assumptions don’t fit current reality

**Quadrant III.**

**Rational Dialogue, Abstract Conceptualization**
(Kolb, 1984; Mezirow, 1970; Herbers, 1998)

**Quadrant II.**

**Empathy**
(Wiggins & McTighe, 1998)

**Perspective**
(Wiggins & McTighe, 1998)

**Application**
(Wiggins & McTighe, 1998)

**Interpretation**
(Wiggins & McTighe, 1998)
- Synthesis
  (Bloom, 1976)
- Comprehension, Analysis
  (Bloom, 1976)
Krueger (2005) describes a theory of action as a logic model that reveals underlying assumptions and inner workings of a program. Based on theory, experience, and ideas, a theory of action suggests a sequence of events and anticipated effects on participants. This Theory of Transformative Action and Assessment is based on synthesis of learning theories, participant experiences, and ideas inspired by the scholars in this study’s literature review.

Figure 6 illustrates learning that is useful today and meaningful in the days to come, requiring instrumental, task-oriented abilities. As time proceeds, what was accurate one day becomes less reliable and produces less successful results in the midst of changing environments. This often-disorienting (Quadrant I) experience need not produce combat or extinction. Instead, disorientation may be wisely met by (Quadrant II) observation and critical reflection on changing reality. At this point, (Quadrant III) rational dialogue—with others and within one’s self—enables expanded awareness and abstract reconceptualization of effective and informed assumptions and behavior. Then, (Quadrant IV) action and experimentation with expanded awareness, brings opportunity to emerge with transformed consciousness, choices, and possibility to reengage in further instrumental, communicative, and emancipatory learning. In and after (Quadrant IV) action, those who have experienced perspective transformation recognize themselves as dual citizens in often disparate worlds. In order to be effective in disparate worlds, the transformed seek contextual understandings of people encountered and experiences had in multiple—frequently conflicting—realities. Increasingly successful in functioning within multiple worlds, transformed learners cycle onward to engage in new, concrete,
and useful (Quadrant I) disorienting experiences, now equipped with greater confidence and openness toward emerging understandings that come from new (Quadrant II) cycles of observation, critical reflection, (Quadrant III) rational dialogue, reconceptualization, and (Quadrant IV) behavior change.

Education systems that invest heavily in instrumental learning are insufficiently preparing students for their futures, which arrive with every tick of the clock and every continued revolution of the earth on its axis. These sometimes-imperceptible changes belie the constancy of change. Education institutions that primarily invest in instrumental learning are insufficiently preparing students. The contexts in which they are prepared to thrive soon become outdated, and it is then up to individuals to either learn to adapt or be left to wither.

Meaningful learning, which prepares teachers, students, and societies for today’s realities and tomorrow’s unknowns, connects instrumental skills, communicative learning, and emancipatory understandings, so that individuals may meet ever-changing obligations and possibilities with critical reflection, rational dialogue, abstract conceptualization, and transformed action ability.

Institutions that aspire to do more but choose to invest in less are disserving students, teachers, and society. Institutions endowed with transformative mission statements—such as guiding students in the search for truth, understanding, and meaning—are obligated to construct curricula that support and assess transformative learning. Otherwise, these institutions are disingenuous to their mission statements and allow knowledge be mistaken for understanding.
Societies that demand transformation from institutions and their stakeholders must invest accordingly, lest hegemony prevail, and human reality remain a mere shadow of its possibility.

The awake people of today’s global society must meet disorienting dilemmas with critical reflection on the assumptions and actions in themselves and their communities. They must create reflective discourse and reconceptualize their possibilities for action that is more inclusive, differentiating, open to other viewpoints, critically reflective of assumptions, emotionally capable of change, and integrative of experience” (Mezirow, 2000, pp. 7-8).

They must take action to address the poverty of contemporary culture—evident in schools and other cultural institutions that continue to unequally distribute cultural capital, lest through inaction, they perpetuate the crisis of richness of potential and poverty of understanding in American society. The awake dual citizens must work as outsiders inside institutions to create new contexts of meaningful learning in the more than 4,000 colleges and universities throughout this country, and intentionally sojourn to transform often disparate realities of richness and poverty, consciousness and hegemony.

Colleges and universities are ideal settings for educators to serve as dual citizens and foster transformative learning among the young, so they may grow to be the transformed citizens and decision makers of campuses, neighborhoods, regions, states, nations, continents, and this planet.

