Conceiving the Experience of Dilemmas as a Rhythmic Feature Shaping the Temporalities of Transformative Learning
Michel Alhadeff-Jones

Assuming that transformative learning may be triggered by the experience of dilemmas (Mezirow, 1991), the aim of this paper is to explore how to conceive their inscription in time. If transformation requires time to unfold, one may indeed question how to interpret the temporalities inherent to the experience of dilemmas and how do they impact a process of transformation.

The reference made to the emergence of ‘disorienting dilemmas’ tends to privilege an understanding of transformative learning as a process provoked by discontinuities emerging within the life continuum. Mezirow’s original contribution, as well as current research around the temporalities of emancipatory learning (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017) show however that the temporalities of transformative learning should not be reduced to their discontinuous aspects. Transformative processes are inscribed in learning and developmental dynamics (including the exercise of dialogue and critical self-reflection) that are simultaneously continuous and discontinuous. Such dynamics display rhythmic features.

Adopting a rhythmological framework (Bachelard, 1950; Lefebvre, 1992/2004; Michon, 2005; Sauvanet, 2000), the aim of this paper is to explore the relationships between the experience of dilemmas and the way they may influence transformative processes, considering their temporal dimensions. The main assumption is that the impact that dilemmas may have on the learner differs depending on their rhythmic features, i.e., the way they are inscribed in time. Therefore, any educational praxis aiming at fostering or reflecting on transformative learning would gain from an analysis of the rhythmic dimensions inherent to the experience of dilemmas.
Conceptualizing the experience of a dilemma as a rhythmic phenomenon suggests one to conceive it through three dimensions (Sauvanet, 2000): the patterns it displays (e.g., the disorienting experience of an antagonism, a tension or a conflict), the frequency through which such an experience is repeated) (i.e., its periodicity), and the singularity or the irregularities that characterize its inscription in the life course (i.e., its movement). Accordingly, the process of transformative learning will depend not only on the nature of the dilemmas experienced (e.g., conflict of values, conflict of loyalty), but also based on the way they are repeated through time (e.g., every day or at a specific period), and when specifically, they emerge in the life course (e.g., concurring with other events, at a particular stage of one’s life). Finally, from a developmental perspective, such a reflection will suggest one to consider transformative learning as a singular process that always occur at a specific pace, depending on the rhythmic features that characterize the subject’s own life history (Dominicé, 2000).

Exploring the Dilemmas Triggered by the Practice of Life History Seminar: the Value of Working at the Edge
Michel Alhadeff-Jones, Hervé Breton & Linden West

This symposium articulates the contributions of three seasoned practitioners (from three different countries) using life history and auto/biographical approaches as a method to reflect on significant life experiences (including transformational ones), and eventually trigger shifts in meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1991) among learners in the context of adult and higher education (e.g., Dominicé, 2000; West, Alheit, Andersen & Merrill, 2007). Assuming the potential value inherent to the experience of dilemmas, as a catalyst for learning, growth and development (Mezirow, 1991), the aim of this symposium is to discuss the conditions in which there is real educational value, and those that eventually prevent meaningful learning from occurring.

The reflection will be conducted from two points of view. From the learner’s perspective, questions will be formulated regarding the choices and tensions involved in the process of generating material for and writing an auto/biographical narrative. Dilemmas regarding the selection of experiences to be included, people to be interviewed, the format of the narrative, the problematic boundary between doing educational biography and explicitly therapeutic processes, or what levels of description to adopt, will be discussed considering their educational value and their influence on perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1991). From the practitioner’s point of view, questions will be formulated regarding the dilemmas involved in the implementation and the facilitation of life history seminars. The reception of participants’ tales, the necessity to choose between competing interpretive frameworks, the options available to facilitate an inclusive dialogue between learners with heterogeneous backgrounds, or the tensions inherent in the different temporalities involved in the organization and the experience of the process, will be analysed.

Based on the professional experiences shared by the three of us, we will finally question the potential benefits of discussing in the classroom the connections between the learners’ dilemmas – emerging from the task of generating, writing and sharing their autobiographical narrative – and the practitioners’ ones, related to the implementation of a containing environment for them to proceed openly as well as critically. Doing so, we will discuss the transformational value inherent in the experience of dilemmas, as they may simultaneously be encountered and reflected on by learners and practitioners.

Adult Education and Change in Organisations
Remos Armaos & Anna Tsiboukli

Transformative learning has received considerable attention in organizational settings the last few years in Greece. However, the transformative learning approach in organizations cannot be seen separate from group psychodynamics that influence organisational life especially more so at turbulent times. Jack Mezirow’s concept on changing personal false assumptions and developing critical thinking in organizational settings could be employed along Harold
Harold Bridger's notion of a transitional approach to change and group psychodynamics. Harold Bridger is concerned with the various groups that operate within organizational settings and suggests that the transitional approach to change is psychodynamic and operates in two levels, the social level and the psychic level of an organization. The social level refers to all aspects of organizational life including structure, culture, norms and rules. The psychic level concerns the organizational values, assumptions, anxiety, fear, defence mechanisms, illusions and ways of thinking of the various groups that form an organization. Mezirow focuses on change of personal assumptions. In organizational settings both are needed for transition, transformation and change to occur. Change, personal or organizational always requires a facilitating environment according to Winnicott’s original idea and this is more so at crisis times. The facilitating environment that handles anxiety is important in order to connect the internal with the external world and find the meaning in between. It also requires a space with proper boundaries and a zone of free movement in order to achieve the transition to change.

Harold Bridger, based on Winnicott’s original theory, argued that a transitional space is needed in order to give groups and individuals the opportunity to explore emotionally the process of change, especially at crisis times and to allow the organization to overcome crisis and move to a new phase of development. However, he argues that organizations should find their own answers to their dilemmas as Mezirow argues that person’s should confront their disorienting dilemmas. In this process at the group setting, three are the significant elements: tuning in, working-through and design. Tuning in, is the ability of an organization to understand the external environment and acknowledge the new circumstances that arise. Tuning in becomes harder when the external environment is turbulent, unpredictable and uncertain. Working-through refers to the ability of an organization to open up and research new stimuli. Design allows groups in organizations to visualize what they would like to achieve according to organization identity and culture. Mezirow presents ten stages of personal change. Bridger presents three stages of organizational change. In today’s turbulent environment fixation to old practices and fear of collapse are always present. Transformative learning becomes a distant goal when the environment no longer facilitates the process. Resistance to change, illusions, anxiety and fear of collapse dominate. Jack Mezirow’s theory of disorienting dilemmas and false assumptions and Harold Bridger’s transitional approach to change requires a participative educational environment and an experiential method approach.

This paper suggests that both theories could be employed in organizational settings for developing a learning culture and achieving change at the personal and organizational level. The paper presents as a paradigm a relevant case study from a drug treatment organization in Greece.

**From Disorienting Dilemmas to Emancipatory Lifelong Learning Experiences: Study of Autoformation Kairos**

Magali Balayn

The proposed submission aims to describe the conceptual work carried out as part of a doctoral research about processes of emancipation and authorization in adult learning. This research focuses on professionals involved in continuing education projects, more specifically projects that promote experiential learning approaches. It seeks to shed light on the emancipation processes that unfold during learning, as well as their determinants. Professionals sometimes feel illegitimate, not meeting the requirements of their position, and this feeling may reinforce in specific situations. This could be the trigger for starting a training project, as a means of narrowing the perceived gap: ‘According to Mezirow, every destabilizing situation can be a disorienting dilemma from which adult training could enable a transformative learning therefore an emancipating activity’ (Jouy, 1997, my translation). Transformative learning is seen as the counterpart, in the field of self-training, to the Hegelian concept of alienation as estrangement (Entfremdung) and externalization (Entäusserung) (Fischbach, 2008). The ‘empty’ and ‘insubstantial self’, in Hegel’s words, can be seen as an occurrence of the disorienting dilemma that conditions the dialogical process.
Indeed, while experiencing training situations and if encouraged, the subject initiates a dialogue with the dilemma though critical self-expression and self-objectification as in the Hegelian process.

The problematisation Fabre (Fabre, 2006) described on the basis of Dewey’s ‘logic of inquiry’ is conceived as a kind of externalization without losing sight of the goal: « an indeterminate situation can not ipso facto be called problematic, but only trough the inquiry: calling it problematic is the first step of the inquiry and it is precisely addressing the problem », what we depict as stepping back in perspective. The subject is therefore able to question his frames of reference. This research especially analyses links between perceived dilemma and entering learning: how does the subject seize the opportunity to problematize the dilemma?

According to the first hypothesis of this research, the disorienting dilemma may be combined with a desire to ‘find solutions’ or the need for a ‘framework for reflection’. Furthermore, discussions with adults in training suggest that these stances can come along with questions about self-positioning and professional or personal posture.

In order to identify these defining moments and understand their role in the emancipation process, we rely on the analysis of self-education kairos (Galvani, 2011). Analysing these pivotal moments helps unveil both emancipation and transformation processes. The subject either experiences awareness or initiates an action. Our inquiry among subjects in training will intend to bring such kairos to light, to understand their conditions of emergence and analyse them.

This study will help understand how the subject happened to experience a disorienting dilemma, which initiated the whole process. In addition, the methodology used will enable the respondents to engage in an analysis of their own experience, for instance by the means of life history.

The City and Its Dilemmas: for a Contemporary Interpretation
Nadia Bassano

Today, the complexity of living together requires to look for new ways to understand our life-context, that is finding different paths and proposal to interpret and re-produce reality (Gadamer, 1972).

Even cities are affected by the contemporary ‘global crisis’, crossing throughout transformations referring both to urbanistic-architectural features and to the concept of city itself (Hall, 2003).

This work, reading the city to pedagogical purposes, addresses on: primarily, rebuilding the polymorphic reality of city from multiple perspectives; secondly, outlining some educational possibilities, starting from the emerging resources. Hence, the study focuses on defining, from an interdisciplinary point of view, the contemporary city throughout its ‘radical’ contradictions, to enlighten not only its politic - and conflictive - nature, but also the transformational power conveyed by those items, intrinsic to the town ‘from the moment of its foundation’ (Mumford, 1977, p. 689).

In literature many authors, describing city throughout dilemmas, captured its essence across features overcoming time and space limits: ‘Objective’ versus ‘Subjective Spirit’ (Simmel, 1903); Local versus Global tension (Sassen, 2014); ‘Space of Places’ versus ‘Space of Flows’ (Castells, 2004) are just few examples. Nevertheless, general reflections on city can overall be retrieved to an ‘original dilemma’, characterizing the history and the stories on cities since their dawn: Pòlis versus Civitas.

This primary dilemma, far from representing simply a linguistic distinction, puts in contradiction two histories, two cultures, two different conceptions of space and inhabiting: then, it suggests two diverse ideas of city and citizenship and, accordingly, of humanity (Lazzarini, 2014).

The idea of Pòlis, related to ancient Greek city-states (Hansen, 2009), refers to a small limited context, focused on maintaining clear boundaries, preserving the ‘original community’ constituted by the ancestry: Pòlis pre-exists to its citizens. On the contrary, the idea of Civitas,
exemplified by the ancient Rome, is guided from the aim of a geographical and demographic expansion: it embraces, still, the idea of welcoming and including new citizens, minded to submit to the common Roman Law (Bénveniste, 2004).

Those two conceptions, overcoming anachronism, express a dialectic tension existing in all urban contexts, which finally constitutes an inner feature of urban context itself, to whom other modern dilemmas can be referred (Cacciari, 2004).

Questioning our implicit conceptions about city from the ‘original dilemma’ allows to assume, avoiding to lean on extreme poles, Pòlis and Civitas as hermeneutic categories to reinterpret reality, to individuate whereabouts urban contemporary socio-cultural-human processes can be ascribed to.

Far from trying an improbable re-conciliation of the opposites, the ultimate purpose of this process could be to define new fruitful places of dialogue: the city can become, than, a space ‘in-between’ people (Arendt, 1998), in which instances of relation and separation, of inclusion and exclusion, of local and global, of Pòlis and Civitas ideas, can coexist in a generative, respectful, educational hub.

Dilemmas of Aging: Elderly People in India
Geetanjali Baswani, Pawan Sahu, Pushpa Kumari & Koshy Jacob

Traditionally in a prosperous society, elderly people are highly regarded, being old and experienced they have an important role to integrate society with their knowledge and skills. They nurture young ones by imparting good character and moral values, preserve cultural values, give advices regarding law and order to settle disputes. But, as the society modernizes, the traditional role that children have of taking care of their ageing parents is changing. Coupled with the pressure of working and taking care of their own families, more children find taking their ageing parents and relatives to old-age homes as the best option or opt for assisted living. They forget that old age is a sensitive phase; elderly people need care and comfort to lead a healthy life without worries and anxiety. Lack of awareness regarding the changing behavioral patterns in elderly people at home leads to abuse of them by their kin. Sometimes, old people are subject to abuse from family members over property dispute, some of them are even forced to sell their belongings and live in penury till death. Many of them are too scared to express themselves or fear being humiliated by their loved ones.

We have to understand that elders desire a life with good health, dignity, economic independence and finally a peaceful death. They long for care, love and affection. Understanding their needs and concerns, will ensure their good health. Lending an emotional support to the elders keep them jovial, which is inevitably the ideal way to live a healthy life. However, for many people, providing care and attention to elders is not possible due to work priorities and on the other hand many-a-times elders does not want to move away from the environment in which they have lived over a long time. According to cultural experts, changes in the structure of the society have left older people with challenges which were not previously experienced.

In the light of the above, the challenges faced by the elderly people would be understood to identify the dilemma experienced by them. The case study of 30 elderly people under three categories- a) living in old-age home, b) living in joint/extended family or c) living independently, would be done. The findings would assist the policy makers in their planning and effective & efficient implementation of the policies and the schemes for elderly people.

Psycho-Sociological Process and Sense-Making of Transformative Dilemmas in the Workplace
Eric Bertrand, Jérôme Eneau & Pierre Faller

This research is in continuation of the academic and research work led by LIRTES (Interdisciplinary Research Laboratory for Transformation in Educational and Social Practice – University of Paris Est Creteil) and CREAD (Research Center for Teaching, Learning and Didactic Practice – University of Rennes 2) which both hold a common interest in lifelong
training and the development of continuing education university programs supporting adult learning. The research which is being conducted this Spring focuses on the transformative journey of ten French organizational leaders of small and mid-sized companies. The purpose is to study the process of transformation and sense-making through their experience and learning of perceived dilemmas.

This research is also the opportunity to establish a more intentional bridge between North-American and French research and their complementary approach to transformative learning in the workplace. In the United States, research building on theories studying the individual development of psychological structures such as constructive-developmental theory (Kegan, 1982, 1994) tends to focus on the variations of perception and experience of dilemmas from an individual and subjective perspective. France tends to favour a psycho-sociological approach including an understanding of the contextual factors; the interest is ‘in the functioning of groups and organizations, in change processes, in power relations, in the understanding of psychological and social conflicts, in the relationships between research and social practices’ (Barus-Michel & Enriquez, 2002 p. 9). From this perspective, dilemmas are understood in their socio-organizational and intersubjective dimensions as those influence institutional dynamics and professional practices in place (Lourau, 1970; Hess & Savoye, 1993).

The authors therefore propose to create new bridges between those two lines of research through a multi-referential and critical approach. From an epistemological perspective, the goal is to produce knowledge on and for action. Practically, the development of new knowledge will impact the design of university adult learning and training programs on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

The first section of the paper presents the multi-referential model used by the authors to understand and analyse the question of ‘transformative dilemmas’ within a leader’s professional journey. The model integrates North-American concepts and research based on constructive-developmental theory (Kegan, 1982, 1994, 2000; Faller, 2014, 2017) and French psycho-sociological perspectives inspired by the influential ‘French Ecole Vincenneoise’ (Eneau, Bertrand & Lameul, 2012 ; Bertrand, 2011, 2014, 2015 ; Eneau, 2017).

The second section presents the research methodology and protocol as well as the preliminary exploratory findings related to the types of transformative dilemmas perceived by the leaders and the process of sense-making throughout their transformative journey. The last section opens to a discussion of the epistemological, methodological and pedagogical dimensions of our conceptual model and approach.

**Health Professions and Nursing Students: Facing a Contemporary Dilemma Between a Focus on Compassion or Technical Assistance. Transformative Learning as a Hypothesis to Cope to the De-idealization Training Path**

Natascia Bobbo & Silvia Lazzaro

According to WHO (2003) chronic diseases are increasing worldwide. Moreover, scientific progress of engineering and informatics applied to medicine has introduced many changes in health operators’ daily work, now characterized by technological devices for therapeutic and diagnostic targets in the critical settings. According to this, there is a sort of dichotomic aspect of health work, fluctuating between the human *care* and the technical cure (Williams et al., 2009). Working with a chronic patient who needs psycho-social support and human understanding requests compassion and ability to face suffering and death. On the other side, the cure of a critical patient requests the acquisition (and continuous update) of many technical skills in order to be efficient and rational during the emergency situations. But both kinds of patients, sometimes, request both kind of assistance.

**Study Design**

These considerations lead to understand if this dualism characterizes only health professionals or the health students too. So, we conducted a qualitative observational study that has involved a significant group of nursing students of the Padua University. Semi-structured interviews were realized between June to September 2015, involving freshmen and near to
Results
We interviewed 43 freshmen and 32 near-graduated students. The analysis of dialogues let to identify the presence of a dualism resulting more dichotomic among the younger than the older students. Freshman, especially females, are oriented to a sympathetic assistance, instead almost of all men have a technical and rational approach to the profession. The difference between young and older students may be linked to the quality of experiences lived throughout the three years. For example, during the stages a student faces some negative aspects of his future profession, many of his anticipations about nurse’s role could be destroyed: students who have an altruistic approach could not be ready to understand their older colleagues’ cynicism. Whereas, students who have a rational approach could not be able to face patient’s request of human compassion. Some students react to this empasse activating one or more psychological mechanisms of defence (denial, avoidance, etc.) Some others choose to not defend themselves, and to try to come to terms with reality, with different consequences.

Conclusion and implication for practice
It is known that a rational or, in opposition, a contemplative thinking singularly taken is not enough to cope to the task of assisting a chronic or dying patient. As Heidegger (1966) says only the use of a union of these two kinds of thinking lets humanity to face life challenges. These students, as well as, many health professionals, need to be supported in an unavoidable and never-ending path of de-idealization that leads them to understand and accept the fatigue of a professional role that must include rational and human, efficiency and compassion in caring for a patient who is, nevertheless, a person. The path of de-idealization (Kay, 1990) is faceable by the development of a transformative learning itinerary (Mezirow, 1991). Accordingly, teacher and tutor have to support students in these paths, and, above all, university has to face these matters finding the adequate strategies to implement among teachers and tutors the transformative learning teaching methods.

Experience-based Learning and Learning from Experience. Supporting Professional Identity Development Through Reflective Practices
Francesca Bracci, Alessandra Romano & Chad Hoggan

This paper presents findings from an intervention research designed to support undergraduate students in the development of their professional identity through the use of action methodologies based, respectively, on experience-based learning (Andresen, Boud & Cohen, 2000; Boud, Keogh & Walker 2013), learning from experience (Argyris & Schön, 1978; Lave & Wenger, 1991; O’Neil & Marsick, 2009), and post-structuralist feminist perspective (Francis & Skelton, 2005; Gherardi & Poggio, 2006). The research project was conducted in two Italian universities and involved the second-year students of the first-cycle degree in education sciences that, in the academic years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, participated in a compulsory laboratory titled Developing professional identity. One hundred and twenty-seven students have taken the laboratories with an average number of about thirty students per year in each university. Every laboratory lasted about six months and its goals were: (1) to develop knowledge and understanding of what it means to be a professional practitioner in the education sector; and (2) to help undergraduates become aware and (begin to) question taken-for-granted and culturally assimilated assumptions about professional practice, identity and the role of the educator.

