Assignment #2 – Developmental Reading

“Explain Jack Mezirow’s transformative learning theory. How does the OGS

approach to transformative learning promote critical reflection for transcending

barriers to personal growth and social impact?”

PHI 800-12: Transformative Learning and Adult Education

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**Developmental Reading**

1. Create Developmental Readings from seminal sources and scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles. Review the instructions for Assignment #3, the course essential elements, and course readings to identify selections of books and journals to create entries.

a. Refer to the "Student Guide to Developmental Readings" in the General Helps folder for updated information on sample comments, the grading rubric, and key definitions related to developmental readings.

“Explain Jack Mezirow’s transformative learning theory. How does the OGS approach to transformative learning promote critical reflection for transcending barriers to personal growth and social impact?”

**Developmental Readings**

**Source 1:** Carter, P.L., & Nicolaides, A. (2023). Transformative learning: An emotional (r) evolution. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, *2023*(177), 25-36.

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “[T]he strongest criticism of Mezirow’s (1978) transformative learning theory [is] that it promoted a focus on the rational (intellectual) dimension of cognition while neglecting the extra-rational dimensions, including the emotional dimension” (Carter & Nicolaides, 2023, p. 25).

**Essential Element:** This element is associated with the element of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to other criticisms of Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory and existing efforts to better understand the emotional dimension of Mezirow’s theory while developing new frames of reference for its application.

**Contextualization:**  Mezirow has identified 10 phases of transformative learning to include: “a disorienting dilemma, self-examination of feelings, critical reﬂection, relating discontent to others, exploring options for new behavior, planning a course of action, gaining knowledge to implement plans, experimenting with new roles, building competence and self-conﬁdence in new roles and relationships, and reintegration” (Carter & Nicolaides, 2023, p. 28-29).

**Source 2:** Fried, J. (2023). *Transformative learning through engagement: Student affairs practice as experiential pedagogy*. Taylor & Francis.

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “To help people learn, we must first know about their current knowledge and beliefs. Achieving that, we must know what generates a change in such brain networks. And for stable learning we must know what leads to long-term change – to memory” (Fried, 2023, p. x).

**Essential Element:** This element is associated with the element of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to explanation of the key requirements or prerequisites for Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory. Knowledge and beliefs are primary factors in transformative learning. They lay the foundations on which adults are able to develop and build further knowledge and skills.

**Contextualization:** Adult learners have established beliefs, experiences, and knowledge that can affect their receptivity to learning. Therefore, having some understanding of how learning occurs in individuals and how such is shaped by their prior knowledge, experiences, and beliefs allow the adult educator to guide learners more effectively and successfully.

**Source 3:** Hoggan, C., & Finnegan, F. (2023). Transformative learning theory: Where we are after 45 years. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, *2023*(177), 5-11.

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “[Jack Mezirow's (1978a, 1978b) conceptualization of perspective transformation altered how we understand the term. Since then, a particular framing of human transformation as a learning process has taken root, mostly described under the umbrella term of transformative learning (TL). Over the last four decades, this focus on the ‘transformative dimensions of learning’ has produced an ever-diverse array of theories, approaches, concepts, and insights about the purposes, processes, and outcomes of dramatic human change” (Hoggan & Finnegan, 2023), p. 6).

**Essential Element:** This element is associated with the element of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to works evaluating how Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory has developed and changed over the past 45 years, and how many different concepts and ideas have come to be grouped under this theory of adult learning.

**Contextualization:**  Mezirow theory has been criticized as being too rationalistic owing to what some scholars such as Boyd and Myers (1988) perceive as its view of deliberation and critical thinking as the primary driver of change. On the other hand, scholars such as Cunningham (1992) and Inglis (1997) have criticized Mezirow’s Theory of Transformative Learning as being too focused on individual rather than social or collective transformation.

**Source 4:** Kokkos, A. (Ed.). (2020). *Expanding transformation theory: Affinities between Jack Mezirow and emancipatory educationalists*. Routledge.

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Mezirow was unable to convincingly argue that transformative learning had an adequate understanding of the social dimension of learning partly because he did not take onboard the full corpus of Habermas’ critical theory whose work grounds critical reflection and discourse in interpersonal relationships” (Kokkos, 2020, *Foreword*, xv).

**Essential Element:** This element is associated with the element of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to works evaluating how Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory evolved overtime as he attempt to connect his theory with other prominent ideas about adult learning.

