

Transformative Education
IU Southeast
Academy of Diversity and Inclusive Education (ADIE)
July 2012

Contents

- I. Why Teach With Transformative Education Theory?
- II. How Can I as a Faculty Member Foster Transformative Thinking?
- III. Strategies and Resources to Use in the Classroom
- IV. Stances of Transformative Learning
- V.
 - x Transformative learning gives adult learners the ability to think autonomously, that is, to think as individuals. It allows learners to develop their own sense of meaning in the world free from the accepted purposes, beliefs, judgments, values, and feelings that we received from our cultures, religions, family beliefs, personalities, and life experiences.
 - x Autonomous thinking is vital for full participation in a democratic society as well as for moral decision making (Mezirow, 1997, p. 7); thus, it is the goal of higher education

⌘

x Transformative Education Theory supports the IU Southeast Strategic Objective 3.2,

x Individual

- o Reflect on how past emotional experiences influence the learning process
- o Practice making observations and reflections
- o Write to make connects and reflections
- o Apply critical thinkers and knowledge seeking
- o Writing into Your Course
- o Chapel Hill Writing Center
- o Create a web diagram that is used for sharing information
- o Concept Map
- o Practice specific observations, case studies are developed based on Penn State
- o Practice individualized learning
- o Practice instructor to relinquish some control to learners
- o Contracts in the College Classroom

Lecture is the method of teaching in which the instructor presents information to students. After a while, students were hired as subject matter experts, so with students having the opportunity to learn directly from the field. In many instances, it is possible to find a way to conduct transformative learning. Lecture using the classroom this session.

IV. Stances of Transformative Learning

Below appear a number of stances with literature, each with its own focus, approach, and adaptability as a more specific entry into

x Cultural-Spiritual

- o Focus of the Theory
 - f Focuses on how learners connect to transformative learning experiences
 - f Concerned with the connections between structures (Tisdell, 2005 as cited in)

- o Approach
 - f* Engaging storytelling on a personal and social level through group inquiry (Taylor, 2008, p. 9)
 - f* Teacher takes on the role of collaborator with an emphasis on group inquiry and narrative reasoning (Taylor, 2008, p. 9)
- o Purpose
 - f* Helps learners develop crosscultural relationships as well as spiritual awareness (Taylor, 2008, p. 9)
- x Neurobiological
 - o Focus of the Theory
 - f* Based on the discovery that the brain structure actually changes during the learning process (Taylor, 2008, p. 8)
 - f* Learning is seen as volitional, curiosity-based, discovery-driven, and mentor-assisted (Janik, 2005 as cited in Taylor, 2008, p. 8)
 - o Approach
 - f* Learners must feel discomfort prior to discovery (Janik, 2005 as cited in Taylor, 2008, p. 8)
 - f* Learning is rooted in the individuals' experiences, needs, and interests (Janik, 2005 as cited in Taylor, 2008, p. 8)
 - f* Strengthened by emotive, sensory, and kinesthetic experiences (Janik, 2005 as cited in Taylor, 2008, p. 8)
 - o Purpose
 - f* Helps individual learners restructure the ways that they make meaning in the world
- x Phenomenological (Wyandotte and Huh, 2012)
 - o Focus of the Theory
 - f* Intellectual, psychological, and moral dimensions of learning foster personal and social change (Wyandotte and Huh, 2012)
 - o Approach
 - f* Learners prepare themselves as knowers, doers, and beings to live meaningfully in the world with others (Wyandotte and Huh, 2012)
 - o Purpose
 - f* Develop learners' consciousness of their own and others' thoughts, language, and reasoning, allowing them to direct their thinking more strategically to specific intentions (Wyandotte and Huh, 2012, p. 8)
- x Planetary
 - o Focus of the Theory
 - f* Address fundamental issues in the field of education as a whole (O'Sullivan, 1999 as cited in Taylor, 2008, p. 9)
 - f* Recognizes the interconnectedness among universe, planet, natural environment, human community, and personal world (Taylor, 2008, p. 9)