We analyze the methodological choices undertaken and the learning outcomes reached from participants in laboratories. Unlike typical intervention research designs, the research did not intend to address a contextual problem, but to understand, formalize and (try to) transform the undergraduates’ established belief systems and representations about their identity and role as educators. The intervention involved the production of methods, tools and procedures that facilitated learners in the identification of assumptions on their own career expectations, employability, and trajectories of professional identity. The transferability of intervention
research is not the generalization of findings, but rather the possibility to use its products – methods, tools and procedures – outside the boundaries of the original research context. By the term professional identity we mean the understanding of one’s self as a professional. This concept implies several questions such as: what kind of educator do I want to be? What is the subject of my work? What do I deal with as a practitioner? Which services do I provide? Upon which values, beliefs, paradigms, and theories do I depend when I build knowledge and solve problems? What are my strengths and my weaknesses? In other words, professional identity includes internalized models of professionalism and of the concept of a good professional, which arise from experiences, are socially situated, and influence knowledge-building and problem-solving processes (Gilardi, Lozza, 2009). These internalized models are part of meaning schemes and are conceptualized within the theoretical framework of transformative learning, as articulated by Cranton (2006), Marsick & Watkins (1990), Mezirow (2000, 2003), Taylor (2002), and Hoggan (2016). Empirical literature about fostering transformative learning suggests that developing professional identity cannot be reduced to a list of disciplinary knowledge and technical skills: it is also driven by what individuals understand as being a professional and how they acknowledge their active roles in building meaning. At the same time, we agree with Poell, Marsick, and Yorks (2009) that more effective pedagogies incorporate teaching and learning methods that prompt learners to work on real-life problems and actual projects in a group setting with a question-driven approach for learning through and from experience.

Consistent with these premises, we analyze strengths and weaknesses of the action methodologies we adopted, as facilitators, in the laboratories. They are based, respectively, on experience-based learning, learning from experience, and post-structuralist feminist perspective (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Action methodologies adopted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminist methodologies</th>
<th>Learning from experience</th>
<th>Experience-based learning</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Narrative workshop</td>
<td>• Action learning</td>
<td>• Role playing</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Self case study</td>
<td>• Conversation</td>
<td>• Metaphor analysis</td>
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Francis & Skelton, 2005; Gherardi, 2004; Thompson, 2016

These methods have in common a focus on reflective practices by participants. However, the three methodological perspectives differ in the types of insight and meaning to be expected from reflective practices. For example, learning-from-experience methods emphasized problem-centered reflection on behavior impacting specific attainment of laboratory objectives. The reflection included also self-examination of critical reasoning processes that underlie how students framed issues and events in their projects and laboratory environment. Experience-based learning methods facilitated undergraduates in discovering ecologically embedded, embodied, symbolic, and presentational ways of knowing and experiencing the type of instrumental learning required. Feminist post-structuralist methods allowed students: (a) to explore the relationship between knowledge and power, eliciting critical examination of how as knowers they are positioned in a network of human and non-human power arrangements that constrain or enable their lives; (b) to re-elaborate their life and social experiences, the way they influenced and determined reproductive tendencies and distortions.
of perspectives about their possible trajectories of professional development; (c) to work on identity and leadership issues, developing creativity and fostering autonomy and self-awareness (Tisdell, 1998; Bierema & Cseh, 2003).

Finally, we discuss transformative outcomes reached from participants in laboratories. The assessment of the learning outcomes is based on the analysis of the materials produced by students during and after the meetings. Data were collected through ethnographic surveys, focus groups, semi-structured interviews, techniques of self-narrative data collection adopted during the meetings of the laboratory, and reflective journals that participants were asked to write after the end of the laboratory. We adopt the criteria of depth, breadth, and relative stability described by Hoggan (2016a) for defining transformative learning outcomes related to how and to what extent students revised and changed their assumptions, beliefs and perspectives about the role and the identity of educators.

**Transformative Learning of the Parent Through Sensitive Dialogue with the Child**

Christine Campini

Through a deductive approach, combining observations and narratives of training and practices, my research, qualitative and involved, explores parent-child interactions and their mutual education in eight families (including mine) engaged full-time with their children in a specific alternative approach, outside of institutions. Conceived in the field of Education, this work has followed an anthropological approach, in the wake of Mauss, who called to study our ‘body techniques’ in that they reveal our societies. The notions of learning with daily life as well as those of ‘corporeal world’ (Andrieu) – the body, mediator in the relation to the world, modelling the spirit (Damasio) – are central here.

In the footsteps of Mezirow, we will identify this phenomenon of crisis represented by the fact of ‘becoming parent’ as an opportunity for transformative learning where this searching parent, close to the reflexive practitioner (Schön), reinterprets his own experience. We will see how the parent faces various dilemmas on different levels that interpenetrate: personal, family, social...

These parents have in common a practice inspired by the teachings of the philosopher Itsuo Tsuda, aikido, and 'katsugen undo' (regenerative movement) lived as an existential research, that they transfer to the educational field, where the child is perceived as a ‘master’ as far as the listening of the senses is concerned. The body and the whole field of sensitivity are for them a ‘base’ (according to their own words in the interviews) to better understand the needs of the child and prepare the ‘ground’ on which he/she can flourish. It is through practices inherited from Japan, hot baths, and 'yuki' (comparable to haptomonc touch), likely to promote body self-regulation, that parents claim they enter a ‘dialogue’ described as ‘fusion of sensitivity’.

The alternative nature of their approach, the reflexivity it implies on their everyday practices, will favour the process of transformation (Mezirow, 210). For example, the birth of the child, a fracture for any adult in the sense that it defines them as a parent (Bettelheim, 1976, p 293) is all the more so by their choice to have this birth happen at home, and to live the first six months (at home) around the clock with the baby. The nascent being comes to deconstruct their world, their place in the family, but also in terms of space—in the home. Temporal and economic organizations are jostled (time off for mothers, flexible working arrangements for fathers).

We will see how being in relationship with the child changes these parents; certain moments are real epiphanies (Denzin) and reveal them, the ‘master’ child becoming maieutician. Their intuitive modes are exacerbated, they will feel the heat, the time, the environment, in another way, similar to that of the baby – for example time ‘changes nature’ for Romain (who is aware of this differentiation of time scales reported by Ciccone), Zac discovers synchronicity, etc.

More than a transformative learning process, this can be considered as a real initiatory journey.
‘Should We Fight or Should We Discuss?’ Teaching With the Method Transformative Learning through Aesthetic Experience
Maria Christou

Handling pupils’ conflicts is an issue of major importance for teachers, as it is a part of everyday school life and of the hidden curriculum. By managing these day-to-day conflicts, teachers’ goal is for their pupils to face erroneous and often stereotyped perceptions that they reflect, while enhancing lifelong learning skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, empathy (Goleman, 1998).

In order to handle pupils’ conflicts effectively, teachers need to take into account all dimensions of learning, paying special attention to motivation (Illeris, 2007). Reprimanding or counselling on the part of the teacher, as well as a face-to-face approach, do not unfortunately produce the desired result. Although many pupils are theoretically aware of effective ways to resolve a conflict, they systematically choose to swear and involve themselves in quarrels and fights that often result in injury. Their behaviour reflects a distorted habit of mind which makes them prone to using physical strength in order to resolve their conflicts. In fact, they face a kind of disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 1991). On the one hand, they choose physical violence as the only way to resolve their conflicts, and on the other, they realize that their behaviour does not give a definitive solution to their issue, so they ask for adult intervention, thus creating a vicious circle that makes their everyday life difficult. However, if they confront their stereotypical points of view and attempt to reflect on them to a certain degree, they may be able to take a first step in transforming them by addressing the conflict from a distance and as a subject of study. In this way, they may reject their usual behaviour as ineffective and change the way they make their experiences meaningful, seeking alternative ways of dealing with their conflicts (Kegan, 1994).

A useful means of reflecting on their assumptions and their potential transformation is the utilization of important works of art that promote critical reflection (Horkheimer, 1938). For Marcuse, the world of art is ‘more real than reality’ (Marcuse, 1978, p. 22).

This paper presents an approach on the subject of handling the conflicts of pupils of the 6th Grade of Primary School, using the teaching method ‘Transformative Learning through Aesthetic Experience’ (Kokkos, 2011). The purpose of this teaching is the critical and creative approach towards the way the pupils manage their frictions and conflicts, and the possible transformation of their stereotypical perceptions on the subject (Mezirow, 2007) through the Aesthetic Experience. The utilization of Abbas Kiarostami’s film ‘Two Solutions to One Problem’ (1975) in this teaching, brings to the fore the disorienting dilemma the pupils are experiencing and gives them the opportunity to confront their distorted assumptions about how to manage their conflicts. Finally, the activation of horizontal skills of critical and creative thinking, as well as empathy, urge them to reflect and adopt a different way of thinking about their behavior.

The Role of the Adult Educator in the Years of the Crisis: Dilemmas and Challenges
Dimitrios Deligiannis

In a period of economic and social crisis, the content of adult education is much wider than that of the past with issues aimed at shaping an active citizen, education and support for vulnerable social groups (Unesco, 1996). New perspectives are opening up, as they are called upon to provide answers within a complex and multicultural environment where adult learners experience the contradictions and challenges of a different everyday life. Critical thinking, questioning assumptions, the tendency for individual and social changes are at the centre of interest. The role of the modern adult educator is of a leading nature and differentiates itself from the traditional knowledge-communicator. He is invited to become the animator who motivates, supports and advises trainees, seeking the greatest possible degree of self-motivation, and joins himself in a course of personal change. His career development, his course and evolution, the possible changes seem to be directly related to the
context in which they are integrated. This may create conditions that determine if any initiatives can succeed or not (Hargreaves & Fullan 1995, pp. 34-35). In a difficult educational daily routine, with inelastic demands and the prevailing practices of the past, there is often a strong confusion between everyday practice and the theoretical approaches of trainers, as it is often not always consistently applied by educational practices that directly reflect their beliefs. They are typical reports from the field of formal education for young teachers that their way of thinking and their predisposition for development are curtailed by the limitations due to the context, but also by limitations due to given and more often tacit assumptions about the usual practice and the dialogue within the classroom or the professors' office (Day, 2003, pp. 67-68).

The purpose of this presentation is to investigate how the new role of adult educators and their relationship with learners are shaped in an educational structure aimed at adults, members of a socially vulnerable group (former users). In the context of the study, it seemed feasible to carry out an action research using the case study method. The starting point of the research was precisely how the trainers of the structure are experiencing the inconsistency between the nature of a particular educational environment addressed to adult learners and their presence at the end of the academic year at formal examinations identical to those of formal education. The dilemmas of the trainers are continuous; the inconsistency itself gives rise to thought. If we add to them the inadequacy of their education, which makes it difficult to adopt theoretical data on the field of adult education in educational practice, we have a picture of the context as we are called upon to examine the way in which during the research the teachers' perceptions of their role and practices are transformed or not. The results of the survey, despite the constraints from the case study of a single educational organization, can provide useful evidence of European reality, as it reflects the activity of an institution with significant experience in organizing educational programs in the field of informal education and there may also be issues for further investigation in the field of adult education.

Transformative Learning Through Innovation Education: Exploring Higher Education Students' Dilemmas
Andrea Detmer

Higher education programmes aimed at developing skills for innovation in students are rapidly and globally expanding. They stimulate cognitive, technical, behavioural and social skills that enhance innovation processes. Socio-emotional skills such as self-confidence, empathy, communicating effectively and negotiating conflict constructively are critical in enabling innovation processes. University programmes in education innovation usually refer to these and other socio-emotional skills in their learning objectives. Yet, the understanding of learning processes experienced by higher education students in innovation-oriented programmes is still limited.

Transformative learning theory sheds light by providing a framework to analyse students’ processes of self-reflection, questioning assumptions, and creating and recreating meaning schemes of different nature. These are pertinent to developmental processes of socio-emotional competencies, which may be mapped in five domains: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making (Conley 2015). Transformative learning is also valuable from the perspective of innovation processes, particularly given the creational, relational and social nature of innovation. This presentation draws upon an explorative study on socio-emotional skills for innovation in higher education students. It analyses how universities pedagogically promote the development of social and emotional skills for innovation in Minor for Innovation programmes. Special emphasis is put on collaborative learning, student agency and community engagement elements. A case study approach is used, considering four cases: two in the Netherlands and two in Chile. In total, 52 semi-structured interviews were conducted with a range of actors involved in the programmes’ design and implementation, including 18 interviews with students. The four programmes comprise between 4 and 6 courses around innovation (and entrepreneurship), and are offered on an optional basis, in interdisciplinary
settings and significantly using project and problem-based learning. In these experiential learning processes students often solve ‘innovation challenges’ in teams, sometimes in collaboration with and/or provided by organisations beyond the university context. The findings discuss students’ dilemmas, their processes of self-reflection and arguable transformation of meaning schemes throughout their learning process framed in Minors for innovation programmes. We analyse how certain socio-emotional skills for innovation are developed by students supported by particular features of the learning contexts under the light of transformative processes. Specifically, we explore:

1. How working in interdisciplinary teams trigger students’ dilemmas and challenging of assumptions regarding their own perspectives around the ‘innovation challenges’ and possible solutions applying their understanding of their own and others’ technical disciplines. Students manifest the tension embedded in shifting their attitudes towards others and others’ disciplinary knowledge in solving problems, and discuss their reflection on openness, tolerance, respect and value of their peers and their views. In some cases, transiting from a rejection to an embracing attitude towards otherness may represent models of learning through new (interdisciplinary) meaning schemes (Mezirow 1985).

2. The implications of collaborating with stakeholders external to the university in addressing ‘real-world’ problems, which leads to students’ enhanced sense of responsibility, communication skills, and profound reflections on their role in society. This relates to learning new frames of reference, negotiating new relationships (Mezirow 1994) and in some cases, transforming their engagement with society, as innovators, graduates and further, citizens.

Changing Organisational Dynamics Through the Strategic Learning Model: the Contribution of Transformative Learning
Fabio Dovigo

Objectives and theoretical framework
Transformative learning has been acquiring a pivotal role in helping organisations to develop flexible knowledge required to sustain performance. Working in increasingly complex environments, organisations can use learning to transform the way they deal with problems by balancing the concurrent need for internal and external alignment and promoting change through innovation strategies. Recalling Burke and Litwin (1992), Marsick and Gephart (2016) strategic learning model differentiates between transformational and transactional dynamics in organisations. As the former refer to the external environment, mission/vision, strategy, leadership, and organizational culture, the latter encompass structure, management practices, systems (including policies and procedures), and climate. According to this approach, involving stakeholders in understanding system dynamics through the analysis of transformational/transactional factors enables organisations to detect and put into action leverage points for change.

Upon request of a Regional Environmental Protection Agency, we used this transformational model to develop an in-depth analysis of the professional identities and skills of top and middle management in order to support strategic innovation through research-action (O’Neil & Marsick, 2007). The goal was to help the EPA to carry out a careful diagnosis of key system dynamics underlying the organisational structure in terms of barriers and opportunities, as well as to design and implement an action plan in order to promote the transition towards institutional change. The paper aims to provide a critical evaluation of the project in the light of its contribution to the field of transformative learning studies.

Methods
Research involved 172 top and middle managers of the EPA over two years. We investigated the transformational/transactional factors of the Agency by administering a first questionnaire based on four dimensions (profile of the respondents, technical and managerial skills, relationship with collaborators, and characteristics of the ‘good manager’). Then we collected data through the Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (Marsick &
Watkins, 1993; Watkins & O’Neal, 2013) to examine in depth the components of organisational learning at EPA and their impact on individual and organisational performance. Results from both questionnaires were subsequently used as a platform for further analysis through individual interviews and focus groups held on site with top and middle managers. Both positive and negative points emerging from this appraisal of key system dynamics were consequently discussed during intersectional meetings, leading to the reframing of previous, taken for granted assumptions about the EPA organisation. On that basis, a new action plan was developed to support new institutional policies on the management of professional roles and leadership within the EPA.

Results
Research-action outline above helped EPA to ease the transition from a narrow, technical view of the working tasks to a more complex perspective of managerial duties. Starting from the evidences provided by the strategic learning approach described, the action plan identified five main areas of improvement of EPA:

1. Organizational identity;
2. Professional identity;
3. Managerial role;
4. Leadership; and
5. The relationship between managerial and administrative tasks.

Finally, in collaboration with the managers specific contents of each area were ranked according to three factors (urgency, feasibility, and impact), in order to maximise implementation and dissemination of the innovation process throughout the organisation.

Learning and Dilemmas: Gender Educators in Sweden
Tove Eriksson

This project is interested in the relationship between professional dilemmas and learning of gender educators in Sweden. Gender educators are adult educators who work around the topic of gender issues and equality. An exploration of gender educators’ work is both timely and relevant as gender inequality prevails in Sweden, manifesting in gendered violence and traditional gendered expectations. While gender equality is often invoked as a characteristic of Swedish society and thereby taken for granted, the actual state is not necessarily examined (Martinsson, Griffin, & Giritli Nygren, 2016). Work to achieve gender equality in Sweden is hence not finished.

Theories around gender and feminism have continued to develop over recent decades, however not much is known about the way this theoretical progress relates to, and impacts on, gender educators’ practice. This project examines educational spaces and conditions where this work takes place, to understand how gender educators work, what theories they have absorbed, what supports them in their learning, and how they may or may not be able to act on their learning. The study thus contributes to a broader understanding of how adult educators learn and use theory.

This project is informed by concepts of transformative learning and dilemmatic spaces. Mezirow’s transformative learning as a model for adult learning, will account for the factors which have supported gender educators’ professional learning. The model of disorienting dilemmas will illuminate ways in which educators learn about new theories and reflect on their practice (Mezirow, 1991). Through the concept of dilemmatic spaces (Fransson & Grannäs, 2013) the dilemmas educators experience in reconciling their learning and their practice will be treated as an attribute of their professional contexts. This will allow for the space between the desired and the actual professional conditions to be explored, but with a focus on understanding how external structural factors contribute to dilemmas. This approach contrasts with understanding dilemmas as an individual’s internal experience.

Methodologically this project is designed as narrative inquiry, using the stories of gender educators to explore the contexts and dilemmas they encounter. Personal experiences will be understood in relation to the discourses they reference, and the exploration will focus on how the participants disrupt or challenge the dominant discourses around them (Chase, 2011).
These individual narratives will be used to ‘illuminate larger social narratives’ (Dwyer, Davis, & emerald, 2017, p.2) around gender educators’ theory and practice dilemmas. This paper will present work in progress and preliminary analysis of a subsample of participants.

**Transformative Learning Theory, a Theory in Progress? The Dilemma Between Self-Conception and a Deficient Debate**

Saskia Eschenbacher

Transformative learning theory (TL) derives its self-conception as a *theory in progress*. As such it is in need of constant critical reflection on its own premises. Considering this essential feature, it is surprising that the debate on TL’s premises is deficient at best. Taylor and Cranton identified a ‘[S]tagnation and lack of theoretical development’ in TL. Following them, ‘despite the intense interest in this theory, much of the research is redundant, (…) while overlooking the need for more in-depth theoretical analysis’ (Cranton & Taylor, 2012, p. 12-13). This dilemma goes along with unresolved issues that derive from the use of various scientific theories and different philosophical underpinnings which inform TL (Humanism, Constructivism and Critical Theory). Following TL’s self-conception as a theory in progress it is surprising, that a critical reflection on those philosophical underpinnings is still missing.

This paper therefore addresses the aforementioned theoretical void by critically reflecting on the ideas of Habermas which frames the work conducted by Mezirow. He adopts several ideas from Habermas and incorporates them as core concepts within his theory. This paper is mainly concerned with three aspects that lack critical reflection and as a result inhibit further theory development.

The first critique centers around Mezirow’s inaccurate and shortened reception of Habermas’ ideas. This problem needs to be solved within TL in order to develop the theory any further. In part, some of these unresolved issues have been identified within secondary literature but are far from being solved, addressed, identified or discussed.