Stafford’s (1993) poem entitled “A Ritual To Read To Each Other” articulates the profound importance and counterhegemonic power of transformative learning. May
Stafford’s message affirm all who labor to promote a meaningful degree of understanding in their societies, institutions, peers, students, and selves—so the richness of American society may contribute to newfound richness in postmodern education and understanding.

_A Ritual to Read to Each Other_

If you don’t know the kind of person I am
and I don’t know the kind of person you are
a pattern that others have made may prevail in the world
and following the wrong god home, we may miss our star.

For there is many a small betrayal in the mind,
a shrug that lets the fragile sequence break
sending with shouts the horrible errors of childhood
storming out to play through the broken dyke.

As elephants parade holding each elephant’s tail,
but if one wanders the circus won’t find the park,
I call it cruel and maybe the root of all cruelty
to know what occurs but not recognize the fact.

And so I appeal to a voice, to something shadowy,
a remote important region in all who talk:
though we could fool each other, we should consider—
lest the parade of our mutual life get lost in the dark.

For it is important that awake people be awake,
or a breaking line may discourage them back to sleep;
the signals we give—yes or no, or maybe—should be clear:
the darkness around us is deep. (Stafford, 1993)
Recommendations

Further study of transformative learning may be useful in fostering a greater degree of meaningful understanding among college students. In doing so, the following methodological, population, and theoretical considerations may be of use.

Methodology

While this study was based on a concurrent mixed methodology design, future studies might explore sequential mixed method designs, beginning with a survey and following with selected interviews. As employing a mixed methodology design provides multiple information sources and approaches, performing full statistical analysis of quantitative findings before initiating qualitative interviews may provide opportunities to more fully explore quantitative findings through qualitative interviews.

Future studies may also expand research questions to explore the experiences of students who report an absence of transformative learning in their college experience. Within this population, surveys and interview questions probing their experiences among Herbers’ four quadrants of transformative learning may enable better understanding of how to foster transformative learning for all students.

Moreover, a longitudinal study of higher education graduates may reveal reflections, illuminate understandings, and illustrate behavior changes that are not yet fully actualized in currently enrolled students.

Participants

While this study involved approximately 150 college students, slightly more than one third of the sample reported transformative learning experiences. A larger number of
participants may enable more extensive statistical analysis of interpersonal and intrapersonal perspective reframing.

Additionally, a large population featuring greater demographic diversity—including ethnicity, age, highest degree earned, and intended education licensure—might similarly enable further demographic analysis of learning experiences among all learners.

In order to communicate meaningfully with populations of greater demographic diversity—such as the preservice teachers from Fond du Lac Tribal College who were invited to take part in this study—important considerations must be made. First, it is advisable to appear in person to explain the significance of the study, request participation, and leave descriptive materials for further review. While this study did these things, listening to students’ interests and values, then identifying where their values are reflected in the study may build essential trust. Furthermore, sending reminders encouraging participation and reminding students of the importance, confidentiality, and opportunity for anonymity in the study may construct sufficient rapport and safety for greater participation in transformative learning research. Additionally, conducting focus groups with prospective research participants may also inform a researcher’s process, format, and content for optimal ease of response.

Theoretical Exploration

Daloz’s (2000) research-based conditions that support transformative learning appear to have much to offer to future research. These include: (a) the presence of others who embody difference, (b) reflective discourse regarding the differing assumptions of
each, (c) a community of mentorship, and (d) opportunities for committed action.

Daloz’s work, along with Cranton’s (1994) *Understanding and Promoting Transformative Learning*, provide an essential pedagogical framework for developing this study’s synthesized Theory of Transformative Action and Assessment.

Finally, future transformative learning research might join E. Taylor (1994) in further exploring the richness of the interdisciplinary relationship between transformative learning and intercultural competence. The Intercultural U Curve Hypothesis offers a half-century worth of research and findings on how to use critical reflection and rational dialogue to guide individuals through disorienting experiences into newfound citizenship of multiple, often disparate worlds.
REFERENCES


Transformative Understanding 155


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APPENDIX A

Pre-survey contact letter to instructors

Dear Dr. ______________:  

I contact you to request your participation with research regarding the presence of transformative learning among teacher licensure candidates at your institution. Mezirow (2000), explains transformative learning as a process in which "we learn to negotiate and act on our own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those we have uncritically assimilated from others—to gain greater control over our lives as socially responsible, clear-thinking decision makers. (p. 8)

The purpose of this study is to determine: (1) to what extent teacher education students in higher education are experiencing transformative learning in their college education; (2) what interpersonal and intrapersonal components of transformative learning theory students are experiencing; and (3) what the effects of such transformative learning experiences are in current behavior.