**Contextualization:**  Mezirow’s Theory of Transformative Learning has been re-evaluated in light of the many changes that characterize learning today, including globalization and issues of climate change, inequalities, misogyny, racisms, neoliberalism and other opportunities that do not just affect learning, but act as what Kokkos (2020) calls an “existentialist threat.” In light of new ideas about learning, the degree to which Mezirow’s Theory of Transformative Learning can still be applied and regarded as formidable can be questioned.

**Source 5:** Kurnia, R.P. (2021). A case for Mezirow’s transformative learning. *Diligentia: Journal of Theology and Christian Education, 3*(1), 73-82.

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Jack Mezirow’s transformative learning theory is one of the most referenced adult education theories. In his theories, transformative learning is the process of effecting change in a frame of reference, using structures of assumption to understand our experiences. Transformative learners move toward a frame of reference with more inclusive self-reflection and more integration of experience. Adult educators should help students become aware and critical of assumptions, their own, and others’. As adult learners, we should be part of transformative learning by being critical with our frames of reference, starting from understanding the world unconsciously in childhood experience, and moving toward a frame of reference with more self-reflection and integration of experience” (Kurnia, 2021, p. 73).

**Essential Element:** This element is associated with the element of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to explanation of the use of Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory to ensure the success of adult learners in today’s contexts as they integrate their experiences in a process of self-reflection to optimize their understanding.

**Contextualization:** Mezirow’s Theory of Transformative Learning provides opportunities for adult educators to foster opportunities for their adult students to use their experiences to transform how they learn and understand things. Transformative learners must engage in critical thinking and critical reflection simultaneously in order to better understand self, others, and the world.

**Source 6:** Moran, C., & Moloney, A. (2022). Transformative learning in a transformed learning environment. *Journal of Transformative Learning*, *9*(1).

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “By using reflective accounts, which were structured using Mezirow’s 10 phases of transformative learning, respondents were able to describe their views, insights, opinions and experiences. Based on the information elicited from respondents, a number of themes were identified, namely, personal circumstances, career, qualifications, personal growth, and confidence, all of which provided significant evidence of the achievement of transformative learning among the full-time mature student respondents in this research” (Moran & Moloney, 2022, p. 1).

**Essential Element:** This element is associated with the element of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to explaining the phases of Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory. Transformative learning demands and involves individuals’ beliefs, experience, knowledge and personal growth.

**Contextualization:** Mezirow’s Theory of Transformative Learning describes the expansion of individuals’ consciousness through the transformation of basic worldview and specific self-capacities (Elias, 1997). As such, transformative learning is facilitated through consciously directed processes which include appreciatively accessing and receiving the symbolic contents of the unconscious, as well as critically analyzing underlying premises (Elias, 1997).

**Source 7:** Schnepfleitner, F.M., & Ferreira, M.P. (2021).Transformative Learning Theory–Is It Tıme to Add A Fourth Core Element?.*Journal of Educational Studies and Multidisciplinary Approaches, 1*(1), 40-49.

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Mezirow puts less emphasis on the fostering of transformative learning and describes adult learning as “an organised effort to assist learners who are old enough to be held responsible for their acts to acquire or enhance their understanding, skills, and dispositions” (2012, p.89). However, he and others outline what they consider some ideal conditions for transformative adult learning” (Schnepfleitner & Ferreira, 2021, p. 45).

**Essential Element:** This element is associated with the element of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to explanation of the elements of Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory. Transformative learning is predicated on activating individuals’ consciousness regarding their learning and engaging their abilities for self-reflection and consideration.

**Contextualization:** In Mezirow’s Theory of Transformative Learning some of the conditions for transformative learning include fostering learner-centered opportunities, participation, as well as interaction in learning environments. Educators must encourage voluntary discourse so that learners are able to examine and validate assumptions, values, beliefs, ideas and feelings. Also, it is very important to foster high levels of dialogue and engage problem solving (Schnepfleitner & Ferreira, 2021).

**Works Cited**

Carter, P.L., & Nicolaides, A. (2023). Transformative learning: An emotional (r) evolution. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, *2023*(177), 25-36.

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***Supplemental Works Cited:***

Boyd, R.D., & Myers, J.G. (1988). Transformative education. *International Journal of Lifelong Education, 7*(4),261–284.

Cunningham, P.M. (1992). From Freire to feminism: The north American experience with critical pedagogy. *Adult Education Quarterly, 42*(3), 180–191.

Inglis, T. (1997). Empowerment and emancipation. *Adult Education Quarterly, 48*(1), 3–17.