Another key element within TL is Habermas’ conception of an ideal speech situation, which is ‘theoretically based, with little support from empirical research’ (Taylor, 1997, p. 54). Habermas himself says that ‘[t]he expression ‘ideal speech situation’ is delusive, insofar as it suggests a concrete form of life’ (Habermas, 1985, p. 161). The dilemma arises out of Mezirow’s conception promoting TL through fostering ideal speech conditions. ‘[T]here needs to be continued exploration into the practice of fostering transformative learning, recognizing the limits of promoting ideal practice’ (Taylor, 1997, p. 55). These limits need to be addressed while our current understanding of how to foster TL needs to be broadened.

The third aspect is concerned with one of the most fundamental tensions within TL, the distinction between personal growth and social action. The dilemma inherent in the use of Habermas’ work becomes apparent: ‘He [Mezirow] wants to situate transformative learning within an emancipatory framework, but at the same time his model seems to emphasize personal transformation to a greater extent than social transformation’ (Taylor, 1998, p. 25).

According to Rorty, Habermas and his notion of discourse belongs to the public sphere and not to the private sphere. Both dimensions need to be placed at the center of TL on equal footing and are highly relevant for future theory development. One possible solution is to focus on different aspects within the work of Habermas that put an emphasis on the personal dimension.

An ongoing critical theoretical review needs to reflect on TL’s philosophical underpinnings in order to go back to a *theory in progress*. In addition to critically reflect on every philosophical underpinning there is a need to reflect on the relationship *between* them and possible incompatibilities.

**Rorty on Irony - Conceptualizing an Adult Educator's Attitude**

Saskia Eschenbacher

Mezirow’s transformative learning theory (TL) and Rorty’s notion of *irony* both share freedom as a main value, the fact that one is not trapped by one way of looking at the world
that is forced by us. TL is concerned with the possibility to change one’s life by critical self-
reflection on one’s premises. The transformative potential that arises out of disorienting
moments in one’s life may change one’s way of being. What has been taken for granted
during specific times in our lives becomes contingent during others. Rorty’s ironist idea can
be best described as a notion of identity that is contingent among the particular basic
vocabulary, it is or becomes one vocabulary among others. Vocabularies are frames of
reference that are brought into being through language. The closeness of TL and ideas within
Rorty’s philosophy is not limited to Mezirow’s perspective even though his perspective is
central to this paper.

Rorty (1989) introduces the concept of irony: an attitude that doubts our own vocabulary in a
radical and unceasing way. This paper argues even further for promoting the attitude of an
ironist as a goal for adult educators aiming at teaching transformatively. As adult educators it
is not only our goal to work ourselves out of our jobs but to model a way of being critically
self-reflective towards our own assumptions in the most radical way. In this paper, Rorty’s
notion of irony will be introduced and elaborated as a theoretical conceptualization of an adult
educator’s attitude.

Rorty’s vocabularies are more than just the way we describe ourselves and the world we live
in. Vocabularies are linguistic housings of certainty and clarity. They incorporate what
Mezirow calls a ‘frame of reference’. Rorty says ‘that the human self is created by the use of
a vocabulary rather than being adequately or inadequately expressed in a vocabulary’ (Rorty,
1989, p. 7). He further distinguishes final and changing vocabularies. While the latter ones are
always tentative and open for change, final vocabularies are what Mezirow calls taken for
granted frames of reference which are not critically questioned. Rorty’s ironist idea creates an
awareness of the fact that there are always other possibilities, there is always another
possibility I can explore. Rorty’s understanding of irony is connected with the idea that we
are always able to call our vocabularies into question. According to Rorty, ‘it is an illusion
to think that we can escape the contingency of the plurality of vocabularies’ (Bernstein, 2016, p.
33). Our final vocabularies remain contingent and fragile. Irony can be understood as ‘a
proposal for how we – or some of us – might live our lives’ (Bernstein, 2016, p. 34). Staying
in the line of Rorty’s argument, fostering transformation is linked to the ‘ability to appreciate
the power of redescribing, the power of language to make new and different things possible
and important - an appreciation which becomes possible only when one's aim becomes an
expanding repertoire of alternative descriptions rather than The One Right Description’
(Rorty, 1989, p. 39-40). According to Mezirow, every belief and judgment has to stay
tentative, open to be critically questioned in discourse, rather than turning to tradition,
authority or force. Rorty provides a meta-theoretical background for conceptualizing the adult
educator’s attitude. He embraces the ethic of invention. His notion of irony promotes pleasure
to trying to look at the world in new ways. It means leaving the home that we’ve had instead
of searching for one correct way of changing one’s life.

‘I’m Not a Man With the Deep Feed’. The Cancer as Shared Social Practice
Loretta Fabbri, Elisabetta Di Benedetto, Carlo Orefice & Mario Giampaolo

The contribute analyzes a case study related to a community of practice (CoP) (Wenger,
2006; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2007). The community is composed by persons with
an oncological disease (insiders) and academic researchers (outsiders). Insiders are three men
and four women with a range of age from 35 to 65 years old and different types of
oncological disease. The heterogeneity of age and disease is a point of strength of the
community because members share different kinds of experiences. Heterogeneous is also the
sickness development. There are members that are doing chemotherapy, others dealing with
the relapse of the disease, others that seems to be out of risk. The most of them have a degree
and work as lawyer, doctor or faculty in the academy. Outsiders are researchers in the field of
adult education, two women and two men with a range of age from 36 to 59 years old. Two
researchers facilitated the face-to-face community meeting, giving rhythm to this informal
aggregation of persons, the third researcher studied spaces in oncological ward, the fourth studied the development and the application of ‘emergent’ technologies in insiders’ practices. Insiders and outsiders are engaged in understanding how a community of practice represents a means to interpret the social and learning experience of cancer-affected people. The dilemma that insider and outsider try to solve is if beyond the community of doctors, who build scientific knowledge, beyond the communities of volunteers, who provide time and comfort, is possible thinking to communities of persons interested in organizing their practical knowledge and their feeling relating to sickness. As members of a CoP, insiders can learn from others that have the same experiences and become competent in the management of their therapy.

Insiders had the willingness to participate systematically to the establishment of a group and above all to the definition of a shared project that goes beyond a simple network of personal contacts. The proposal to create a CoP, became a path of research and learning in which insiders and outsiders together validated the conditions to become a research community able to produce practice knowledge. The objectives of the research have been thinking to the group as a CoP, capable of working on explicating experiences, and being able to interpret themselves not as patients but as persons able to adopt a research attitude.

The methodological approach that leads the work is the collaborative research model (Shani, Guerci, & Cirella, 2014), used to facilitate the development of the community of practice. This methodology origins from the organizational studies, initially interested in behaviours, performances and human relationships in the workplaces. Recently this field of study started to investigate collaboration to understand advantages it took in the organizational and social systems.

The achieved result has been that of helping the transformation of a group of persons, increasing their ability to interact and share knowledge. The CoP took care of itself, increased the sense of belonging, and appreciated the benefits of learning from the experience of others. Future purposes are to understand how to establish relationships outside the community and produce a possible impact on healthcare organizations.

**Transformative Learning Approaches Beyond Transformative Learning Theory**
Loretta Fabbri, Laura Formenti, Alexis Kokkos, Claudio Melacarne & Aliki Nicolaides

The symposium aims to engage a reflection among the speakers and with the public, on some new directions of research in Transformative Learning theories and practices, drawing together four different points of views: a) the foundation of the Italian Transformative Learning Network; b) the emerging perspectives in theories of transformative learning; c) some best practices inspired by TLT; d) the movement of TLT in a global perspective and possibly a new mission.

The symposium is focused on the evolution of TLT in a multidisciplinary and international perspective, based on empirical research as well as theoretical reflection, presenting some of the trends and debates going on TLT and the multiplicity of methods and theories that seeded from Jack Mezirow’s articles and books. We will assume that TLT is not (and maybe should not be) intended as a foundational theory, but as an approach to learning that, due to its peculiar epistemology, can offer space for different traditions, positions, and sights. This could also mean, however, confusion, superficiality, and the lack of a clear and coherent perspective.

TLT is now used in different ways and the word ‘transformation’ is a core concept in the educational scientific debate. It may refer to the sociocultural tradition in research (Kokkos, 2012), to the revival of an epistemology of complexity (Formenti, 2017), to the translation of theory into practices (Fabbri, Romano, 2018), to deepening adult learning theory building (Nicolaides, 2015) and to the many different contexts where TLT is used. This could be critical point in the evolution of TLT, but also a promising one, to support the use of it in an integrated frame for adult education.

For many years, researchers have been using TLT as the ‘one best way’ to develop research programs and promote emancipatory programs for adults and communities. A post-qualitative
approach, combined with a focus on practices will be used here to shift attention from theoretical validation to discuss the efficacy of this approach in opening new possibilities within educational settings, everyday life, and workplaces.

**Engaging Transformative Organisational Learning at University of Siena: the Case of Teaching and Learning Center**  
Loretta Fabbri, Mario Giampaolo & Alessandra Romano

One of the dilemmas characterizing European higher education systems is how to support the acquisition of strategic skills to enhance students’ employability and faculty’s professionalism (Cleary, Flynn & Thomasson, 2006; Denecolo & Reeves, 2013; Mishra, 2014). In this perspective, soft-skills have been studied for decades and there are various research directions that propose methodologies to facilitate their development in students and scholars (Robles, 2012; Fabbri, Melacarne, 2016).

The contribution presents a case study on the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) of the Santa Chiara Lab at the University of Siena. It is a research and training center that offers workshops on soft skills in response to the need of professional growth. The objective of the TLC is to provide methodologies, tools and strategies to support students in constructing their own professionalism through the development of soft-skills. The TLC further aims to construct and develop strategies to enhance the work of faculties. The contribution describes the development process and the first emerging outcomes of the impact of the activities of the Teaching and Learning Center, designed to spread collaborative teaching methods, practice-based and learner-centered approach in the academic environment, and to support organizational learning through a bottom-up community approach.

The case allows reflecting on dilemmas related to a research perspective in the field of organizational development (Gephart & Marsick, 2016). This perspective examines which tools and strategies an organization like the university could use to develop its own coursework in light of the need to facilitate the acquisition of soft-skills. With regard to this issue, there are essentially two approaches, which are discussed and argued (Yorke & Knight, 2004). The first approach, called ‘parallel’, allows universities to realize workshops and seminars as a different offer respect to the curricular work required to students. The second approach, called ‘embedded’, is based on the premise that there is no differentiation between the way disciplinary contents and soft-skills are taught. Following these two approaches universities are able to manage organizational issues adopting different criteria.

The contribution finally focuses on the methodological implications of the work of Coryell (2016) as important to the future development of the TLC: according to this perspective, were identified as success factors in creating and supporting teaching and learning aids, different characteristics also related to (a) organizational aspects like gaining the support of internal and external stakeholders, (b) designing a reflective evaluation for improvement, and (c) encouraging community learning collaboration.

**Dangerous Transformations. Dilemmas and Conflicts Between Politics and Pedagogy in the Contemporary Italian Context**  
Alessandro Ferrante

In the context of the dismantling of the welfare state pursued by neoliberal policies, over the past two decades in Italy there have been multiple and pervasive social, cultural and economic transformations, some of which have had and still have a significant impact on the educational field, both scholastic and extra-scholastic. In some cases, such transformations have generated conflicting and problematic relations between educational systems and political systems (especially local administrations, as many educational services depend on their funding).

One of the issues that causes more concern in educational services and generates considerable tensions between these and the institutional partners with which they collaborate is related to the process of service evaluation run by the political administrations. As a matter of fact, each
service is obliged to provide official documentation on the educational work carried out. This
documentation is subsequently delivered to external bodies, such as the Region or the
Municipality, who evaluate the service based on what has been communicated through these
formal documents. Since educational services are aware that they are formally and informally
exposed to the judgment of local political administrators, they consider carefully what and
how to communicate, also in relation to their objectives and the possibility of influencing
their recipients’ perception of service. This type of communication, therefore, is not left up to
chance, but is constructed strategically to be as effective as possible. However, the
communication exchange between political and educational systems is not free from conflict,
fear and ambiguity. In fact, in many cases the educational services seem to be guided by
languages, expectations, logics, rules, standards, communication and evaluation criteria that
are quite different from those that prevail in the political institutions with which they interact.
For instance, the institutions, as opposed to the services, are more likely to evaluate results
rather than processes, and tend to adopt quantitative rather than qualitative criteria. The
services thus find themselves devising communication strategies that take into account the
need to mediate with the expectations of their institutional partners, without however
remaining subjugated. All this does not only produce constant tensions between political and
educational systems, causing discomfort and anxiety in services, but also modifies the
pedagogical and organizational cultures in often unexpected directions.

Starting from this scenario, this paper aims to focus on the delicate issue of the relationship
between politics and pedagogy in the contemporary Italian context. In particular, by briefly
referring to a research on the evaluation of educational services carried out between 2012-
2013, we will examine the different dilemmas in which services can incur when
communicating with the political institutions appointed to assess them. The intervention,
therefore, is aimed to critically examine some key problems that the services have to face by
placing them in the context of a society that, according to Niklas Luhmann’s theoretical
categories, can be described as complex, a-centric and differentiated in its fundamental
functions. We will then adopt Luhmann’s systems theory to analyse some of the most
significant implications underlying the communication dynamics between political and
educational systems.

‘Freedom Is a Very fine Thing’: Democratic Praxis and Divergent Notions of Autonomy
in Transformative Learning Theory
Fergal Finnegan

This paper will explore how freedom is imagined in diverse ways in transformative learning
theory through a critical exploration of the theme of autonomy. It will build on arguments
made in a paper read at the second ITLP conference (Author, 2016a) and related subsequent
articles (Author 2016b, 2017) which made a case for working towards a more explicitly
differentiated conception of transformative learning which distinguishes between individual
and collective forms of reflexive agency and clarifies how they relate to each other. I want to
develop aspects of these arguments in further detail through an immanent critique of various
conceptions of autonomy, most importantly those offered by Mezirow, Freire and Castoriadis.
The overall aim is contribute to a psychosocial version of transformative learning theory
which is also informed by critical sociology and social movement studies.

A summary of the broad arguments made at the 2016 ITLP conference will be offered in the
first section of the paper. In particular, I will return to how I think theories of reflexive agency
and learning can be linked to Bhaskar’s (1979) critical realist analysis of the meaning of
emancipation. I will then offer a brief overview of the varying ways freedom, autonomy and
praxis have been conceptualised in adult education and how this can be framed in relation to
the conference theme of dilemmas.

I will then turn to specific theorists of transformative learning. First I will review Mezirow’s
praxis. I will argue, against several radical critics (e.g. Inglis, 1996; Newman, 2010; Murray,
2013) that the way Mezirow carefully links, but distinguishes, the project of personal
autonomy from emancipatory social action is useful. However, Mezirow’s notion of autonomy is nevertheless limited by an overall tendency towards methodological individualism in his work. This means there are clear limitations in the way autonomy is understood in relation to collective political agency and in describing how social structures enable and constrain various forms of autonomy.

The paper will compare this framework with Freire’s (1970, 1998) understanding of freedom, autonomy and democratic praxis. Drawing on Fromm’s notion of biophilia Freire treats freedom and the desire for autonomy as fundamental aspects of human ontology. Freire also posits our radical incompleteness as individuals in relation with others as well as the mediating value of emancipatory knowledge in ‘naming our world’ This reflects Freire’s lifelong engagement with emancipatory movements and his account of the specific qualities of collective autonomy is richer than that offered by Mezirow. However, Freire subsumes, and to an extent disregards, distinct and important aspects of individual autonomy and biographical learning in his theory of freedom.

Thus, the penultimate part of the paper will seek to go beyond an ‘either/or’ approach and seek to resolve the theoretical dilemmas sketched out above to explore how autonomy might be fruitfully reframed. To do this I will examine how Castoriadis (1987) describes what characterises collective and individual forms of autonomy in relation to each other. I will also briefly link these reflections to other recent work on transformative learning (Illeris, 2014; Alhadeff-Jones, 2017; West, 2016). This will be used as a departure point to discuss how the praxis of social movements in Europe and Latin America can help illuminate the full meaning of autonomy, democratic praxis and freedom and what this might mean for thinking about a differentiated theory of transformative learning (Author, 2017; Cox & Nillson, 2015; Zibechi, 2013; Vasuvedan, 2017). The paper will conclude by situating this differentiated theory of autonomy and transformative learning in relation to the contradictions and dilemmas produced by social and cultural conditions of advanced capitalism.

Between ‘lifting off the labels’ and ‘hearing it in their voices’: Revealing dilemmas and transformation in postgraduate students of Aboriginal health and wellbeing
Sally Ann Fitzpatrick & Lois Meyer

This paper outlines the learning trajectories of mature-age students as they negotiate the complex spaces of Aboriginal health and wellbeing through participation in a postgraduate public health program provided by a small, dedicated First Peoples’ health and wellbeing unit in an Australian university. Importantly this program occurs within the broader context of continuing colonialism and racism, and a raft of health and social inequalities experienced by Australia’s First Peoples. Students bring intense discomfort at the legacy of our shared history and are aware of their society’s resistant assumptions and beliefs that change is simply not possible.

Our approach to address this systemic nation-wide challenge has been to provide a learning environment, in particular an innovative group-based scenario planning assessment, that aims to enable students to reframe their beliefs, feelings and practices towards personal and social transformation. The research presented here draws on a longitudinal multiple methods study tracing the experiences of our students. Using qualitative analysis underpinned by theoretical frameworks including Honig (1994), Mezirow (2000), Lawrence and Cranton (2015), Hoggan (2016) and Cheers, Darracott, & Lonnie (2005), we examine how our pedagogical approach has fostered students’ transformative learning and empowering change in their own personal and professional lives.

Preliminary findings of data collected over a two-year period with 28 students and focus on a case study of a six students revealed evidence and descriptions of emerging dilemmas, insights, impacts and the nature of empowerment and transformation in this specific context. Two areas where significant growth and empowerment was measured and discussed were enhanced understanding of self and gaining voice.

Our preliminary findings raise important questions about how and where we might usefully employ the term ‘disorienting dilemma’ within higher educational contexts. Catalysts for
growth associated with critical self-awareness and empowerment are linked to students’ expressions of new capacities to join the national dialogue and contribute to social justice through personal and professional practices that we contend will contribute to First People’s health and wellbeing.

**Adult Education and White Privilege, Untangling Dilemmas of Privilege and Power**
Camilla Fitzsimons

Ireland is changing. No longer a country of net migration, it is now a country of growing immigration with a mushrooming non-white population, many of whom are born in Ireland (Central Statistics Office National Census, 2016). Ireland is also a country of mounting racism (Carr, 2015; Michael, 2015) and many educators seek to address this through the course of their work. Yet when ‘white-people’ in particular study race; they often fail to connect their own racial identity with the social positioning this affords them (Berlak, 2004; Zembylas, 2007). This doesn’t only apply to learners. As I look around at the adult educators who talk about and write about race, they, like me, are invariably white.

Yet rarely do their conversations focus on the normative nature of this whiteness. Instead, race is ‘othered’ in those who are ‘non-white’ and differences are simplified through the lens of cultural divergence. Even within highly diverse countries such as the USA or UK, claims of cultural distinctions uphold difference through concepts such as ‘black-culture’, and untrue homogenisations of religious identity, particularly for Muslims (Kundnani, 2015).

Notwithstanding some truth in the notion of cultural difference, it is also important to explore the concept of *racialisation*, a process where, over time, certain traits are socio-culturally assigned to homogenised populations with little or no consideration for wider imperialist contexts (Carr, 2015; Said, 1978; Kundnani, 2015). Rather than interrogate these power-laden relationships, an influential discourse of multiculturalism has emerged that presents race as neutral, non-political, and, most importantly, a safe space for those amongst us who are white (hooks, 1994; Halley et al, 2011; Fitzsimons, 2017). In these, often enjoyable and somewhat beneficial spaces, those who are white get to celebrate differences in ‘others’, differences benchmarked against a highly capitalist, homogenised vision of the so-called West. At the same time, they avoid any interrogation of the privileges they hold at the expense of those othered (Macintosh, 1988).