I am convinced that research regarding transformative learning in teacher education is significant, as it provides higher education stakeholders with a clearer understanding about the degree to which teacher education candidates are developing what Daloz (1990) calls proactive thinking, incorporating multiple perspectives, and encouraging dialogue and construction of knowledge.

This research project is grounded in the literature of transformative learning theory. Methodologically, this research project triangulates quantitative data analysis with qualitative analysis of phenomenological interviews.

I am requesting your helping advancing the understanding of transformative learning in teacher licensure programs. In order to do so, I request that you consider joining neighboring teacher education programs in participating in this study. If you agree, I would be grateful for your help in introducing and administering a survey to the senior year teacher licensure candidates at your institution. I have enclosed a sample of the instructions, a student contact letter, the survey, and a request form for follow-up interviews.

With your approval, together we can better serve our students’ learning, our profession’s insights, and our institutions’ understandings of transformative learning in teacher licensure programs. I would be pleased to be able to share with you the results of this study.

Thank you for reviewing the enclosed materials. I will contact you regarding your availability to help accomplish this important research.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Glisczinski
University of Minnesota Duluth
Department of Education
Email: dglisczi@d.umn.edu
APPENDIX B

Pre-survey contact letter to participants

Dear students:

In an upcoming class period, your class will be participating in a survey regarding the presence of transformative learning among teacher licensure candidates at your institution. Educators and theorists explain transformative learning in the following way:

Transformative Theory's focus is on how we learn to negotiate and act on our own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those we have uncritically assimilated from others—to gain greater control over our lives as socially responsible, clear-thinking decision makers. (Mezirow, 2000, p. 8)

This survey is part of a research project which seeks to understand: (1) to what extent teacher education students in higher education are experiencing transformative learning in their college education, (2) which interpersonal and intrapersonal components of transformative learning theory students are experiencing, and (3) what the effects of such as transformative learning experiences are in current behavior.

I am convinced that this research is significant because it provides students, educators and decision makers with a clearer understanding of the degree to which teacher education candidates are developing proactive thinking, ability to use multiple perspectives, and encouraging dialogue for construction of knowledge.

I am requesting your help advancing understanding of transformative learning in teacher licensure candidates. In order to do so, I would like you consider your experiences as a teacher education student, so you may record your thoughts on the survey—which your class will take in an upcoming class period. The survey is attached for you to preview. In addition to the survey, I will be seeking volunteers to do follow-up interviews regarding their learning experiences in teacher education. Please consider signing up as a potential interviewee after you take your survey. Unless you designate otherwise, all survey information and findings will be anonymous.

Thank you for your thoughtful participation in this research. I appreciate your help and value your contribution to meaningful teaching and learning.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Glisczinski
University of Minnesota Duluth
Email: dglisczi@d.umn.edu
APPENDIX C

SURVEY OF LEARNING EXPERIENCES
Survey number:

This survey is part of a research project about the experiences of teacher education students. Educators believe that important things happen when students learn new things. Only with your help can we learn more about this. The survey takes only a short time to complete, and your responses will be anonymous and confidential. Thank you for being part of this project; your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

1. Thinking about all of your experiences at this institution, check off any statements that may apply.

☐ a. I had an experience that caused me to question the way I normally act.
☐ b. I had an experience that caused me to question my ideas about social roles.
   (Examples include what a teacher should do or how a student should act.)
☐ c. As I questioned my ideas, I realized I no longer agreed with my previous beliefs or role expectations.
☐ d. Or instead, as I questioned my ideas, I realized that I still agreed with my previous beliefs or role expectations.
☐ e. I realized that other people also questioned their beliefs.
☐ f. I thought about acting in a different way from my usual beliefs and roles.
☐ g. I felt uncomfortable with traditional social expectations.
☐ h. I tried out new roles so I would become more comfortable or confident in them.
☐ i. I tried to figure out a way to adopt these new ways of acting.
☐ j. I began to think about the reactions and feedback from my new behavior.
☐ k. I do not identify with any of the statements above.