- o Approach
 - f Reorganization of the political, social, and educational systems in which learners belong (Taylor, 2008, p. 9)
 - o Purpose
 - f Helps the learner identify how they view human counterparts as well as how they relate with the physical world (Taylor, 2008, p. 10)
- x Psychoanalytic
- o Focus of the Theory
 - f A process of individuation, a lifelong journey of coming to understand oneself (Taylor, 2008, p. 7)
 - f Psychoanalytic theories originated with the work of Sigmund Freud
 - o Approach
 - f Individuals come to understand their identity through reflection on psychic structure (Taylor, 2008, p. 7)
 - o Purpose
 - f Helps individuals discover new talents
 - f Gives individuals a sense of empowerment and confidence and deeper understanding of one's inner self, and a greater sense of self-responsibility (Taylor, 2008, p. 7)
- x Psychocritical or Cognitive-Rational (Mezirow, 1997)
- o Focus of the Theory
 - f Aims at effecting change in a frame of reference which develops autonomous thinking in adult learners (Mezirow, 1997, p. 5)
 - f Focus is on the individual learner through self, and a greater

- f* Examines how education can help students make sense of their lives (Baumgartner, 2001, p. 17)
 - o Approach
 - f* Intuitive, holistic, and contextually based (Baumgartner, 2001, p. 17).
 - f* Mentor guides students in a learning journey affected by the student's social environment (Baumgartner, 2001, p. 17)
 - o Purpose
 - f* Students are able to move through developmental transitions and are changed in the process (Baumgartner, 2001, p. 17)
- x Race-Centric
 - o Focus of the Theory
 - f* People of African descent, most often black women, are the subjects of the transformative experience (Taylor, 2008, p. 9)
 - f* Emphasizes the social-political dimensions

V. Annotated Bibliography of Resources

Many of the resources listed below were used in the creation of this web document. Each article offers valuable information for faculty members wishing to engage in transformative education pedagogy. The articles were chosen in an effort to include the various stances of transformative education theory as well as offer suggestions for further research.

- x Baumgartner, L. M. (2001). An update on transformational learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 2001(89), 15-24.
 - o Written by Dr. Lisa Baumgartner, Associate Professor of Adult and Higher Education at Northern Illinois University, this article provides a brief history of transformational learning through 4 lenses: conscious processing, cognitive rational, developmental, and spiritual. Baumgartner describes how a traditional view of transformational learning, which was developed by Jack Mezirow, has been expanded and includes practical suggestions for fostering transformational learning for groups. Dr. Baumgartner's article is a easy read and may be useful to any faculty member wishing to incorporate group strategies to foster transformative learning in their classroom.
 - o <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ace.4/pdf>

- x Cranton, P.A. (2002). Teaching for transformation. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 93, 63-71.
 - o Dr. Patricia A. Cranton, Visiting Professor of Adult Education at State University- Harrisburg, provides an overview of transformative learning theory and offers suggestions for faculty members to set up a classroom that is conducive to transformation. Cranton describes how transformative learning theory has evolved from a linear process to a more spiraling process and outlines 7 facets with associated teaching strategies that can be used to set up a learning environment that promotes transformation. Cranton describes each teaching strategy in simple terms and offers examples of how each has the potential to be transformative but cautions that no teaching method guarantees transformation. An expert on authenticity in

been expanded to include approaches such as affective (emotional),
extrarational (imaginative) and experiential (response to life experience).
Cranton and Roy's article is worthwhile for faculty members wishing to engage
more fully in the varying perspectives of transformative learning; however, the
article is theoretical in nature, offering limited suggestions for practical teaching
strategies.

- o <http://jtd.sagepub.com/content/1/2/86.full.pdf+html>
- x Cranton, P.A. (2006). Fostering authentic relationships in the transformative classroom. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2006(109), 5-13.
- o

science related courses may make this article more appealing to faculty members in the hard sciences.

- o <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/CTL/cgi-bin/docs/newsletter/transformation.pdf>
- x Mezirow, J. (1997). Transformative learning: Theory to practice. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 74, 5-12.
 - o Authored by Dr Jack Mezirow, Emeritus Professor of Adult and Continuing Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, this article provides a detailed description of the cognitive

transformative learning. Dr. Mezirow's article is an easy read and is recommended for educators that wish to learn more about his cognitive approach to transformative learning.

- o <http://www.transformativelearning.org/index/TLCProceeding2003.pdf>
- x Taylor, E.W. (2001). Transformative learning theory: A neurobiological perspective of the role of emotions and unconscious ways of knowing. *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 20(3), 218-236.
 - o Dr. Edward W. Taylor, professor of Adult Education at Penn State University – Harrisburg, outlines the relationship between emotions and reason and the role that implicit memory plays in transformative learning theory. Dr. Taylor identifies