Amidst this environment, racism becomes individualised and isolated, and not understood as institutional and systemic. Although many educators work hard to create democratic, participatory learning environments than can address this dilemma, there can be a tendency to retreat to the comfort of the status quo when uncomfortable race-related disturbances emerge (hooks, 1994; 2010). This prevents important exploration of tensions and antagonisms that are essential if we are to address the power-laden dimensions of race relations.

**The workshop**

This workshop takes is as its starting point the need to reflexively engage with our own racial identity; however we may interpret this. Through high levels of participation, attendees are invited to draw from personal experiences and reflect on their own racial identity. Methodologies will be designed around the work of Kendall (2013) and others who seek to illuminate white-privilege by connecting with instances in our lives where racial socialisation is illuminated and our sense of place in the world is changed. The workshop intends to take the spotlight off those at the receiving end of structural racism and shines it on those who benefit, but are often less aware.

**The Art of Harmonising Opposites: Auto/biography and the Challenge to Dichotomies in Transformative Learning**
Laura Formenti & Linden West

We are a man and a woman, from different parts of Europe, nurtured in different kinds of family, community, gendered roles, as well national and academic cultures. We have sought to learn from each other, auto/biographically, and dialogically, using our different
Design of a Training Perspectives Questionnaire to Encourage Transformative Professional Development
Daniela Frison & Concetta Tino

Trainers and consultants’ professional development and reflection on their way of conceiving training are the focus of this work-in-progress research design. The study has been developed within the project ‘Soft Skills: Aware, Competent and Competitive’, led by an Italian training centre in cooperation with the University of xxx and based on regional funds. The project, which still in progress, started in March 2017 and involves trainers, consultants and SMEs’ staff in charge for training activities who work in different contexts and sectors (companies, third sector, schools and training centres, etc.). It aims to provide participants with professional development opportunities to enhance awareness about themselves as trainers and to improve generic skills. With this aim, 24 professionals were involved in a 24-hours training program that proposed methods and techniques inspired by experiential learning and outdoor training (Di Nubila & Fedeli, 2010; Kolb, 1984; Rotondi, 2010).

The purpose of this paper is to present the process of development of a Training Perspectives Questionnaire to explore trainers and consultants’ way of conceiving training. The research group is following a mixed method approach (Creswell, 2008), and exactly an exploratory sequential design (QUAL-quant) where qualitative data results will be useful to extend the quantitative findings.

Data collection will be carried out through two phases. The first one has been focused on the exploration of training perspectives, through a Transformative Learning approach useful to promote critical self-reflection about training and about habits of mind (Cranton, 1996; Cranton & King, 2003; Kreber, 2012; Taylor, 2008).
With this aim, a semi-structured interview protocol was developed to gain an in-depth understanding of the issues of interest, taking into account the following dimensions: personal information (gender, organization (profit no profit), role, education, years of experience, % of training and/or consultancy activity, attendance to previous professional development programs); professional and personal expectations; training perspectives; perception of performed generic skills; feeling about the outdoor experience.

The interview was managed considering two important components: first, the significant episodes of participants’ experience connected to real life as a trainer (Marsick, 1998) were investigated; second, training metaphors (Fabbri & Munari, 2010) were proposed to mediate the interview. The interview, audiotaped and transcribed, was addressed to a convenience group of 10 trainers involved in the training program. Furthermore, 3 key informant interviews were addressed to the outdoor trainer.

In the second phase of the study (in progress) the themes emerging from the interviews are going to be integrated with dimensions identified through the literature review process (Pratt, Collins, & Selinger, 2001). The instrument development will evolve through successive stages of operationalizing collected training perspectives to finalize a Training Perspectives Questionnaire to administer to a wider population of trainers as a tool to use for professional development.

**Facing Disorienting Dilemmas in Professional Transitions. A Narrative Research on PhD Graduates' Experiences**

Andrea Galimberti

A PhD graduate’s current chance of ultimately attaining a permanent position in academic research is a few per cent on average and the Italian context is in line with the European trend: a recent study carried out by ADI – the national association of PhD students and PhD graduates – predicts that only 6.5% of current Italian Post-doc researchers will obtain long-term academic positions (ADI, 2016). The result is that PhD graduates are increasingly turning to non academic labor market, often considering this as a second-choice option. The risk of over-skilling and skill mismatch (Flisi et al., 2014) is an actual threat that poses to universities new dilemmas about their role in training these professionals and problematise the traditional distance between the academic sphere and the private sector (Slowey & Schuetze, 2012). If researchers are asked, as many contemporary professionals, to develop competences that go beyond their own specific field throughout their careers (OECD, 2012), little space is dedicated to analyze and interpret experiences of those who faced the challenge to translate their competences in new professional contexts. This contribution will present an ongoing qualitative research based on narrative interviews addressed to PhD graduates that experienced a professional transition. The construction of the research sample entailed different choices, first of all the decision of interviewing PhD graduates coming from a wide range of disciplines in order to be coherent with the nature of transversal competence - described as interdisciplinary in itself. Another criteria for sampling was the diversity of professional trajectories in terms of destinations: from contexts more familiar with academic research (e.g. a big company research centers) to others more ‘unconventional’ (e.g. small and medium enterprises). This variety enhanced the possibility to explore a wide range of assumptions and dialogues coming into play during the transitions. Big companies or public research centres are, for example, more used to understand the value of a PhD graduate and to adopt ideas and languages more coherent with the academic ones. On the contrary, in many cases more ‘unconventional’ professional contexts don't even know what a PhD actually is. Participants' narratives highlight moments in which taken for granted assumptions and courses of action seemed not being useful anymore for making meaning in the new professional context. These situations are experienced as very challenging and disorienting situations, often requiring a transformation of previously structured frames of reference (Mezirow, 2000). New learning processes are described, resulting in new positioning on a variety of dimensions involved in the transition: explicit and tacit knowledge acquired during PhD training, one's own professional identity or acknowledgment needs. Dealing with all this
issues is often a very demanding endeavour that cannot be solved only through instrumental thinking but requires also relational and imaginative resources.

‘I Felt as If I Was Becoming Myself Anew.’ Transformative Learning Through Action Research Projects Carried Out by Beginning Teachers
Katarzyna Gawlicz

The objective of my paper, which I write from the position of an undergraduate and graduate student supervisor at one Polish university, is to explore dilemmas related to inviting students to carry out action research projects as part of their diploma requirements, but also, and more importantly, as a transformative learning experience. I aim to show how inviting students to reflect on their pedagogical practice, contest it and develop alternative ways of being a teacher can support their personal and professional development and promote emancipatory change in education.

Early childhood education students I supervise have an opportunity to carry out projects in which they use elements of educational (auto)ethnography and action research to explore other teachers’ and/or their own practice, and transform it (Carr & Kemmis, 2004; Cervinkova, 2013). In this paper I draw on my experience of working with two students who were already preschool teachers. Their projects, in which they focused on their own practice, developed through phases typical of action research, i.e. planning, execution and reconnaissance (Lewin, 1946). Prior to the planning stage, the students video-recorded and examined their own work with children. The analysis of the recordings made them deeply uncomfortable as they realized that their practice clashed with their beliefs about appropriate professional and personal conduct. This led them to reflect on their work, and plan and take steps toward transforming it in a manner that was more coherent with the ideal of a teacher they strove to become.

Using these examples as a point of reference, I analyze the dilemmas and tensions that the students faced, and their transformative potential. They relate to different stages of the project, from confronting one’s mistakes, admitting to them, naming them, to finally introducing changes while being alone, without having either good models or support from colleagues. The dilemmas the students experienced touched their personal and professional identity, as they realized that they inadvertently blocked children’s development, did not listen to them or hurt them, and working through them was a painful process. However, it led the students to profound personal, professional and political transformations (Carr & Kemmis, 2009). As one of them reflected, ‘I felt as if I was becoming myself anew.’ They developed an ability to take a critical stance toward their work and strove to improve it, but also wanted to share their experiences with other teachers and support them in similar endeavors. The emotionally exhausting process proved deeply satisfactory for the young teachers.

Finally, I also reflect on my own dilemmas as an instigator of such a process. While I see its transformative potential, I am also aware of the high personal cost that goes with it. Some of the questions that can be posed concern, first, my right to push the students into this kind of work without being able to provide them with an adequate assistance and support, and, second, necessary changes within the system of teacher education that could lead to the development of safe environments in which such projects could be possible.

Identifying Dilemma and Transformation Among Priests in Higher Education for the Consideration of Dilemma Among Business Students
Trevor Gerhardt & Andrew Gould

I experienced a seismic shift and dilemma in my theological position due to a traumatic event which included bereavement and a subsequent crisis-conflict of identity. Mezirow (2000, p.xii) argues that you do not return to old perspectives once they have been transformed but the forward movement is seldom consistent either. It is this experience and the discovery of Moon (1999) as a helpful partner that led me to ask, ‘does the use of the specific tool of
reflection initiate dilemma in adults in ministerial training by creating a trauma/crisis of theological dissonance?’

According to Brookfield (2000, p.126), critical reflection on experience certainly tends to lead to the uncovering of paradigmatic, structuring assumptions. Within the Church of England, considering the training of priests within Higher Education in which critical reflection is pivotal, theological paradigms may be the focal assumption. Reflection is used throughout the training process for priests in the Church of England. Ministerial formation is an expectation in this training process. The hypothesis by the researcher of the correlation between reflection and formation was that a theological dilemma was the only ‘conflict-crisis’ brought on by reflection which led to transformative learning. Furthermore, now working in a business college, with critical reflection still being pivotal in module teaching, in comparison, what dilemma can be expected among these students?

The hypothesis was tested on two focus groups by providing a review of the literature in the form of a reflective cycle. The review of the literature drew primarily on the work by Moon (1999) about the use of reflection to affect deep learning and change, and the work by Collicut (2015) on Christian character formation. The two focus groups, examining their experience as priests in the final year of their training in the light of the researcher’s reflection provided feedback on what significant dilemmas took place for them.

The hypothesis was modified. The narratives from the two focus groups indicated that the most common dilemma among them was that of bereavement and a conflict-crisis of identity. The tool of reflection did not initiate bereavement and/or the conflict-crisis of identity but was a useful tool in order to negotiate them.

**The Disorienting Dilemma: Loss of Ground**

Larry Green

As a psychotherapist and professor I’ve learned that little transformation occurs that doesn’t respect and address resistance to change. Personal transformation is a possibility—perhaps even an expectation—in both contexts. However, as Mezirow (2000) observed, transformation of meaning perspectives is relatively rare. This presentation is an examination of why that might be the case. Hopefully, a more nuanced understanding of the forces that resist will enable us to provide better support for those standing at the threshold of such a process. In comparative mythology transformation is aptly named the hero’s journey thus connoting its daunting nature. The archetypical hero goes on an adventure, and in a decisive crisis passes a test, and then comes home changed or transformed. In transformative learning theory, this decisive crisis would be the disorienting dilemma. Such a dilemma reveals a fault line in the very ground, or premises that previously supported the individual—a terrifying prospect. According to Mezirow (2000) ‘[a] defining condition of being human is our urgent need to understand and order the meaning of our experience, to integrate it with what we know, in order to avoid the threat of chaos’ (p.3) Giddens (1991) claimed that such an ordering and understanding provided ontological security or a sense of continuity. A disorienting dilemma splits that sense of continuity—producing a ‘before’ and ‘after’ of the precipitating event. The individual is thrown into profound ambivalence between the need to conserve their self as they know it to be and a need to venture forth in search of new ground. The latter is expressed as the drive to discover or create more adequate premises.

I begin with an anecdote that simulates the experience of loss of ground. The experience invoked will be used as a reference point that can inform the resulting discussion of the challenges implicated in transformative learning. The first of these goes as follows:

‘Here is our situation. We’ve fallen out of an airplane. The bad news is that there is no parachute. The good news is that there is no ground.’

This radical reframing of the experience of loss of ground as good news reverses the natural inclination to arrest the fall. I will then make use of Sartre’s explication of the risks involved when considering a change in one’s fundamental premises.
‘Consciousness is afraid of its own radical freedom because it knows that at any moment it can make a choice that could undo a lifetime of decisions. Instead it chooses to hide out in the ego.’

Of course, the ego is capable only of replication, not creative agency. To that challenge I add another, more particular one, articulated by Lacan. He claimed that all meanings are anchored or referred to a master signifier which I read as equivalent to a fundamental premise or reference point. Psychosis can result when that master signifier is problematized unleashing a cascading of meaning that is arrested by the adoption of a disastrous metaphor that halts and stabilizes the erosion of all meaning. Paranoid ideation is a particularly florid example of such a process. The subject can ‘explain’ everything according to his own idiosyncratic system. Finally I will turn to Ortega Y Gasset for a literary description of this dangerous crossing that articulates a positive outcome.

**Bringing Truth to Life: Challenging the Boundaries Between Transformative Adult Learning and Psychotherapy, Toward a More Inclusive Community**

Larry Green & Linden West

Our paper draws on research, theory and practice to think about the boundaries between transformative adult learning and psychotherapy. We argue that the distinction between these two communities of practice could be loosened, in the interests of both. Both share an emphasis on critical reflection but according to Mezirow (2000:23-4) ‘psychotherapy focuses on assumptions regarding feelings pertaining to interpersonal relationships’. We agree, in part, with his claim but disagree that psychotherapy is limited to a focus on relationships. Rather it is a point of departure that ultimately leads to reflecting on one’s relation to the world. The reason interpersonal relationships are emphasized in psychotherapy is because it is here that one’s existential engagement is the greatest. That investment can motivate a reflective exploration when things go awry. And that exploration can reveal the inadequate assumptions that generate relationship misery. Whole worlds of experience and thinking are instantiated in this engagement. For example, the inter and thus the intra personal are often suffused with demeaning scripts of someone’s place in the world. One’s identity is frequently determined by socially constructed meanings about one’s gender, ethnicity and class.

In addition, we think that Mezirow does not go beyond a generic description of the psychotherapeutic process, thereby neglecting the affective struggle at the heart of transformation. We suggest that psychotherapy is much more aware and articulate about the nuances of such processes. This includes the despair that accompanies the realization that one’s old perspective is going nowhere; the desperation to lead a better life; the grief with letting go of one’s old safe harbor; the courage required to plunge into the unknown, the acts of agency to form new premises, etc.

Furthermore, psychotherapy cultivates a quality of thought that potentially unites the messiness and complexity of lived experience with the capacity to slightly distance ourselves from it, bringing 'truth' to life. We call this the art of transformation: finding a space of being both in touch with and mindfully (critically) separated from the unfolding experience. It is in this critical space that we can become aware of, rather than subjected to, the assumptions that govern our behavior. Without that separation it is impossible to critically evaluate one’s fundamental premises.

The scope of psychoanalytic psychotherapies is partly the ‘here and now’ of interpersonal relationships, but also of the ‘there and then’ of history, in terms of the internalized people and events that have entered our psyches and lives. They often lie at an unconscious level but can be very influential nonetheless. Consider, for example, how our subjectivities are colonized by stereotypes of race, ethnicity and gender. There is, however, little or no room for the unconscious in Mezirow; little room for what is difficult to know and articulate. This difficulty arises because it is terrifying for the conscious mind to discover an agency operating in the background. What he terms ‘assumptions’ might be equivalent in some way to the psychoanalytic unconscious, but this is uninterrogated, as is the difficulty, terror even, of letting go of them, however demeaning. Jack Mezirow does not really articulate a method
for making these assumptions visible, whereas psychotherapy does. The aforementioned critical space or separation is but one of the methods for problematizing received beliefs. Finally, psychotherapy does not eschew cognition, but rather puts it in relation to the affective and conative.

**Interacting With Non-Traditional Learners. Teachers of the ITP (Individual Teaching Programme) as a Case Study**

Paulina Hawrylewicz-Kowalska

Individual Teaching Programme (ITP) is a specific form of teaching, characteristic for the Polish educational system. It enables students with health issues to continue their education. ITP takes place in an individual, direct contact with a teacher (face to face). Due to the health issues of students covered by ITP, this teaching takes place in the student's place of residence, in their family home. A characteristic feature ITP is implementing it as part of education system in Poland, therefore students work with the curriculum adopted by the school, but it is suitably individualized and adapted to their psychophysical. I call this group nontraditional students. In the context of educational research, the term ‘nontraditional’ usually appears in relation to the student (Finnegan, Fleming, Kurantowicz, & Nizińska, 2011, s. 8). Nontraditionality fully complies with conditions / features presented in the literature on the subject. Based on this definition, it should be stated that: (1) ITP students are a group of students who due to their special characteristics (state of health and symptoms related to it) are covered by a special form of teaching, which is ITP; (2) ITP students are the only and the first persons in their families who use this form of teaching and do not have previous experience in this area; (3) participation in ITP allows them participate in education and gain education they find satisfactory.

In the area of my research interests there is a teacher working with students covered by ITP. The purpose of my research is discover common patterns of experience in the daily work of this group of teachers. I am interested in the personality traits of these teachers and how the process of their individual adaptation to work in nontraditional conditions and the nontraditional educational situation proceeds. In the research I want to learn how the knowledge resulting from these special professional experiences (the interaction of a teacher and ITP student, relationship with the student's school and home environment) is transitioned to understand of the context of their own experience and professional and nonprofessional areas of teacher’s lives (Ecclestone 2009, 9 - 26). The theoretical basis of my research is J. Mezirow’s concept of transformative learning (Mezirow 1991). The method of research was narrative interview which I conducted with two teachers a woman with eleven years of experience and a man with thirty five years of experience. Both interviews lasted about one hour were recorded and transcribed. I choose research from persons among teachers involved in the Individual Teaching Program in a big city. The paper presents the preliminary results of the analysis one of narrative interview which indicates the contexts that build the professional identity of these teachers and understanding of their own professional experience.

**Some Dilemmas Related With Professional Transitions: the Case of Nurses Becoming Teachers in Health Sector Training Centres**

Pierre Hébrard

For the contemporary period, it is more and more frequent to experience changes of function or occupation, what implies to face professional transitions. Research works about this issue indeed throw light on the fact that these transitions are often entailing a period of doubt and dilemmas more or less difficult to overcome (Dupuy & Le Blanc, 2001). Doubt about one's competence in the new occupation, difficulties to integrate the norms and values ruling the new activity, without renouncing the particular values related with its first professional identity, dilemmas due to the process of freeing/commitment (Martin & Mègemont, 2016). My paper will present the results of a research concerning this type of dilemmas and some conditions that can allow to overcome them through learning. It is about nurses who recently
became teachers in health sector training centres. After a long period of work as nurses, they were assuming a new function as manager of a team of nurses, before becoming teachers. Their professional career is then marked by two main professional transitions, entailing some dilemmas about values and perspectives related with their new occupations. However some kind of continuity is also active, because some values and frames of reference, that have been integrated during their preceding experiences can be appropriate in the new situations. This study refers to biographical research (Lahire 2013; Delory-Momberger 2016) and is based on the theoretical frame of transformative Learning (Mezirow 1991, 2003; Hébrard 2016). The methodology is built on semi-directive interviews focused on the vocational career of four people – two women and two men – who have recently taken on a function of teacher in health sector training centres. The content analysis has thrown light on the processes by which they had to overcome some dilemmas in order to build their new identity of teacher. It allowed us to give some elements of answer to the following questions: What factors have facilitated the overcoming of the dilemmas related with professional transitions and have helped the process of transformative learning? What was the influence of some significant meetings with certain persons (mentors, peers, etc.)? What was the role of the tensions between continuity and change, of the socialisation within a community of practice, and of the interactions with other actors in the training situations?