2. Since you have been enrolled at this institution, do you believe you have experienced a time when you realized that your values, beliefs, opinions, or expectations had changed?
   Yes _____ If “Yes,” please go to question 3 and continue the survey.
   No _____ If “No,” please go to question 10 to continue the survey

3. Please briefly describe what happened. If you are thinking about multiple events or if you would like to explain your experience in greater detail, please note this below and use as much of the reverse side of this page as you wish.
4. As a result of this change, I think differently about other people’s assumptions. Yes _____ No _____

If “Yes,” do you think differently about other people’s . . . (check all that apply)
- Concepts
- Beliefs
- Feelings
- Actions
- Other: ____________________________

5. As a result of this change, I think differently about my own assumptions. Yes _____ No _____

If “Yes,” do you think differently about your own . . . (check all that apply)
- Concepts
- Beliefs
- Feelings
- Actions
- Other: ____________________________

6. As the result of your experience when your values, beliefs, opinions, or expectations had changed, do you think your perspective changed? Yes _____ No _____

If “Yes,” do you think your perspective changed regarding . . . (check all that apply)
- Other people
- Myself
- Other:

- ____________________________

7. Please briefly describe how your thinking about other people’s assumptions and your thinking about your own assumptions has changed. Please use the space below, or use as much of the reverse side of this page as you wish.

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Page 2 of 3
8. As the result of your experience when your concepts, beliefs, feelings, or actions had changed, do you think your behavior has changed?
Yes _____ No _____

If “Yes,” do you think your behavior is now more . . . (check all that apply)
- open to other viewpoints
- critically reflective
- free to change
- differentiating
- integrative of experience
- considerate of social justice
- proactive
- active in constructing knowledge
- directed toward the search for truth

9. Please briefly describe how your behavior has changed. Please use the space below and use as much of the reverse side of this page as you wish.

10. Sex:  □ Female  □ Male

11. Marital status  □ Single  □ Married  □ Divorced/separated

12. Ethnicity  □ Native American  □ Asian or Pacific Islander  □ Black
□ Hispanic  □ White  □ Other: ____________________

13. Program:  □ Special Education  □ Early Childhood Education
□ Elementary Education  □ Secondary Education

14. Prior education:  □ High school diploma  □ Associate’s Degree
□ Bachelor’s Degree  □ Master’s Degree or beyond
□ Other: ____________________

15. How many semesters have you been enrolled at this institution? __________

□ 40-49  □ 50-59  □ 60-69  □ Over 70

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.
Please consider volunteering for a possible follow-up interview to discuss your experiences. Your instructor has volunteer sign-up sheets.
APPENDIX D

Survey Instructions: Adapted from King (1997)

Dear Dr. _____________:

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research. The instructions for conducting the survey follow.

1. Please read the following to the class before the surveys are distributed.

"From the researcher:

This survey is part of a research project about the experiences of learners in teacher education programs. We believe that important things happen when individuals learn new things. Only with your help can we learn more about this.

The survey only takes a short time to complete, and your responses will remain anonymous unless you choose to volunteer for a follow up interview; data collected from the survey will be presented as a group so that the identity of any one participant will not be revealed, unless you choose to do so by signing up for a follow-up interview. Thank you for being part of this project; your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

As participants, you are also invited to take part in a follow-up interview. Those who are interested should please fill out and return the separate form for this purpose. The form is labeled "Sign-up form for follow-up interviews."

Space is provided on the sign-up form, should you wish to submit questions about the survey to the researcher."

2. The surveys and related forms should be distributed, completed, and placed in the envelope provided.

3. Please fill in the following: School ____________________________

Date ____________________________

Number of students in this survey

4. Please complete and insert this page into the envelope. I will collect these results at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for your help. If you would like to receive more information about the research findings, please write your address below.

Sincerely,
Daniel J. Glisczinski
University of Minnesota Duluth—Department of Education
Email: dglisczi@d.umn.edu
APPENDIX E

Sign-up form for follow-up interviews

Adapted from King (1997)

As a participant in this survey, you are also invited to take part in a follow-up interview. If you are interested in doing so, please fill out and return this form to your survey administrator. Space is also provided on this form to submit questions about the survey to the researcher.

Please note that this form will be turned in separately in order for you to remain anonymous in the survey process. Only by volunteering for a follow-up interview will your name and survey number be recorded, so that you may be contacted if your survey is selected by the researcher.

☐ Yes, I am willing to participate in an interview regarding the educational experiences described in the survey.

☐ No, I would not like to participate in the follow-up interview process.

If you answered "Yes," Dan Glisczinski, at the University of Minnesota Duluth's Department of Education, may contact you.