**Defining the Notion of Responsibility Using Dramatic Techniques**

Maria Kagiavi

The workshop presented here, was targeting to reveal the strong dynamic which is included in the use of art during the teaching process of adult learning groups. During the workshop’s process, we applied D. Perkins’ ‘model’ of ‘Visible Thinking’ and used specific tools borrowed by the Educational Drama’s teaching hypothesis. The questions asked were:

1. How do participants understand the meaning of ‘responsibility’? Which are their views and consensuses for the topic and how do they handle the meaning in their professional as well as their wider environment?
2. Could the methods of ‘Visible Thinking’ and ‘Educational Drama’ contribute to the critical approach of ‘responsibility’, conducting an emotional probe relative to this meaning and probably to the modification of any expressed negative or malfunctioning emotions?

Visual arts and songs were used as stimulus in order to investigate the above mentioned questions together with the development of critical thinking followed, most likely, by critical reflection.

Experiential sessions Stages:

*Introduction:* The workshop opens with the participants answering the question ‘What do I want to ask about the issue of responsibility?’ in written form. The small pieces of paper are folded and collected in a small box.

*Contact:* The participants choose a painting and, depending on the painting of their choice, they are divided into pairs. During the first acquaintance process they explain their reason for choosing the specific work of art.

*Initial observation of the works of arts:* Subsequently, the paintings are closely observed and further studied using D. Perkins’ ‘Visible Thinking’ Approach.

*Thought Activation:* After the completion of the observation, the participants are divided into 4 groups based on the two paintings and are asked to answer the following questions:

1. What’s the relationship between the people presented in the painting? (2 groups)
2. Which of the two individuals in the painting holds the responsibility of the relationship? (2 groups)

*Dramaturgical processing:* The teams are asked to register and then act out their viewpoints on the following subjects:

1. What preceded the scene depicted in the painting?
2. What will follow the scene portrayed in the painting?
Individual Thinking: Following the representation of their views, the participants are requested to draw the outline of the human figure in the painting whose role was recognized by their group as the leading one in the relationship and both in-role and out-of-role feelings are listed. The second group members express their feelings while the painting under discussion is projected.

Collective Thinking: The groups carry out a discussion of the way the concept of responsibility was approached during the representation.

Reflection: The participants are provided with a piece of paper and are asked to note down one word referred to in the workshop they just attended which they believe it best answers their own concern about the issue of responsibility. The notes are read in comparison to the first ones.

Closure: The workshop ends with discussion in plenary session.

The Utilization of the Aesthetic Experience as a Means for a Better View of Life
Maria Karakou

One of the messages I receive daily in recent years through my interpersonal relationship with my pupils, is the frustration they feel as they cannot get closer to the standards promoted by the media. They appear to be facing a disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 1991) about the real values of life, since they focus on material goods to such an extent that they are prevented from enjoying what they already have and consequently are unable to appreciate the pleasures of life.

According to the above, the workshop presented below aims to: critical thinking about what really matters in life.

Goals
- Knowledge level: Understand that material goods are not everything in life
- Skills level: Report small daily joys; Identify behaviors that prevent them from enjoying everyday life
- Attitudes level: Adopt a more optimistic and positive attitude towards life

Main educational tools:
- Active educational techniques (Courau, 2000).
- The Method of Transformational Learning through Aesthetic Experience as a means of developing critical thinking (Kokkos, 2011). The existing bibliography on the application of this method has shown that it is an integrated educational tool, as the teaching of cognitive objects through the aesthetic experience offers beginnings of thought and movement of emotions that perhaps cannot emerge with such intensity through other educational practices.

It can contribute to the development of horizontal capabilities such as understanding complex situations, discovery and interconnection of individual information elements, conceptualization of alternatives, awareness of differences (Kokkos, 2011, Mega, 2011, Barlos & Gogu, 2011) that Kokkos calls ‘mental function’ (2017), as well as in the formation of aesthetic criteria. In addition, it may engage students in a critical reflection process (Mezirow, 2007, Kokkos, 2017).

The workshop lasted 8 teaching hours and passed all stages of the Transforming Learning through Aesthetic Experience. 22 students of the 3rd class of technical education took part (age 17-22).

The works selected were the text by Z. Saramagou ‘About the Blindness’, which was also used as a theatrical play and the film ‘The Wings of Love’ by Wim Wenders.

Results
After completing the workshop, the participants' comments were absolutely positive: they characterized it as a pleasant, very interesting experience, through which a variety of feelings emerged, such as fear, dissatisfaction, surprise, but also hope, optimism, pleasure.

By comparing their final views with the original ones, in addition to enlargement - enrichment, they have identified a deepening - awareness of the real values of life and in several points a shift of views, as Raikou calls (2013: 306) a large-scale diversification, there
is a change of the original concepts from instrumental and standardized to more empirical and holistic approaches.

**Traces of Transformations: Dilemmas as Learning Resources and Drivers for Transformation?**
Monika Kastner, Ricarda Motschilnig & Irene Cennamo

This paper ought to be a journey into participatory research in adult literacy education. When researching the roots of a possible Austrian ‘tradition’ in adult literacy education, we found an early reference to Mezirow’s theory by Elisabeth Brugger, one of the Austrian pioneers in adult literacy education, who met Mezirow in the late 1980s at Columbia Teachers College when working there as a teaching assistant. Brugger referred to Mezirow’s theory in the documentation of the first national program (1990 – 1995) for German speaking adult literacy learners, and used Mezirow’s ‘perspective transformation’ (1988) as a heuristically concept for explaining participants’ decision to take part in adult literacy education (Brugger et al., 1997). We found and re-visited an ‘Austrian spirit’ of (self-)empowerment, critical and emancipatory approaches and life-deep and life-wide orientation (cf. anonymised, in press; Doberer-Bey, 2016).

**Theoretical concepts**
Following and rethinking these roots, based on Mezirow’s theoretical framework and inspired by the figure of ‘Competent Comrades’ (Belzer & Pickard, 2015) (which indeed is a common figure in the classrooms of adult literacy education in Austria), we grounded our approach in setting up a participatory research project entitled ‘Forschungskurs Lernen’ (‘research seminar on learning’). The research group consisted of adult literacy learners, professionals and university-based researchers. Our research topic was ‘learning’.

We aim at transformation and change in individuals, communities of practice, research and societies as (possible and desired) results, because participatory research is an integrated activity that combines social investigation, educational work and learning, and action (Tandon & Mohanty, 2002). Measures promoting (self-) empowerment and enhancement of individual self-competencies substantiate Community-based participatory research (von Unger, 2014). The Transformative Learning Theory (Taylor & Cranton, 2012; Fisher-Yoshida et al., 2009; King & Heuer, 2009) seems to legitimate a participatory research approach, because ‘experiences’ may catalyse transformations. Vice versa, this research approach could serve as a methodological frame for experiencing and researching transformative learning processes.

**Milestones of the journey: Dilemmas as learning resources and drivers for transformation in scientific activities**
In the paper session, we plan to share considerations on pedagogical/andragogical learning theories interrogating transformative processes and on methodological challenges connected with participatory approaches. We will identify project-generated dilemmas, and provoke movements in thinking, using a dialectical approach, across these spheres and dimensions:

- Individuals and collectives
- Adult education providers
- Governance
- Scientific community
- Society

In brief thesis we will debate the identified dilemmas, which are located in dynamic fields of tensions and we will take multiple antagonistically perspectives in consideration. Topics will be: reflecting and sharing power – necessary and potential transformations of all participants and parties involved; aspirations of change and ethical responsibility; starting participatory projects (who is in charge of defining the research topic?); grade of participation; dissemination of findings to different addressees; resistance towards participatory approaches and research proposals (scientific mainstream); transforming stigmatising and discriminating societal discourses on adult literacy (learners).
Transformative Experiences in Biosciences: Dilemmas for Students and Professors?
Katerina Kedraka

In this article, we argue that integrating and self-directed knowledge across university learning can lead to critical reflections and potentially transformative learning, for both students and educators. A learning experience regarding the critical awareness of transformative learning and changes in thinking and/or action in the field of Biosciences that students of the Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics of the Democritus University of Thrace have gone through the Student-Run Biology Workshop (SRBW) is presented. This is an project fully undertaken by the students, aiming to involve undergraduate students in the field of Biosciences to deeply approach and present scientific issues in an innovative way, in order to reach scientific knowledge through self-improvement, team-work, interaction, collaboration and discussion. The participating students worked using self-regulating learning, a strategy in which they took control of their learning through team building and active learning processes, exploring alternative ways of collaborating, deepening and presenting and, in general, understanding their scientific knowledge and their role within their curricula. Therefore, students through self-directed learning chose to leave their comfort zone mostly by integrating new concepts of learning into their mental models, thus engaged in critical reflection and led to a radically innovative learning model in Biosciences.

The aim of the research was to find out whether this educational experience was a transformative experience, as well. Qualitative research method was used; data was collected by personally-written documents and proceeded through Content Analysis. Results showed that students’ participation and consequently their teamwork within the SRBW energized them to face assumptions, to engage in new concerns, to adopt alternative learning practices, to gain a critical and comprehensive understanding of Biosciences and their role within the field. The experience gained by the students has led them to a review of roles, to the building of a new perception of knowledge, to co-operation, to self-management of educational activities, and, eventually, to a more emancipatory learning. The findings confirm Mezirow (1990), who underlined that learning is essentially the process of interpreting an experience that affects the subsequent action of the individual, since values, perceptions, thoughts and feelings are determined, to a significant extent, by the reflection on our habits and assumptions, which are at the same time the limits of our perception. This experience offered the students the opportunity to approach university learning through a self-regulated, alternative, innovative strategy, leading to integrative, synthetic approaches grounded in team work, innovation and engagement in activities encouraging problem solving. Concluding, this initiative seemed to generate to a cognitive struggle, a concept identified as the engine that drives highly creative thinking since knowledge, skills and concepts are acquired and mental models are subsequently transformed, a process Mezirow referred to as transformative learning (Pennington, 2013).

But what if this SRBW project is something much more? Which are the key dilemmas concerning this emancipatory learning strategy deriving from this experience for the participant students- future Bioscientists? Furthermore, what about the dilemmas that we, their professors, faced when we saw our students fly so high –without needing us? And, as Brookfield (1996) underlined, can we critically approach our assumptions and assertions without experiencing the consequences of our actions?

Self-Directed or Assisted Learning? A Persistent Dilemma of Adult Educators
Alexis Kokkos

There is a long tradition in the theoretical framework of adult education (e.g. Knowles, 1975; Tough, 1979; Boud, 1981; Smith, 1982; Mezirow, 1991; Illeris, 2017) which considers that self-directed learning – understood as the process in which learners take responsibility for various decisions associated with their own learning – constitutes a core aim of the field. Indicatively, Cranton (2006) claims that ‘the concept of self-directed learning has permeated
adult education theory and practice to such an extent that it is almost equated with adult education’ (p.3). The rational of this widely shared belief is that through the self-directed process learners may become motivated and empowered, and enhance their ability to take control over their choices and actions. Moreover, Cranton (ibid) stresses on the specific link between self-directed and transformative learning in that the process of the latter requires a certain amount of reflecting initiative from the part of the learners.

On the other hand, a great number of radical theorists have pointed out that there are inherent constraints in the enterprise of self-directed learning. For instance, Brookfield (2005), Freire (1970), Illeris (2017), and Mezirow (1991) claim that learners have often interiorized taken-for-granted assumptions by which they are determined, thereby they have difficulty to recognize their real needs and interests. Kegan (1994) stresses that the majority of adults lack the epistemological readiness in order to take charge of their dysfunctional assumptions, e.g. they do not possess the required internal system for self-evaluation and cognitive sophistication. For all these reasons, adults indulge in immunity for change and they refuse to engage in processes that challenge their perspective.

Therefore, adult educators deal with a crucial dilemma regarding their role, that involves interconnected dimensions: Is it ethical to encourage learners to challenge their assumptions when the latter resist or do not fully recognize this aim? To what extend might they put forward which among the learners’ assumptions should be assessed? How might they foster learners’ understanding without being unduly influential? Finally, how could they preserve the goal of self-directed learning while at the same time they have to deal with learners’ reluctance and lack of awareness?

In my conference’s paper, the dimensions of the stated dilemma will be analytically presented. Moreover, the various ways of dealing with this will be discussed in the light of the ideas expressed by three major scholars of the field (Brookfield, Freire, Mezirow).

Structure of the Experiential Workshop
First part: The theoretical background of the dilemma will be presented.
Second part: The way to deal with the dilemma will be discussed by the participants (group work).
Third part: The views of the groups will be expressed and elaborated. There will also be connection to the theorists’ views, which concern ways of dealing with the dilemma at hand.

The Disorienting Dilemma of Cultural Estrangement in Refugee Communities and the Transformative Potential of Authentic Input in Instructed L2 Learning
George Koulouzides & Maria Skiada

When the structure and the content of a person’s life-world is stable and the person is able to respond to every meaning-making challenge, life is characterized by validity and soundness. However, this validity is challenged during a crisis or during a significant metabasis from a certain life paradigm to another. During this metabatic period the person experiences a disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 1991). Even though, the physiopsychic characteristics of a disorienting dilemma have not been defined, we claim that an experience can be considered as such, whenever a person is confronted with a paradoxical personal or collective situation that challenges the assumptions of the individual frame of reference. The forced relocation which is experienced due to political turbulences, armed conflicts and other forms of violence by refugees generates similar situations and conditions. Burnett (2013:25-26) states that ‘A refugee’s identity is impacted from the moment of fleeing their home country until being granted refuge in a new host country’.

Several studies advocate that one of the most essential cultural aspects of the host country that should be comprehended by refugees is language. According to a recent study, language teaching and learning is vital for providing refugees with opportunities for social engagement. The same study recommends that without it, the long-term options for refugees are limited (Capstick & Delaney, 2016). We are supportive of this recommendation and in this presentation we additionally claim that the disorienting dilemma of cultural estrangement felt by the refugees, may be alleviated using authentic texts in language teaching. Indeed, the
authenticity debate being held in the field of linguistics is enriched with arguments which advocate the use of authentic texts as an input which is appropriate and capable of fostering language acquisition (Mishan, 2005).

In the case of refugees who learn the target language (L2) within an instructed learning environment, the incorporation of a plethora of authentic texts prepares them for the cultural immersion which they will experience out of the class, and it helps them to systemize and become aware of the knowledge which is acquired under real conditions of communication. The contribution of the native cultural products (literature, music, films, newspapers, etc.), selected based on their relevance and immediacy, provides learners with the necessary cultural equipment that make them, ‘feel more confident and (...) sound more fluent in the target culture’ (Tomalin & Stempleski 1993:39). Moreover, authentic texts, as vehicles of the symbiotic relationship between language and culture, create conditions for consciousness raising leading to a form of (cultural) awareness which is as an influential factor in transformative learning processes. From a psycholinguistic point of view, the exposure to an instructed experience to authentic input, allows learners to develop the necessary new schemata, a sort of cultural transformative learning framework vital for the L2 command. Therefore, authentic texts may become keys for opening up the L2 society contributing thus to relieving the cultural estrangement and promoting the encounter with the other, an important step in acquiring the intercultural competence needed for the perspective transformation of refugees.

Frustrations, Dilemmas and Growth Worries of Beginning Teachers in Inclusive Education: a Case Study of School Teachers in Delhi, India
Pushpa Kumari, Rajiv Nayan, Geetanjali Baswani & Pawan Sahu

Inclusive education has become a prominent international ideal and value in educational policies and practices. It is a seemingly simple concept about opportunities, equality, and solidarity that has wide global appeal. Learners with disabilities and those experiencing diverse barriers to learning are gaining access to mainstream schools and curricula. It requires great effort over many years to prepare a school system as well as the schools to be inclusive offering effective education. Seeing that children and communities differ greatly, there is need to find out what works for particular learners in particular schools and classroom situations. Inclusive education is thus an ‘evolutionary process’. Instead of inclusion being a reform effort, schools are trying to integrate their human as well and their capital resources in order to offer integrated improvements to cater for all learners (Janney & Snell, 2013).

Teachers who are beginners in this field face various challenges because of the demands of their work made increasingly difficult by the diverse range of students, lack of assistance to support the diverse range of student needs and the resulting burnout. This paper intends to present data from beginning teachers, to illustrate the ongoing problems they face when teaching students with diverse learning needs. Despite policy advances and mandated courses in inclusive education in initial teacher education, beginning teachers are overwhelmed by the magnitude of teaching diverse learners in contemporary classrooms. Many studies conclude that teachers are key to the success of inclusive education, yet candidates are still leaving initial teacher education without the skills, knowledge, or attitudes needed to work with all of their future students (Jones and Fuller, 2003). This paper would like to conclude by arguing that the voice of beginning teachers is essential for the ongoing movement towards the creation of not just inclusive schools but also inclusive societies.

Development of an ePortfolio Page: the Notebook to Reflect on the Meaning of Life
Concetta La Rocca & Massimo Margottini

Contemporary society often faces dilemmas concerning the formative and the working path. Particularly in this work we analyze the dilemma trainers have in regard to guidance. To guide means: A) analyze skills possessed by the subject to help him to find the most appropriate profession?; or: B) support the subject in the self-analysis of her/his training path
in order to bring out the authentic motivational drive to implement behaviors that give meaning to her/his existence in an overall way? Naturally, the search for employment is always primary importance, but, in the second alternative, it is not considered exclusive and exhaustive of the orientation. In this study we support the need to provide subjects with useful tools for the overall reflection on their own path in order to help them become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses and therefore to draw a line of conduct on which they can imagine and build a future in field of existenzial dimension, training, work, relationship (Batini 2005, Bruner, 1992). The ePortfoio (Barrett 2000, 2003; Huang et al 2012; La Rocca 2015 a, b; Margottini, 2013, 2014; Pitts et al 2012) is an appropriate tool to design future starting from reflection on past experiences and from the analysis of the present. The authors, already in previous researches, have built an ePortfoio considering it a semi-structured tool/environment because subjects freely build some pages and compile structured tools for the construction of other pages. This study presents one of these structured tools called Notebook for the reflection on the meaning of life which constitutes, precisely, a page of eP; the notebook allows you to accompany the subject to reflect on the meaning of her/his life path using the imagination (Mancinelli, 2008) and the dimension of values (Bernaud, 2015). The notebook is ongoing in empirical experimentation in some upper classes of EINAUDI institute in Rome; in these classes there is a strong component of students with problems and immigrants. In the final paper we will report the results of the experiment.

Disorienting Dilemmas and Irritations in Professional Development. A Longitudinal Study on Swiss Teacher-Students
Anna Laros & Julia Košinár

The research project ‘Challenges for Future and Beginning Primary Teachers’ (PH FHNW 2014-2017) aims at identifying how primary teacher students perceive and cope with challenges during training and after career entry. During both phases of their professional development, (burgeoning) teachers experience profound irritations that make them question their taken for granted beliefs. The strategies they develop in order to cope with challenges accompany changes in their perspectives, which can be interpreted as transformative learning processes (Mezirow 1991). Presently, several studies on teacher professionalization examine whether such changes of perspectives can be interpreted as transformative learning processes or even as habitual transformation (Kramer 2013, Kosinar 2014).

In a reconstructive study with a qualitative research design, we conducted 14 narrative-style interviews with students at the end of their training (t1) and after their career entry (t2). The guiding principle for data analysis was the documentary method (Bohnsack 2013, Nohl 2013). We identified four relational types (Nohl 2013) that guide the students' processes of professionalization during their practicum (t1). We named the different frameworks: 1. ‘self-actualization’, 2. ‘adaptation’, 3. ‘development’, 4. ‘probation’. Our analyses show that experiencing and coping with disorienting dilemmas lead some young teachers to cease acting in accordance with their frameworks of orientation. Instead, they search out alternative frames to help them to understand their new experiences and to find a fit within their social field. During this learning process, their perspectives shift and, consequently, they act differently.

We further analyze students' and young professionals' learning processes by referring to two theoretical concepts: Mezirow’s (1991) concept of transformative learning and Combe’s (2015) interpretation of experimental learning theory (Dewey 1994). In both concepts, profound learning is catalyzed by an irritation or crisis, which is followed by an intensive, highly individual process wherein learners begin coping with crises and consequent changes in their thinking and acting follow. Further analogies, as well as differences between both concepts, will be depicted.

In our contribution, we outline the four professionalization-frameworks that students' orientations can be attributed to at the end of their training period. Using contrastive case studies, we will give examples of how interviewees are dealing with disorienting dilemmas during their practical training (t1) and after their career entry (t2). The longitudinal
perspective allows us to reconstruct profound changes in students' orientations that can be interpreted as transformative learning processes. Special emphasis will be placed on how these findings shed new light on the role of disorienting dilemmas in transformative-learning theory (Mälkki 2012, Laros & Taylor 2015).

The Hero’s/ Heroine’s journey – experiencing the transformative potential of dilemma
Daniela Lehner

The Hero’s journey is based on the mythological work of Joseph Campbell (2008) and his map of archetypical patterns. According to his understanding myth is the symbolic and collective wisdom that is present in all cultures at all times. Myth symbolizes the essential knowledge of life cycles, transformation and initiation. All cultures at all times had rites for transition processes in life. As Carl Gustav Jung (1989) describes, collective symbols and myths present concentrated experiences of people. A symbol presents an actualised archetype; in fact, there are universal interpretations of symbols but the experiences of archetypes are individually unique.

Campbell describes the archetypical journey of the hero/heroine as one who follows his/her call starting with a crisis or dilemma. It is the dilemma of the desires/potentials of a person and the challenges to bring them alive or fulfil them. As Mezirow (1991) describes, a disorienting dilemma or crisis holds potential for transformation. The hero’s/heroine’s journey is initiated by intra-personal dilemma.

Rebillot (2011) created a one week long workshop, using methods from theatre, gestalt therapy, body work, dance and indigenous rituals to create a holistic concept called the hero’s journey. The hero/heroine is the archetype who starts an adventurous journey, following his or her call, out of dilemma and crisis. The person separates from his or her known environment and spends one week with a small group for internal archetypical self- and group discovery. This is a discovery of one’s own potentials and treasures. At the end of the journey the hero/heroine brings back his or her gifts to serve society. The path of self-discovery is also a discovery of recognizing once unique place in the world.

The inner wisdom or intuition is guiding the hero/heroine through his or her fears, shadows and unknown inner terrains, while the inner demon of resistance is trying to stop the hero/heroine from his or her call. In the process, one becomes aware of the inner belief sentences or inner demons, which are mostly adapted from society (media, family, school etc.). This is a process of embodied expression and self-reflection of the learned limitations and personal potentials. Drawing on my personal experience with the heroine’s journey, I realized how my belief sentences about gender norms restrained my self-concept and body posture.

I experienced the journey as a transformational process, which changed my self-concept and concepts about my surroundings. I came in contact with my personal archetypes of change and experienced a ritual of transformation, as a process of separation, initiation and return. I experienced as O'Sullivan, Morrell and O'Connor (2002: xvii) describe, “a deep structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and permanently alters our way of being in the world” (…).

In the final paper, I present a theoretical analysis of the Hero’s journey, and its potential as a map for transformative learning processes out of dilemma, including an auto-ethnographical perspective based on my personal heroine’s journey in March 2017 and narrative interviews with the group/participants I shared the experience.

Feminism as a Dilemma? Three Voices for a Dis/orientating Conversation
Silvia Luraschi, Gaia Del Negro & Laura Formenti

In this paper, we share the first results of a triadic ethnographic conversation (Sawyer, Norris, 2013) using different kinds of writing, pictures and ‘evocative objects’ (Bolas, 2009) as a way of knowing (Heron, 1996). Our collaboration, not least in an international research workshop about gender in art and adult education, and involving other voices in order to
enrich or challenge our narratives, will be a starting point for critical reflection. Our research method incorporates theories of dialogue, life history, aesthetic representation, and transformation.

We are different: three white women, researchers in education from different backgrounds. Our university is situated on the fringes of an economically strong and culturally vibrant city, in a suburban district, whose heavy and manufacturing industries once thrived. Recent research illuminates how traditional working class cities have been changing in fifty years (1968-2018) raising issues of alienation, fragmentation, anxiety, and fundamentalism (West, 2016). We use biographical and art-based methodologies to make sense of emerging phenomena and to raise awareness of their subjective, relational, and social implications (Author, 2016, 2017).

Recently, the revival of feminist ideas and practices, also due to Trump’s election and the Weinstein affair, is producing discussions, self-disclosure, political activism, and a possibility to foster awareness of the many forms of oppression that a woman can experience. This may open up new spaces for transformative learning. However, speaking of ‘feminism’ in our experience is difficult. It may produce annoyance, as if the term did not serve to problematize experience, but rather to classify people. So, the political is interpreted as straightly personal. Are you a feminist? I am not a feminist! Besides, we did not construct this term through collective engagement with other women, as it was the case when it was born. The political stopped being personal time ago, it seems.

Our aim, then, is to explore some dilemmas brought in our lives by a feminist self-positioning: about learning, about our theory and practice of research, about the imagination and representation of gender, especially in art and adult education, about the embodiment of identity, knowing, and social justice. Starting from our own experience as the ‘site of research’ (Norris, Sawyer & Lund, 2012), and using it to foster an intimate experience of reciprocal unveiling, as feminist groups did in the Seventies. Collaboration and critical friendship will sustain our mutual interrogation of established roles and identities, ideas and presuppositions about social engagement.

Transformative Learning in the Novel Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse
Aleksa Jovanovic

This paper presents the transformative learning theory of Jack Mezirow through the novel Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse. Content analysis was chosen, within the qualitative research paradigm, because of its capacity to encompass the abundance of qualitative data which this novel provides. The concept of social role takes very important place in this paper. One of the valuable insights is that there are two groups of phases in the transformation of perspective. The first group contains the first four phases, and they are a critical part of the transformation of perspective, while in the second group there are phases that pertain to the creation of a new role, or a new meaning perspective. All the results and conclusions drawn are based on the particulars of this analysis, not generalisations.

Social Relations and a Café
Chrysa Manthou

Recently, in education it has been scientifically demonstrated that the formation of enriched learning processes with the use of art enables students to experience and understand better the subject under research. Also, this method gives the opportunity to the students to examine in depth the researched issue by critically thinking through the dialogue, to interact, to critically reflect on dilemmas that offer the stimulus for learning and reflection, to review and even to revise their established stereotyped perceptions. Furthermore it is possible for people who are not familiar with art to approach emotionally, cognitively and culturally the artworks selected for the teaching, achieving the learning through the activation of horizontal skills, critical and creative thinking and empathy (Kokkos, 2011; Raikou, 2013; Xristou, 2015; Kayiavi, 2016).
The main aim of this paper is to feature, through dilemmas inherent in adult learners, the stereotyped views that they express about the role of the coffee shop as a setting for the creation and development of social relations and as a place for communication of lonely people. Additionally, this paper presents the critical thinking’s trajectory and the potential transformation of adult learners’ stereotypical perceptions on an issue that they easily overlook as a social frame of reference without taking into account the process of reflection and critical understanding of sovereign perceptions and practices. The trajectory of the teaching process in the above subject is presented and analyzed with the use of Kokkos’s method ‘transformative learning through the aesthetic experience’ (Kokkos, 2011). This method associates the content of artworks with the content of topics studied by students or adults, aiming to their critical and creative skills’ development. The application of the above method to education, is proposed with this paper. Since its use proves to have positive effect on the process of knowledge’s acquirement, the deeper subject’s examination, the reflection and the critical thinking and eventually on the transformation of incorrect assumptions. With regard to the contribution’s structure, initially is presented the theoretical framework along with the influences of the main scholars of the Frankfurt School (Adorno and Horkheimer), Cornelius Castoriadis, the Palo Alto thinkers of California, Freire and Ira Shor, on the art’s contribution and importance (Kayiavi, 2016).

Afterwards, the Kokkos's method ‘Transforming Learning through Aesthetic Experience’ with its 6 (six) main phases and reference to its goals of activating the critical and creative thinking of learners through the artworks’ processing, is presented (Kokkos, 2011 ). The implementation’s phases of the teaching intervention for the learners of a Second Chance School in the social literacy’s subject are described. ‘Social relations and coffee shop’ was the teaching topic and the ‘Transforming Learning through Aesthetic Experience’ was used. Through the teaching tools, included visual artworks and literature, the transformation of learners’ initial views was attempted. Finally, it is highlighted that for the effectiveness of such an educational process, with emphasis on the method ‘Transforming Learning through Aesthetic Experience’, emerge as decisive factors: the context, the learning environment, the educators' reflection on their teaching, the evaluation and self-evaluation. Also, the educators’ essential knowledge, their experience and their personal support attitude are emerged as prerequisites (Kokkos 2011).

Dilemmas in Facilitating Transformative Processes in Adult Education. A Case Study by Teaching Modern Greek as L2
Mary Margaroni

The proposed paper explores the role of the dilemmas that arise during educational programs for teaching Modern Greek as L2 to adult students and in which ways those dilemmas could be a starting point for cultivation of critical thinking and potential internal transformative processes for both students and teacher. This is a case study which concerns a summer intensive Greek language course for foreign students at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Modern Greek Language School) in summer of 2017. As almost all Greek language courses for foreigners in Greek universities have as their main objective to help students to achieve the level of Greek which they aim, according to the Common European Framework for Languages, usually lessons are oriented on the final linguistic exams organized by the Greek Language Center to obtain one of the official diplomas: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2. This often creates the conviction both for students and teachers that the success of a language course depends on the coverage (or lack thereof) of the educational matter mentioned in the Study Guide. Typically, the initial presentation of the linguistic theory is followed by its practical application in the form of various exercises, emphasizing the communicative approach to language. The result of this exam-centric approach to language is on the one hand the creation of a sense of lack of time to engage in educational material beyond the predetermined textbooks, whose content is almost literally followed, and on the other the teacher-centered orientation of teaching, in which the teacher teaches and the students are taught usually in class and rare outside.
Within this well-defined teaching framework, in July 2017, an 80-hour Modern Greek language course for foreigners B1 level took place. Recognizing the problematic reference frameworks and the dilemmas of conventional teaching, which deprive the learning process of its creativity and its experiential dimension, reduce or even completely eliminate the critical dialogue between the teacher and the students and their critical reflection and limits the possibilities for deeper internal transformations to all involved, I adopted and applied more democratic, open, and flexible didactic methods such as CLIL (Eurydice Network, 2006) and didactic techniques such as theater-pedagogical techniques (Levy, 2005). I also extended the language lessons outside of the restricted and restrictive space of school and class and I used language not as an end in itself but as a tool of creating and sharing meaningful ideas, ways of thinking, personal experiences and expectations. In this way, the educational / linguistic-pedagogical process could regain its original substance as a deep act of love and transformation (Mezirow, 2000; Gunnaugson, 2005).

Training for Entrepreneurship: the Dilemma of Time and Isolation. The Case of 88 Entrepreneurs of Small Companies in Brittany
Jean-Michel Mégret & Jérôme Eneau

‘Nature always imposed upon beings this imperious dilemma: to adapt or to disappear’ (Le Bon, 1920, p. 43). This proposal by a French doctor and sociologist (1841-1931) seems to echo the challenges proposed to the entrepreneur of the 21st century. It is from this idea that we will shed light on the place of the dilemma in the entrepreneurship training of 88 Breton entrepreneurs. What role does the dilemma play in the sustainability of companies? In what form does it translate into entrepreneurial learning?

According to Cristol and Muller (2013) ‘entrepreneurs have little time to learn, because they are dedicated to developing their business first [...]’. They would arbitrate their choices based on a parameter of time management and their commitment to training’. In addition, Toutain and Verzat (2015) state that while it is usual to consider entrepreneurship ‘professionally and socially’ as an ‘individual activity’, we cannot ignore the permanent interaction between the entrepreneur and his environment. We can then ask how the entrepreneur does apprehend the time between learning and activity, in this environment? What would be the benefits? How can he preserve his independence while learning from and by others? To provide some answers to these questions, we will first delimit the dilemma in its dimension referring to the temporalities of transformation processes, in an entrepreneurial context, through ‘lack of time’ to dialogue and to think critically. In a second step, referring to the work of Alhadeff-Jones (2014), we will look at the central aspect of new conceptions of ‘support modalities likely to favor the deployment of a reflexive capacity and a power to act on our relationship to time’. Then, based on Eneau's (2005) ‘educational reciprocity’ and Mezirow's ‘transformative learning theory’ (2001), we will examine the place of disorienting dilemma in a co-development situation taking place in an entrepreneurial context.
Finally, the empirical approach will be based on two studies (Mégret, 2016): the first, conducted as part of a Master's degree in Education Sciences and conducted through a questionnaire with 68 entrepreneurs in Brittany; then second, still in progress and more qualitative, carried out in the framework of a first year of doctorate and based on 20 interviews with entrepreneurs.
After a short presentation of the main results, the discussion will examine 1) the importance of dilemmas of time and isolation in the entrepreneurial process and 2) the importance of sharing learning experiences, to give to the entrepreneurs a more effective ‘power to act’.

Examining Feminist Pedagogy From the Perspective of Transformative Learning: Do Race and Gender Matter in Feminist Classrooms?
Misawa Mitsunori & Juanita Johnson-Bailey
Feminist pedagogy has been widely used by many practitioners in education to create safer and more inclusive learning environments. Feminist pedagogy is the art and science of teaching from women-centered and feminist approaches by aiming ‘to encourage the students to gain an education that would be relevant to their concerns, to create their own meanings, and to find their own voices in relation to the material’ (Maher & Tetreault, 2001, pp. 3-4). Feminism is both a social justice movement, as well as a framework through which to understand women’s experiences in male-dominated societal institutions. As a movement to promote equality between women and men, feminism has served as one of the most effective and liberatory social movements in the U.S. and abroad (Freedman, 2003). Feminist pedagogy also allows students and teachers to understand how knowledge and viewpoints are multifocal instead of uniform. While practicing feminist pedagogy is valued in contemporary postsecondary education, especially when one has feminist components and women-centered curriculum, traditional ways of operating feminist pedagogy can be complicated by the positionality of instructors and learners (Johnson-Bailey & Lee, 2005). Feminist pedagogy enables educators to enhance and promote an understanding of social justice from a gender perspective that has often focused on White heterosexual female perspective in the field of women’s studies. Research shows that it may be the case that women who are not White heterosexual females frequently have their own authority and knowledge questioned.

This proposed presentation will focus on how non-White professors, a Black tenured full female professor and an Asian male pre-tenured professor co-created a feminist classroom and how they negotiated their power in that class. We propose that feminist pedagogy is a viable framework through which to create and foster learning environments that center the voices and experiences of women and other marginalized learners. In addition, feminist pedagogy foregrounds the development of critical thinking skills, building a community of learners, and consciousness-raising through linking personal experiences to structural issues (hooks, 2003). In particular, this presentation specifically explores critical incidents which occurred in the class that the professors believed were directly related to their White women students’ reaction to their positionalities as a Black woman and an Asian man. The critical incidents centered on the students collective disorienting dilemmas that led to what they described as ‘transformative’. This proposed presentation will address the following questions: 1) what is feminist pedagogy? 2) what does a feminist classroom look like in higher education? 3) how does the intersection of race and gender influence feminist pedagogy? 4) how do critical incidents foster transformative learning? and 5) what strategies can adult educators and practitioners use to deal with the disoriented dilemmas in a feminist classroom in higher education? This proposed presentation has five sections. First, the presenters will use PowerPoint slides to provide general information about feminist pedagogy and feminist classrooms from relevant literature. Second, they will ask attendees about their general ideas of feminist pedagogy and feminist classrooms. Third, they will provide a brief overview of transformative learning and positionality. Then, the presenters will share their co-teaching experiences of feminist pedagogy courses from their perspectives as a Black female tenured full professor and an Asian male pre-tenured professor. Next, the presenters will give interactive activities, which will provide opportunities for the attendees to reflect on and share their classroom experiences as students and/or instructors regarding feminist pedagogy and transformative learning in feminist classrooms. Last, the presenters will provide a Q&A session.

‘Humanizing the Machine’: Exploring the Nature of Authentic Practice Online
Alice Mongiello

The paper is centred on the premise that transformative learning online is a relational, intersubjective process based on the establishment of relations of mutual recognition (Flemming 2016). There is also the perspective that the online context creates a ‘safe space’ and acts to level the playing field thereby enabling non-traditional learners to adjust more easily to the habitus of academia and therefore experience a transformation (Mongiello 2015). The central aim of the paper is to explore the nature of authentic practice online and ways in
which the personal and inner curricular of adult educators shapes their practice. Fourteen online adult educators were selected using a purposive sampling strategy. Adopting a qualitative approach based on a constructivist view of human knowledge, semi-structured asynchronous email interviews were used to collect the data. Data was analysed using a hybrid thematic approach. Four central themes emerged: positionality, authentic practice, technology as an enabler and at what cost.

Authenticity can be viewed as a ‘multi-faceted concept that includes at least four parts: being genuine, showing consistency between values and actions, relating to others in such a way to encourage their authenticity, and living a critical life’ (Cranton and Carusetta 2004:7). This view is further supported by Cranton (2006:113) who notes the key elements of an authentic relationship: ‘helping students to learn, caring for students, engaging in dialogue and being aware of exercising of power’. Mongiello (2015) refers to the subjective qualities of an online authentic relationship: support, trust, friendship, empathy and intimacy. Authentic practice online encourages adult educators to be mindful of non-traditional learners’ biographies and the ways in which these offer rich territory for fostering incidental transformations. Of interest to the paper is the practice of authenticity online and ways in which this can potentially create conditions to foster a transformation.

Although the online context has potential, there are challenges in developing an authentic online persona. Online adult educators can no longer ‘rely on sensory and expressive skills to establish and maintain relationships’ with their learners (Major 2010:184). This means their online persona has to ‘change in terms of non-verbal communication, intimacy, energy and humour’ (Coppola et al 2002:178). As adult educators bring their authentic persona into the online classroom they may find themselves questioning personal, social and institutional expectations about what it means to be a ‘good’ educator and, as a result, have to reconsider their educational online practice. In addressing this dilemma, they may need to understand better ‘their personal and hidden inner curricular’ and in doing so acquire a deeper understanding of the ‘more intimate and ostensible beliefs and motivations’ of what it means to be an online educator (Shockley et al 2008:198). Is it possible to ‘educate from the heart’ in an online context?

Contemporary Working Dilemmas and European Policies for Transformation
Georgios Panagiotopoulos & Zoe Karanikola

The contemporary societal characteristics, the rapid development of technology, the intense demographic changes, the high and persistent unemployment rates have led to major changes in the workplace, resulting in a change in wages, productivity, working conditions and relationships, types of occupations and organizational models (UN Human Development Report, 2015). This pace of change is expected to continue in the coming decades, causing workers to feel uncertain, complex and volatile. In addition, the increased life expectancy has as a result the increase of work life limits. More and more elderly people continue to work or are forced to work, as one major concern of many countries is to protect their insurance funds. These particular conditions, coupled with intense population movements, have the effect of increasing populations that are vulnerable social, economic and professional groups. Groups that need to redefine their work profile and strengthen it with skills that will allow them to respond to the mental, physical and emotional demands of the new labor market.