Name:

Survey number:

Email:

Telephone:

Questions for the researcher:

Thank you,

Daniel J. Glisczinski
University of Minnesota Duluth
Department of Education
Email: dglisczi@d.umn.edu
APPENDIX F

Post-survey interview instrument
Adapted from King (1997)

NAME

Date
College or University

Description of Process:

What follows is an anticipated structure for phenomenological interviews with selected participants regarding their experiences with transformative learning in teacher education programs.

Prepared Introduction:

Thank you for agreeing to speak with me about your learning experiences in your teacher education program. My aim is to better understand teacher education students’ experiences with perspective transformation in higher education. The purpose of this interview is to provide you with questions that allow you to speak about your learning experiences in teacher education, so that higher education may come to better understand perspective transformation in teacher education programs. While I am happy to direct the interview, I invite you to speak about whatever comes to mind during this interview.

Regarding Audio Recording:

May I record our conversation on audiotape so I can listen freely to your experiences and then take notes on these later? Thanks.

Interview Questions:

1. Focused life history

   - Please tell me about you and your life before your teacher education program.
   - In what ways has your upbringing influenced your life choices?
   - Tell me about the dynamics of your life that placed you where you are today.
   - What brought you to your chosen college?
   - What experiences and attributes have strongly influenced you?
   - What might you tell me about that would help me understand who you are?
   - What else should I know about you?
2. Present experiences

- Please tell me a story about a deep or powerful learning in your college experience.
- In your survey you mentioned experiences that caused you to question your thoughts, assumptions, or behavior. Help me understand what was going on.
- To what extent was your questioning based on reflecting on other people’s assumptions, ideas, behavior, choices? Please describe this for me.
- To what extent was your questioning based on reflecting on your own assumptions, ideas, behavior, choices? Please describe this for me.
- What else should I know to help me understand learning that has changed your perspective?

3. Significance of experiences; making sense of these

- Tell me about the ways your deep or powerful learning experiences have affected your behavior: as a student, as a teacher, as an individual.
- Tell me a story that illustrates how your behavior has changed as a student, as a teacher, as an individual.
- What in your student life is different because of the powerful learning experience(s)?
- What in your personal life is different because of the powerful learning experience(s)?
- What in your teaching life is different because of the powerful learning experience(s)?
- What else should I know to help me understand the impact of your transformative experiences?

Interview closure

Thank you for helping me better understand your experiences with perspective transformation in teacher education.
APPENDIX G

Consent Form
Transformative Teacher Education: A Meaningful Degree Of Understanding

You are invited to be in a research study of the degree to which teacher education programs are transforming future educators into individuals capable of negotiating and acting on their own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than which have been uncritically assimilated from others—in order to act as socially responsible, clear-thinking decision makers.

You were selected as a possible participant because you are enrolled in a teacher education program. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in this study. This study is being conducted by Dan Glisczinski from the University of Minnesota Duluth’s Department of Education.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to better understand transformative learning experiences in post-secondary teacher education programs.

Procedures:

If you agree to be interviewed, I would ask you to participate in a series of up to three audio taped interviews that would be conducted in the months following the completion of your survey. You are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

The study has several risks: You may reflect deeply enough about your potential as an educator that you feel guilty for not being able to accomplish everything you want to in your students’ lives. You may choose to terminate your involvement with this study at any time.

The benefits to participation are: You may reflect deeply enough about your potential as an educator that you feel encouraged and supported in changing your students’ lives.
Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to the records. Only the researcher will have access to audio recordings of volunteers’ follow-up interviews. These will be erased at the conclusion of the study.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota or your college of teacher education. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Dan Glisczinski. You may ask any questions you have now.

If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at
120 Montague Hall
UMD Department of Education
Duluth, MN, 55812
Telephone: 218 726 7610
Email: dglisczi@d.umn.edu

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the Research Subjects’ Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: __________________________ Date: ______________

Signature of Investigator: __________________________ Date: ______________
APPENDIX H:

Codes and Themes from Qualitative Analysis of In-Depth Phenomenological Interviews

Codes:

- Modest roots
- Worked for what they have
- Epiphany of illness*
- Developed talent
- Developed leadership
- Critical reflection on faith*
- Critical reflection on conservative background*
- Seeking multiple perspectives
- Reflective response to adversity
- Critical reflection on classes as change agents
- Critical reflection on others' limited perspectives
- Cycles of transformation
- Pursuing diverse experiences
- Engaging ambiguity
- Existential perspective
- Could not not act on understandings

Themes:

1. Developed awareness and respect for dual citizens of disparate worlds--especially selves
2. Sought contextual understanding
3. Became intentional sojourners

*Codes not developed into themes