In such a context, the training and education of potential professionals becomes a matter of major importance and a reference point for the policies of international organizations. Thus, the UN with the Sustainable Development Goals program, adopted in September 2015, establishes seventeen key objectives for sustainable development. As it is stated in the preamble of its official text, it is "an action plan for people, the planet and prosperity", with its main axes being economy, society and the environment (paragraphs 7, 19, 25). In addition, it aims to ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and high-quality technical, vocational education, adult education and calls on governments to equip adults with skills that will ensure decent work for everyone, increase productivity, promote and defend their labor rights. In an effort to align with UN objectives, European Commission has drafted texts
which aim, through the adoption of common cohesion and synergy policies, to help achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

One recent text is that of “A New Skills Agenda for Europe”, which was adopted by the Commission on 10 June 2016. It is the result of communication from the Commission of the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. This agenda aims to make sure that European people develop the right skills for the jobs of today and tomorrow. This task is essential to boost employability, competitiveness and growth across the EU. Besides, it calls on EU countries and stakeholders to improve the quality of skills and their relevance for the labor market. Different actions are designed in order to improve the quality and relevance of training and other ways of acquiring skills, to make skills visible and to enable people make better career choices, find quality jobs and improve their life chances.

Following the quantitative methodology and in particular the content analysis of the text we examine the way it can be achieved. The categories used for the analysis of the text come from the transformative learning theory of Mezirow and in particular the ten stages of stochastic processing.

The results of this study show that the aim of this text seems to be the learning transformation of employees in order to become more employable.

Enhancing Empathy in Transformative Learning Contexts
Manos Pavlakis & Georgios Giotopoulos

The idea behind this paper proposal raises the issue that creating an empathetic attitude in educational environments can be part of a solid transformative learning strategy on behalf of adult educators. The point is that, while too often the process of transformative learning is connected to critical reflection and rational discourse processes, it seems that there is need to highlight the importance of emotions during a transformational learning process.

The attempt to link the emotional dimension to the theoretical approaches of Transformative Learning is not a new one. Actually, it is a continuity of the discussion that has taken place among various field theorists and the criticism Mezirow has received, for example from Dirkx, that he places too much emphasis on rational discourse rather than imagination, dreams, feelings and unconscious situations (Journal of Transformative Education, 2006).

It is true that the founder of Transformative Learning Theory in several of his texts insists on a role for the adult educator that aims at the development of learners’ critical reflection (Mezirow, 1999) and the development of skills that will help them to become active learners using rational discourse (Mezirow, 2003). However, a careful analysis of Mezirow's work shows that his interest in the 'tools' that contribute to the transformation of stereotypes and assumptions is not limited to rational discourse and critical reflection. On the contrary, he often emphasizes other values and concepts, such as diversity, trust, equality and an empathetic attitude among people in a learning group (Mezirow, 1998).

In addition, the value of empathy has been generally recognized within the field of Transformative Learning. Kasl & Yorks (2016), for example, argue that adult educators need to develop their self-awareness and question their hegemonic assumptions, in order to develop an attitude of empathy towards their own learners. In other situations, Marsick refers to a fact from her personal experience, during which the lack of empathy resulted to an approach failure of the emotional state, which is important in the learning process, while Taylor points out that there is a need to further explore the relationship between critical thinking and empathy (Kokkos et al., 2015).

The paper proposed draws evidence from studies that have taken place in Greece. The main tool of the study is the method 'Transformative Learning through Aesthetic Experience', which enables trainees to re-examine their previous assumptions through their contact with works of Art (Kokkos, 2010). Findings from cases in formal and non-formal education suggest that the method can enhance the ability of trainees not only to critically examine an issue, but also to recognize and respect the perspective of ‘others’ and engage emotionally in
complex concepts or situations. Additionally, it seems that there is a need for further research in a rather interesting field of study.

**Transformative Dilemmas During the Training of the Adult Trainers/Educators Through the Use of Art**

Niki Phillips

During ‘Train the Trainer’ educational programmes the participants often question whether the adult trainer is primarily responsible for the dynamics evolving in the training group. Even though the literature of Adult Education pinpoints the outstanding role and skills of the educator/trainer in creating constructive dynamics within the learning group, some educators seem to be expressing the assumption that the trainer’s/educator’s skills and interaction with the learning group may not be the major influencing factor on group dynamics. Sometimes learners’ motives and readiness for learning are stronger than the Educator’s skills and attitudes and therefore positive group dynamics are hard or impossible to achieve.

Mezirow (1991) underlines that the transformative process of beliefs and perceptions begins directly with a ‘disorienting dilemma’, which Kokkos et al (2011) define it as an internal crisis of individuals, a sense that ‘something is wrong’ in how they add meaning to situations, which forces them to reassess their assumptions.

The workshop’s aim is to bring into surface this disorienting dilemma and highlight the responsibility of the Adult trainer/Educator in creating the appropriate dynamics during the learning process and the suitable skills required by them in order to achieve the desired outcome. This dilemma will be reflected upon through the use of Art and in particular through the French film *Entre le Murs/ The Class* (2008), directed by Laurent Cantet.

The film will be approached through the following four phases of the Perkin's model (1994).

**Phase 1: Time for observation**

During the first phase, trainees will carefully observe a work of art (a particular scene from the above mentioned film) without interpreting or judging it. This is the first aesthetic contact with the work they observe. Within this phase, learners do not interpret the film scene; instead they proceed in an 'objective observation' of what they watched. They reflect upon their previous experiences related to the art they have observed and make initial assessments (Perkins, 1994, pp. 42-46).

**Phase 2: Open and adventurous observation**

During this phase trainees observe the work of art with an open-minded and creative attitude. They carefully observe the work trying to detect ‘What would the artist want us to observe’. At this stage, open-minded thinking is triggered in order to achieve the best possible observation. The data selected is approached through a creative point of view (Perkins, 1994, pp. 54-56).

**Phase 3: Analytical and deeper observation**

During this phase trainees - based on the data collected in the previous phases – will deepen their reflection and interpretation of the work of art (the film scene). They will attempt to answer the questions that were emerged in the previous two phases. They also explain and substantiate their views, and draw conclusions. This type of analytical observation is a pervasive approach of reality, which activates the learners’ reflective skills (Perkins, 1994, pp. 67-68).

**Phase 4: Review of process**

During the fourth phase, participants approach the art holistically, exploiting their experience in observing the previous phases. They reflect upon the various phases of observation that they went through and detect the transformations they achieved regarding their original assumptions about the work of art (Perkins, 1994, pp. 75-78).

**Transformative Learning Through Transformative Research – Stories of Student-Researchers Engaged in an Advocacy Research Project**

Joanna Pitura
Foreign/second language (L2) learning constitutes an important part of young people’s education in Poland as language competences – the English language in particular – allow for active and fuller participation in social, professional, educational, etc. life. In this context higher education institutions need to make special effort to provide L2 educational opportunities that are conducive to all students’ learning. Yet, it appears that students with special educational needs (SEN students; i.e. hearing- and visually-impaired, students with chronic diseases, physical disabilities, and learning difficulties) tend to be at a disadvantage as L2 teachers – for various reasons, including insufficient knowledge regarding the specificity of SEN students’ learning and social context – design and provide classes for ‘traditional’ learners, neglecting the need to optimise SEN students’ access to the learning materials, as well as their participation in the learning community. For this reason, steps need to be undertaken to use research in order to sensitize L2 teachers to the problem of social and educational access, bias and equity to help them make more informed decisions about their (more inclusive) teaching practice, hence changing the present – unfavourable for SEN students – situation.

Transformative/advocacy research – rooted in the agenda of social justice and human rights – has potential to advance social change through the voices and involvement of researchers and the marginalised individuals (Mertens, 2008). In the current paper, it is suggested that by engaging students – pre-service L2 teachers – in research on / with / for SEN students, academics can enhance students’ research and professional competences. Apparently, immersing students in carefully designed educational activities and confronting them with an experience that challenges their beliefs and practices – a disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 1991) – can lead to reflection and questioning of the existing values, potentially triggering transformative learning.

Accordingly, the aim of the paper is to present how transformative learning was fostered among higher education students. This was made possible by involving students – pre-service L2 teachers, participants of the ‘Research Methods in Glottodidactics’ course – as co-researchers in doing research for SEN students and with SEN students. The use of storytelling makes it possible to get insight into student experiences in this transformative/advocacy research project, including the moment of the emergence of the disorienting dilemma (Kroth & Cranton, 2014), as well as the action and reflection that assist the students from then on.

**Orientations on Disorienting Dilemma: Towards an Integral Conceptualization Between Theory and Practice**

Natassa Raikou

In the present paper we attempt to trace how the dilemma is determined initially in Dewey’s work and in Mezirow’s afterwards. Our objective is the investigation of points of convergence but also divergence on the scientific approach of the two theorists, but also the influence of their ideas in the evolution of the perception of the dilemma.

Dewey, in his famous book *How we think*, introduces the concept of dilemma. He refers to dilemmatic situation as ‘a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty’ (Dewey, 1933, p. 12). Some decades later, Mezirow uses the term for the first time in the initial formulation of transformative learning phases (1981, p. 7): ‘The traumatic severity of the disorienting dilemma is clearly a factor in establishing the probability of a transformation. Under pressing external circumstances, such as death of a mate, a divorce, or a family breadwinner becoming incapacitated, a perspective transformation is more likely to occur’. Through a systematic study of their work, as it will be presented in the present paper, we lead to the conclusion that in Mezirow’s work explicit effects of Dewey’s thoughts regarding dilemmatic situations can be traced. An important convergence is that both of them connect directly the dilemma with the procedure of critical reflection, as a starting point.

Dewey argues that there is a pre-reflective situation, a situation that precedes reflective thinking. As he mentions, ‘reflective thinking … involves (1) a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty, in which thinking originates, and (2) an act of searching, hunting, inquiring, to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose of the
perplexity’ (Dewey, 1933, p. 12). This pre-reflective situation ‘begins in what may fairly enough be called a forked-road situation, a situation that is ambiguous, that presents a dilemma, that proposes alternatives’ (Dewey, 1933, p. 14). Mezirow on the other hand considers dilemma as a dominating element of transformative learning procedure. Defining the phases of transformative learning, he acknowledges disorienting dilemma as the starting point or the first phase of the process of transformation (Mezirow, 2012, p. 86).

However, Mezirow doesn’t take Dewey’s ideas as they are, but he makes good use of them in a creative way. Moreover, studying Mezirow’s theory, we can support that he evolves the concept of the dilemma into his work. This evolution is dynamic and is supported even more by the new generation of transformative learning theorists. This comparative approach gives us the opportunity of an intertemporal examination of the meaning of dilemma in transformative learning theory, starting from Dewey’s effect to Mezirow’s conception of transformative learning until today. Studying the evolution of this concept gives us also the motive to understand in depth the meaning of dilemma and its role in reflective thinking.

**Micro-Interaction Analysis of the Dilemmatic Processes of Transformative Learning: Ambivalence and Edge-Emotions in a Theatre Project With Foster Care Youth**

Anna Paulina Rainio & Kaisu Mälkki

‘A foster cared teenage boy, on the verge of giving up the theater project as his social life, social rubber bands, pull him back on to the streets, to refuse all institutional stuff. The instructors, doing a delicate job in inviting him into the activity, to having the courage to take agency and be seen in this context’

In this paper we examine, with a micro-interaction analysis (Jordan & Henderson, 1995), the dilemmatic processes of transformative learning (e.g. Mezirow, 1991; 2000; Taylor, 2007) ethnographic data from a theater workshop with foster care children (Rainio & Marjanovic-Shane, 2013, Känkänen & Rainio, 2010). As a theoretical lense we use a framework combining the sociocultural perspective on learning with transformative learning theory: the concept of ambivalence (Rainio & Marjanovic-Shane, 2013) and the concept of edge-emotions (Mälkki, 2010; 2011), both of which offer analytical tools to grasp dilemmatic situations. The concept of edge-emotions is a recent development to the theory of transformative learning. This study develops a pioneering approach for analyzing the edge-emotions from an ethnographic data while strengthening its sociocultural dimension with the concept of ambivalence.

With ambivalence, we refer to ‘a dialogic tension in coordinating relationships in contradictory or dilemmatic social situations’ (Rainio & Marjanovic-Shane, 2013, p. 112). As a personal psychological state ambivalence typically refers to ‘being torn between’ attitudes or feelings towards an activity or a life situation. This ‘torn between’ often becomes expressed as ambivalent behavior in social interaction, for example, as a simultaneous need to both be a part of and withdraw from a community with which one is involved. (see Ferholt & Rainio, 2016). Respectively, the edge-emotions (Mälkki, 2010; 2011; see also Mälkki & Green, 2016) refer to the unpleasant emotions, such as anxiety, fear, anger, appearing when our assumptions are being challenged and when our meaning perspectives, and thus our innate coherence-producing system is being threatened. Edge-emotions, stemming from the basic life-support system, mobilize us to restore our comfort zones. This protective/defensive reaction can produce serious obstacles to learning, development and reflection - or, in the case of teaching, to responding pedagogically. To overcome this natural inhibition to transforming our mindsets, we may learn to embrace and work with the edge-emotions, and even learn to utilize them in order to develop our meaning perspectives and to utilize dilemmatic situations for learning (see Mälkki, 2010; 2011).

We offer an in-depth understanding of the dynamics and struggles of participating in the kind of activity both challenges the social givers of the learner and supports him in the development of agency. We will analyze how, on the level of speech and nonverbal and
verbal communication, the edge-emotions are activated in ambivalent situations and how they are dealt with in the interaction.

Based on our analysis we develop a systemic approach where student ambivalence is brought together with the ambivalence that also the teacher may experience in these same moments. We develop a framework for analysing teacher-student interaction and emotions. Rather than only focusing on how the interaction would in ideal case take place, this framework brings into view the challenges that the both parties are facing in these moments, and suggests ways to negotiate these challenges.

The ability of a teacher to respond pedagogically to the ambivalence of a student is crucial for supporting the student at risk of exclusion and alienation (Rainio & Marjanovic-Shane, 2013). The results illuminate the dynamics of these interaction processes and offer valuable insights for any pedagogical encounter or a challenging classroom situation where the teacher should respond pedagogically to a student initiative or reaction that challenges the expected line of action.

**Learning by Rhythmic Dilemmas: a Narrative and Participatory Inquiry With Foster Care Professionals**

Alessandra Rigamonti

Foster care is a complex and temporary process characterized by separation of children/parents as well as continuation of their affective bonds. In this process, many actors (children, social workers, birthparents, foster families, social and health agencies) are involved, interacting and learning by their explicit or implicit temporalities intertwined with systemic, social and cultural temporal dimensions. Thus, the concept of *rhythm* (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017) could be used to illuminate the coordination of these embodied and simultaneous temporalities.

From a pedagogical perspective it is important to prepare and support professionals who are called to respect the rhythms of families and children taking into account also their rhythms. In Italy, there is no specific training about foster care, since most professionals only have a generic training as social educators, social workers, psychologists and so on. My research is aimed to illuminate, on one hand, how rhythms can affect children’s and adults’ learning in the foster care process and, on the other, how professionals can learn to look after them, within a multiprofessional network. So, participatory inquiry is both a method for research and a learning process. During my research, I identified dilemmas related to this process and their learning potential: this will be the narrower focus of my presentation.

A complex and systemic methodological design guides the research. A pilot project was already conducted with 12 foster care professionals, using *co-operative* inquiry (Heron, 1996) to explore the participants’ multiple representations of foster care. In-depth interviews with other 18 professionals were then used to point out the importance of rhythms. The collected data were further analysed by a group of 10 social workers through *co-operative* inquiry in order to illuminate the frames of meaning and presuppositions regarding the temporal dimensions and to critically explore the practices that individually, relationally and institutionally sustain or hinder rhythms.

From pilot project and interviews it appears that foster care interventions are characterized by rhythmic dilemmas. The professionals’ frameworks of meaning do not offer clear pedagogical or methodological strategies to manage or think about: 1. foster families vs birth parents vs professionals temporalities; 2. unpredictability vs planning process 3. time to think vs time to act; 4. continuous vs discontinuous processes. This preliminary analysis raises many other research questions:

- can we imagine a transformative learning process, as emerging from these rhythmic dilemmas? Which theoretical and practical meaning and implications do these dilemmas bring into the professionals’ experience? How do they manage, when they begin to be reflexive about them?
- How could co-operative inquiry be designed as a form of professional training about temporal dimensions? How can it promote learning for transformation (Mezirow,
1991), at an individual, relational and institutional level? How can we transform rhythmic dilemmas and possible disorienting moments into generative and potential events?

My aim is to suggest innovative professional training framed by the systemic approach, the theory of complexity and transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991; Dirkx, 2008); it could encourage professionals and their institutions to review theories and practices of foster care in order to increase reflexivity and awareness about temporal dimensions.

Adults and Higher Education: Between Dilemma and Critical Self-Reflection
Laura Selmo

Nowadays, a lot of people decide to come back to study and to go to the University. Why do they decide it? Maybe because the social and economic crises have created doubts and incertitude in people or because they need to change their professional life, their job or to improve their career, in general because they live a dilemma in their life. During my experience as researcher and professor, I have met a lot of adults that desire to learn and transform their life opening to new prospective. Sometime they live a dilemma that creates tensions or conflicts in themselves and they search in learning a possible solution to solve them. In according with Mezirow (1991) that introduced the notion of dilemma to evoke disorienting moments in our lives, associating a critical self-reflection and an assessment as fundamental assumptions to transform these moments in potential ways to change themselves and their life, this paper describes the analysis of 40 personal and professional stories of adults that attended two different courses: health education and teacher education at University of Verona. For Dewey (1938) education should try to link knowledge with experience and to transform it into action and this occurs through reflective thinking as a process of discovery. Donald A. Schön (1983) theorized that reflective practice represents an important factor in improving activities as it facilitates the continuous integration of knowledge, experience, values and action. Jack Mezirow, (1991, 2000) gave reflection a central role in learning because through it we become aware of the ways in which we interpret reality and give meaning to actions and behaviour, transforming how we conceive our being in the world. Hence, during the courses students were invited to write their stories and these stories were used as start point to reflect on the different aspects and desires that move on the decision to learn again and to change their life. The main questions that guided reflection were: 1. Which is the disorienting dilemma that move me to learn? 2. Which is the relationship between my dilemma, learning and transformation of myself ? 3. Which are my future actions?

At the end of courses, qualitative research was conducted on the stories and its aim was to study the processes that move adults from dilemmas to lifelong learning, and the relationship between such dilemmas and learning and transformation as well.

The stories were analysed by content analysis with a qualitative approach. This process involved line-by-line coding and subsequent grouping into categories of meaningful units after reading each stories a lot of times and applying open coding and in vivo coding and an inductive and deductive analytical approach. In general, results underline the importance to put in the centre of learning the personal and professional stories of students to help them in recognizing skills, exploring new options and planning a course of new transformative actions.

Learning Through Talking About Oneself: the Transformative Potential of ‘Coming Out’ Narratives in Young Adults
Maura Striano & Stefano Maltese

Coming out is not only a more or less fixed step within the process of growth of homosexual people (Cass, 1979; Coleman, 1982) and in their process of identity formation (Hencken, O’Dowd, 1977).
This specific and crucial biographic event is also transformative opportunity according to Mezirow’s transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991; Taylor and Cranton, 2012) not only with regard to the clarification sexual orientation, but also to a full subjectivation of life courses, following a critical and reflective pattern (King and Biro, 2006). Moreover, if we understand coming out as self disclosure process, we can see how it brings in itself an educational meaning, considering education as the process of becoming oneself according to a critical and humanizing perspective; in these terms it is an opportunity to transform young adult’s self images through a sound process of reflection, which generates coscientization and liberation (Freire, 2006) and produces a more authentic and full engagement in one’s own life.

Through the analysis of a number of autobiographical narratives of young omosexual adults who have identified in coming out the turning point of their existential condition (Maltese, 2017), we will highlight the emergence of new and different meaning perspectives (identified as epistemic, psychological and socio-linguistic) not only in discursive processes (Kincaid, 2010) but also in the orientation of life courses (Eichler, Bernarte, 2018) focusing on the transformative steps described in self narratives according to different temporal dimensions (Merril, West, 2009): young adults learn from their own past experiences (before coming out) rethinking them according to new meaning perspectives; they also learn from their present experiences, within which they are engaged with a new awareness; finally, they learn from the future, intended as emancipatory project of self determination.

As a performative act (Burgio, 2012) coming out goes beyond self report, and unfolds as an inquiry process of self understanding and auto-poietic positioning within the world, which offers us the possibility to identify meanings that are not objective traces, but subjective and performative constructions, understood and explored according to a transformative matrix.

**Acting Dilemmas. Theatre of the Oppressed as Vehicle for Transformative Learning**

Alessandro Tolomelli & Francesco Cappa

Theatre has its roots in ritual and sacredness, and through theatre, human beings have ritualized the moments in life that hold particular meaning for them at the social and individual levels. Education, like theatre, allows us to experience a liminal space (Turner 1982) that has a deep analogy with the dynamics of the learning space. Dilemmas are a central feature of the theory of transformative learning and are conceived as the expression of conscious-unconscious dynamics, or socio-cognitive conflict, or power struggles, we can assume that they bring a potential of learning, transformation and emancipation (Mezirow 1991). Mezirow was profoundly influenced by the pedagogy of Paulo Freire (Freire 1970) in early phase of his research (Taylor&Cranton 2013), expecially by the relevance of the awareness and critical reflection in the process of invididual and collective emancipation. During the same period Augusto Boal is deeply influenced by the thought of Freire and based most of theory and practice of his Theatre of the Oppressed on the Freire’s perspective. Disorienting dilemmas, the starting point of a transformative learning process, has a relevant analogy with the interrogating elements and the problematic scene that is the starting point of every process of critical ‘conscientization’ (which is much more than simply awareness-raising) that the Theatre of the Oppressed try to ‘play’ with a community.

Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) methodology as an innovative non-formal adult learning approach aimed at fostering individual and community development and emphasising learning processes for social and individual transformation. TO develops a concrete path of learning, which allows individuals and communities to be aware of body and social mechanisation as well as «social masks» that we are compelled to wear (Boal 1993). Moreover, theatre framework is useful to reveal hidden aspects of reality and/or implied meanings. Perhaps this is where Boal’s greatest pedagogical achievement lies: the fiction of theatre makes us authentic through a simulation in which the possibility of accessing a more authentic dimension of what characterises daily life has materialised (Santos 2016). We can recognize here a relevant connection with Mezirow’s critical reflection of assumptions and meaning perspectives change in adult education (Mezirow 1997).
Theatre provides a critical interpretation of reality and is not a way to encourage a narcissistic contemplation of it. In Boal’s vision, theatre becomes the process of searching for ways which allow us to read and transfigure reality, and to reveal archetypes, eschewing any hedonistic shortcuts and giving back to the people the control of their path of understanding. As expressed by Boal in his later works (Boal 2008), TO has the aim of allowing theatre to regain its transformative function. TO is led by the Freire idea that knowledge is something that all people have to build up autonomously, encouraged by dialogue with others. Knowledge has gained through the production of meanings of which the subject is itself a maker (Freire 1970).

The experiential session will propose TO techniques to practice and encourage the capacity of reflection-in-action (Schön 1983) of participants. It aims to combine in-depth theoretical analysis with practical experiences and abstract discussions with real enlightenment. Acting dilemmas using TO as vehicle for inclusive and transformative learning could be a significant way to develop a ‘performing pedagogy’ (Garoian 1999), going toward an art of educational politics.

**Dilemmas in Designing and Facilitating Corporate Training for Transformation**

Panagiota Tsentourou

Corporate trainers are entitled to design and facilitate training courses to support primarily their Organizations’ strategic goals for organizational retention and growth. Designing training interventions, they must take into account organisational, pedagogical and interpersonal dimensions. Those of them who embrace the broader purpose of adult learning as defined by Mezirow (Mezirow and Associates, 2000) ‘to help adults realize their potential for becoming more liberated, socially responsible, and autonomous learners - that is, to make more informed choices by becoming more critically reflective as ‘dialogic thinkers’ in their engagement in a given social context’, they are willing to facilitate not only informational, content-based learning but also transformative learning in their practice. Trying to combine this vision with their organizational priorities and the learners’ expectations, corporate trainers are constantly facing dilemmas whenever design a training intervention.

Transformative learning in the workplace has similarities and differences with transformational organizational change. Both are change processes, but transformative learning is usually about individual change, whereas transformative organizational change is typically focused on system wide, instrumental goals. The two foci can be brought together as the change process of an organization involves individuals and ‘individuals who are transformed make changes in the environment that enable others to likewise transform and together act in the environment to move toward desired goals’. (Watkins, Marsick & Faller, 2012)

Not only is it a complex situation, but also there are many theoretically and practically unresolved issues that corporate trainers face such as: In which ways is it possible to incorporate transformative learning processes in a training intervention conducted in a ‘restrictive’ corporate environment? How might evaluation be designed to measure transformation? Since critical reflection and discourse take an extended amount of time how can such activities be included in a training programme lasting a couple of days? Unresolved issues can even include ethical issues such as: Does the educator decide which among a learners’ beliefs should become questioned or problematized? Do we engage in facilitating transformative learning, regardless of where that leads?

The experiential workshop doesn’t aim to discuss or enlighten these issues. Its purpose is to present corporate trainers’ views on their dilemmas when designing and facilitating transformational learning and create an environment with the use of art observation and discussion to share similar dilemmas with all participants. It consists of three parts. Part 1: Presentation of corporate trainers’ views on their dilemmas in including transformative processes into their corporate training design and facilitation, collected by structured interviews.
Part 2: Engagement of workshop participants in critical reflection about these dilemmas by systematically observing works of art (fine art) and discussing critical questions. This section is based on ‘Transformative Learning through Aesthetic Experience’ Method developed by Professor A. Kokkos (Kokkos, 2010).

Part 3: Group Reflection-Discussion on participants’ own experiences and views on the workshop and/or life experience of similar dilemmas as learners or educators in their own environments.

**Transformative Learning and Group Psychodynamics in Organization Settings**

Anna Tsiboukli

At crisis times mental health and social care organizations are often faced with the fear of collapse due to limited funding, staff shortage and resources. In a turbulent environment projection of negative feelings and attitudes may be a temporary relief in organisational systems that cultivates illusions and paranoia in order to avoid responsibility. Another part is scapegoating. These are the times that organizations may experience emotional toxicity generated by pathogenic internal conflicts, painful thoughts and feelings that are projected and acted out in ways that may lead the organization to fixate. When organizations fail to restore balance and trust and fail to tolerate frustration and stress, any attempt for change may be perceived as traumatic. The more closed a system becomes the more change is experienced as trauma at both the individual and the collective level. Inadequate leadership emerges as another symptom of psychopathology. Inadequate leadership tends to over-control the internal of a system when it fails to exercise any control and power at the external environment. Inadequate leadership manifests itself in a passive aggressive behavior and trying to protect itself becomes defensive and authoritarian and reinforces fear.

In an authoritarian organization, leadership tries to keep its distance. In this system members’ relationships are challenged and group polarization becomes a process where group discussion tends to reinforce even the most extreme positions. These phenomena are expected to rise at crisis times. However, the transformation of organisations in learning organisations might assist to cope with the demands of the external environment.

Learning organizations fulfill five basic principles that include group learning (Senge, 1990), cognitive patterns, i.e. deep rooted assumptions, generalisations, meaning and representations that affect the ways in which we understand our world and our actions within the world (Bennis & Namus, 1985) and allows understanding, analysis and synthesis of interdependence and interaction with others. Modern organizations share some common features (Marsick & Watkins, 2003), opportunities for learning, group learning, systems of shared learning and networking for achieving development defined as the complex educational strategy that aims to change attitudes, ideas, values and even the structure of an organisation. Therefore, at crisis times organizations need more than ever before, not just well trained staff with autonomy, self-sufficiency and the ability to take initiatives in order to be able to understand their attitudes and handle cognitive dilemmas (Kegan & Lahey, 2009) but furthermore an environment that allows participation to decision making.

Within this context the current study employed Marsick’s and Watkins’s *Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ)* in order to understand the extent to which mental health organizations at crisis times can operate as learning organizations in order to fulfil expectations for adaptation and change. In addition, the research aspired to offer a framework for understanding how to design a learning organization and to look at the changes individuals must make and ways to build learning into the fabric of everyday work experiences. Going through the seven dimensions of the learning organization that form the basis of the DLOQ (Marsick & Watkins, 1999; Watkins & Marsick, 1993, 1996), the study measured important shifts in the organizations’ climate, culture, systems, and structures that influence whether individuals learn. Both at individual and at organizational level, the current evidence draws the links between learning outcomes and potential changes in learning performance. Taking into account that individuals yet carry within them a microcosmic portrait of the organization (Argyris & Schön, 1996), this research illustrated those portraits,
through which we can detect changes in the organization’s mental models, shared values, and memory.

**Perspectives on a Contemporary Dilemma and Its Implications for Transformative Learning, Lessons Learned From South-East Asia**
Annette Ullrich & Levan Lim

Europe is caught in an ethical dilemma. Compassion for foreigners is declining, nationalism is resurgent, we face illiberal winds. Europe does not want to let migrants die, but it also does not encourage more migrants to come. Asylum seekers also face a dilemma, they can either risk everything on dangerous journeys to Europe or they must surrender to lives of poverty and persecution in their countries of origin. In Germany, a sense of historical responsibility and widespread efforts to acknowledge the Holocaust generally leads to a welcoming attitude towards refugees and to an emphasis of respect for human rights. The German constitution is secular: open and neutral towards religions, it guarantees freedom of religion. Immigration is complicated and there is no simple answer to the question of how countries should deal with issues related to national security. Europe’s multiple challenges can neither be addressed by foolish optimism nor by resigned pessimism.

In order to understand Europe’s crisis and to address the socio-political, ethical, and educational consequences that characterize European countries and also the wider world, open dialogue and critical reflection are necessary. Openness to learning about foreign cultures and cultural differences in relating to the world and to each other is a prerequisite for understanding the experience of contemporary dilemmas. The dilemma between respect for human rights and the desire to preserve cultural identity requires the courage to defend one’s values as well as creative acts of democratic guardianship rather than an extreme emphasis on political correctness, the acceptance of taboos, and ‘the adamant belief that if the people shouting fire are silenced or stopped then the problem they are identifying will go away’ (Murray, 2017, p. 227).

The example of South-East Asia shows that multiculturalism can work if immigrants bring their unique backgrounds and heritage to a new culture, develop hybrid identities, and live alongside people of other religious and cultural backgrounds. They contribute to a globalized world where cultures mix. Host countries’ hospitality and receptiveness to foreign influence is extraordinary, but not unlimited and without losing sight of their own identity. A prerequisite for living alongside people of other traditions is the realization that all traditions, religions, and values are relative. Trying to understand why other people disagree with our most deeply held convictions and looking beyond that can help us to focus on the common humanity we all share. At the same time global citizens know and honour their unique value and cultural traditions regardless of skin colour, nationality or upbringing. The beauty of life can be described in the context of personal relationship and human connection, when we connect with each other below the surface and beyond skin colour, religion or political view.

The purpose of this paper is to explore questions raised by the dilemma inherent to the experience of migration and the way they relate to learning and transformation in adult education, e. g. questions about the intellectual, interpersonal, and intrapersonal capacities needed in order for people from different cultural and religious backgrounds to live peacefully together but also the ‘Big Questions of Life’, such as what gives us hope in a troubled and constantly changing world?

**Retirement and Transformation: Adult Education and Transformative Learning in Aging Society**
Chaewon Yang

People are now living longer and healthier lives than previous generations. Technological and medical advances extend life phases, and as a result, knowing how adults live after their retirements is important not only for the nation’s sustainable economic growth but also for the personal well-being of a country’s citizens. Because of these changes in society and in the
labour market and the demographic shift, reviewing literature on the retirement and educational experiences of retirees and re-establishing a fresh concept of retirement would be insightful for setting up a new direction for the adult and lifelong education field. Therefore, retirement might be a concept that will have to be redefined significantly at the turn of the century. Life after retirement was considered as ‘the period of leisure at the end of life’ (Heath, 1996, p. 40). Retirement was ‘a time of reward for a life of endeavour’ (Heath, 1996, p. 40). However, times have changed, and the length of time after retirement has dramatically increased over the past century mainly due to aging. Heath (1996) also pointed out that the changing economy situation and complexity of benefit plans and Social Security requirements contribute to the necessity to learn about retirement itself for a successful retirement experience.

Atchley (1976) noted that sociology is a field that is made up of language and knowledge, and from this point of view, retirement and retirement planning can also be explained from an adult education perspective. This is because adult learning is more focused on reflecting on life experiences of adults instead of receiving information. These experiences do not remain dormant, but can actually be a trigger that encourages individuals to acquire new knowledge or hone skills that existed previously (Jarvis, 1981). The later life of retirees may be drastically different from previous generations’ experiences, because their social position and family relationships change, and retirees can also face the danger of financial and health risks. Moreover, another challenge for retirees in their later lives is finding new roles that continue to add meaning and fulfillment to their everyday lives.

Among the various theories related to adult education and lifelong learning, Mezirow’s transformative learning theory (1978) can be one of the most implicative tools for understanding retirement education as adult learning. Transformative learning is grounded on the assumption that every person wants to make meaning from their daily lives (Taylor, 2008). Retirees’ diverse experiences are the primary medium of transformative learning (Taylor, 2009). Transformative learning is implicative for retirees to rearrange their values, mindsets, or habits of mind after leaving their workplaces, which has been the origin of their self-estimation and identity. Retirement, which can be a loss, a movement, or an opportunity, should be reflected on, criticized, and recognized as a transformative incident throughout one’s whole life. Additionally, the experience of retirement should be analysed by transformative learning for retirees to fit into their new roles in their families and society. In this regard, retirement needs to be analysed with the linkage between individual transformation based on changes in society and power relations.

The dilemmas that retirees have in this aging society are the role transformations in one’s identity, family, workplace, and society. This study aims to discuss how adult education can intervene to aging and retirement, which is a global social change. with transformative learning theory.

The Body as Teacher: Expanding Theories and Pedagogies of Discomfort in Transformative Learning
Jude Walker & Shayna Horstein

In Plato’s Allegory of the Cave, a freed prisoner is shown the fire responsible for casting the shadow puppets which he had believed for all his life to be real objects. In a futuristic dystopia, Neo (Keanu Reeves) is confronted with the fact he is actually living in the Matrix, a simulated reality created by machines to erstwhile harness energy from human bodies. Both fictional characters face a disorienting dilemma, one which fundamentally challenges their existing frames of reference. From a Mezirowian (e.g., 2000) perspective, they have a choice: to face the dilemma, the ensuing feelings of anger, guilt, shame, sadness, and to engage in critical reflection and dialogue in a process of transformation towards more authentic living, or to return to the cave or matrix.

Plato explains that once shown the fire, the freed prisoner ‘would escape by turning away’ and return to look at the shadows. If dragged into the light of the sun, the prisoner would at first become blinded. However, if he remained outside the cave in the daylight, he would
eventually be able to look at the sun and then be able to reason about what it was. In the Matrix, Neo has a choice: to take the blue pill, to remain in ignorance and illusion, or the bitter red pill, to become unplugged from the machine and shown the harsh reality of an enslaved human race.

In learning about racial prejudice, poverty, gender discrimination, global climate change, or colonialism, learners are often confronted with ideas and perspectives which do not fit within their current meaning perspectives, or match their previous reality. At that moment, they can retreat, become paralysed, defensive, or challenged in a way that they begin a journey towards transformation. As educators who teach adults about such issues, both formally and informally, we attempt to engage a Pedagogy of Discomfort (Boler, 1999) for our students, exposing them to Plato’s sun, to uncomfortable truths or to the ways in which ‘truths’ have been, and continue to be, constructed by the powerful to mollify the less powerful and to maintain the Status Quo (Freire, 1970). In doing so, we face two, interrelated dilemmas: 1. How to expose learners to Plato’s sun in a gradual way which best supports a process of transformative learning 2. How to best respond to the ways in which their dilemmas provoke dilemmas for us as educators: do we become present to our emotions and our bodies (e.g., Dirxx, 2008, 2016), responding to our own discomfort? Or do we attempt to sweep the discomfort away as quickly as possible and move on to important ‘content’?

With professional expertise in adult education and somatic psychotherapy, we propose to deliver an experiential workshop for conference participants in which we will collectively explore ways to respond to our own internal dilemmas and those of our students in teaching sensitive content to adult learners. In the 90-minute session, we will engage in exercises aimed at fostering our emotional and physical awareness in facing dilemmas as adult educators. We draw on literature in the areas of embodied pedagogy and emotions in the classroom, transformative learning, and neuropsychology (e.g., Dirxx, 2001; Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007; Vacarr, 2001) to privilege a pedagogy of emotion in nurturing a process of transformative learning for ourselves as educators and for our students. We believe that attending to moment-to-moment dilemmas as adult educators can help bring us more into an authentic way of teaching in being true to ourselves and to our students.

Self, Other and Transformative Learning. Stories of Knowing in a Cultural-Writing Course at a Chinese University
Binfang Wu

This proposal seeks to address a form of dilemma that is not much foregrounded in transformative learning studies, that is, the self vs other dilemma in the literature of transformative learning studies or learning studies at large, self or identity is so much emphasized, while other is often forgotten. Different from Dirxx (2001) who sees other an ‘unconscious self’ and West’s the other (West, 2014), as a source to give self-recognition, this proposal shows some alternative forms of other, historical/cultural other and the other in the memory of learning as well as intimate other, who also plays significant part in promoting transformative learning. By bringing in these, this proposed paper aims to broaden our understanding of ‘self’, which has long been a focus in transformative learning designs and practices (e.g., Wang & Yorks, 2012). However, there is an implicit presupposition that ‘self’ is an individual existence which ready to be activated while seeking an ‘authentic’ or ‘autonomous’ self (Kegan, 1982; Tennant, 2012). Indeed, self is not an isolated conception and transformative learning is not ‘simply an internal psychological practice conducted in isolation from others’ (Tennant, 2005, P. 113). Instead, it is fundamentally relational, especially from a social-cognitive approach, in which self is considered to be entangled with significant others (Andersen et al, 2002).

Based on this understanding, this proposal presents an ethnographic study of students’ knowing and transformative learning in a cultural-writing course for undergraduate English majors at Zhejiang Normal University (ZJNU), China. In narrating three stories with fieldwork data collected from moments of students’ pre- and in-class discussions, presentations, and reports of term-paper project, this study explores how students rebuild self
through getting to know or re-understanding ‘the other’, close or far away, historical or present. Learning to write culture, as the teacher leads them to see, is to appreciate the life world of others and to rethink the taken-for-granted toward self-transformation. This paper argues that transformative learning is the process of knowing self, agentically, in relationship with others. It constitutes of moments of critical shifting that place self and identity in a more relational, reflexive and refringent direction within situated cultural contexts. The self-other dilemma could be evocative, simulative and finally dissolved in this concrete and situated knowing process.

Adult Learners’ Dilemmas Due to Political Changes. Implementing Plans and Experimenting With New Roles
Marta Zientek

This paper aims at describing the interpersonal and intrapersonal dilemmas appeared in the act of living through educational events and opportunities, experienced by a group of four adult learners as they engaged in non-formal educational environment. These educational dilemmas appear in time of political changes and they are presented in two ways. At first, they are visible as crucial, life-knowing factors which allow adult learners to transform their lives while analysing them. On the other hand, these dilemmas are displayed as inseparable parts of life goals which permit the adult learners to provide different life-actions which are more recognized as opportunities in pedagogical and sociological approach. The dilemmas support these learners in building more confidence to implement new educational plans and intercede for creating more intuitive and holistic view of learners’ new roles and, what is more, the ability to experiment with them in non-formal, informative learning conditions. At the same time, introducing changes to their self-learning, conscious actions, this article tries to present this small learning community as an educational challenge that interrogates, and then revises adult learners’ personal beliefs, thereby triggering intrapersonal and interpersonal dilemmas.