

# **TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING AMONG VICTIMS OF TRAUMA**

## THE IMPACT OF AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM ON

Transformative Learning Experiences among Victims of Trauma

Research Project

Seminar: Issues in Education

Central Michigan University

Prepared by:

Alqi Beqo

Abdul Abubaker( CCVT Language & Skills Development Coordinator)

Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT)

December, 2014

Research Monitor

Dr. David Lloyd

### Abstract

This mixed method research explored transformative learning experiences among victims of trauma in an English language study program, Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC). The survey aimed to identify the percentage of students experiencing Transformative Learning (TL) due to participation in the LINC program and the catalysts that initiated TL experiences. The interviews explored further the nature of students' TL experiences. The survey data collected from a modified version of Learning Activity Survey (King, 2000) from 56 participants revealed a high rate of students experiencing transformative learning, 48 (85.7 %) students out of 56 participants. In addition, the survey data identified four major TL catalysts - classroom learning activities, support from instructors and classmates, life change events such as immigration, and the ongoing length of time participating in the LINC program. None of the demographics had any significant impact on proportion of students experiencing TL. The account of eight interviews revealed three main themes including language learning, cultural and personal change. Furthermore, the use of TL theory among adults who had experienced trauma was found valuable to foster post traumatic growth. It is maintained that the practice of TL theory as an instructional strategy should be encouraged in LINC programs as it plays a key role in shaping students' positive TL experiences.

*Keywords:* Transformative learning, post traumatic growth

### Acknowledgements

Foremost, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the research monitor, Dr. David Lloyd, for the continuous support of this research, patience, motivation, and immediate feedback. My sincere thanks and deep gratitude goes to David Burt, LINC instructor at Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT), whose help to modify the language of the survey and the list of learning activities was invaluable.

In particular, we owe this research to an inspiring manager of CCVT, Huda Bukhari, for enlightening us with the first glance of the research on transformative learning through her “Befriending” program.

**Table of Contents**

Abstract .....	2
Acknowledgements .....	3
List of Tables.....	5
List of Figures .....	5
Chapter 1: The Problem Defined .....	6
Background Statement .....	6
Problem Statement.....	9
Purpose of Study .....	10
Research Questions.....	10
Definition of Terms .....	11
Theoretical Framework .....	11
Assumptions .....	15
Limitations of the Study .....	15
Chapter 2: The Literature Review .....	17
Why Transformative Learning .....	17
Components of Transformative Learning.....	20
Critical Analysis of TL.....	29
Chapter 3: Methodology .....	32
Research Methodology.....	32
Data Collection .....	33
Data Analysis.....	35
Ethical Review .....	37
Chapter 4: Data Analysis .....	38
Results of the Study .....	38
Summary .....	47
Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations .....	49
Summary .....	49
Discussion and Conclusions .....	51
Recommendations .....	55
Summary of the Discussion and Conclusions .....	58
References.....	60
Appendices.....	68

## List of Tables

Table 1: Mezirow's Ten Phases of Transformative Learning .....	13
Table 2: Ranking of Learning Activities .....	40
Table 3: Percentage and Mean Score of Grouped Learning Activities .....	41
Table 4: Differences between Canada Time and LINC Time .....	45

## List of Figures

Figure 1 Revised Transformative Learning Theory.....	12
Figure 2: Three Types of Reflection.....	24

## Chapter 1: The Problem Defined

### Background Statement

The face of Canada is continuously changing. Toronto, Canada's largest city, is home to refugees from over 120 countries. A refugee, different from an immigrant, is "forced to flee from persecution" (Dauvergne, 2012, p. 311). Pullenayegem (2014), a refugee policy analyst, published the following data related to refugees in his work "The Face of Canada":

Canada accepts about 25,000 to 30,000 persons per year as refugees who have humanitarian and compassionate grounds for remaining in Canada. Of this number, about 10,500 are selected from refugee camps and brought to Canada either on a government program or through a private sponsorship program. Toronto itself is home to a large number of refugees and together with Vancouver and Montreal, account for most of them.

However, these urban areas are challenges that could shatter their hopes completely or rebuild their life narratives for future resilience (Language and Skills Training, 2012).

The study site for this research was one of the centres in Toronto that provided service mostly for refugees who had experienced torture. Over the past 37 years, this centre has grown into a funded organization with more than 40 staff members. The foundations of volunteerism, advocacy, solidarity, and support have remained steady as they have expanded their activities in response to the growing diversity of their clients. It offers a profile of services that, in many ways, is a community response rather than a service response. Counsellors and physicians are available to address health problems associated with exposure to violence. Participant-driven support groups allow for a sharing of resources and group-specific programming. Settlement and legal services assist with negotiating immigration processes and connection with institutions, and

a large network of volunteers provide individualized support from navigating the city to learning English.

For the past 23 years, specialized Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) program has been a key component of the centre in the recovery and successful rehabilitation of survivors of torture and organized violence. The LINC program in collaboration with the many other services provided by the organisation and in partnership with the community, enable and support survivors in the process of successful integration into Canadian society and promotes hope after the horror (Abubakar, 2014).

Experiencing torture, war and other forms of organized violence results in learning barriers that require an educational approach and support system different from the mainstream of LINC immigrant programs. This organisation has met the challenge of teaching English as a Second Language through the years by creating a “safe haven”, where clients are made welcome through an environment where virtually all specialized services are found under one roof. LINC classes are considered “Safe Heaven spaces” as they are transformed into communities which encourage hope, optimism and service to each other and society. What makes these communities safe is the design, qualified teachers and the curricula. Abubakar (2014) mentioned that language training courses nurture the individual and cater to the needs of adult learners who suffer from debilitating imprints that make the learning process harder and strenuous.

Building relationships is key for healing and integration of trauma survivors. The program aims to build a vibrant infrastructure of people relating to interactions among people that meets needs and works for change. The centre is thoroughly integrated with other agencies, hospitals, and universities – having a strong community presence through strategic partnerships and public education activities. At a micro level, a web of healthy relationships is created and the

group transforms itself into active community members who support one another, replacing the “circles of silence” with “circles of solidarity” (Abai, 2003).

Educators hold a powerful position in the lives of survivors, as the educators are able to connect with them on a daily basis providing mentoring and academic support. Couto, one of the trauma counsellors of the centre articulated that “since mistrust is a common symptom of trauma, teachers of this centre make efforts to build the trust of survivors through reliability and confidentiality as these can have a monumental effect on the mental health of survivors (S. Couto, personal communication, October 5, 2014). S. Couto, also highlighted the fact that reliability and confidentiality are fundamental in increasing the capacity to socialize and befriend others. In addition, Couto and Wembo (2013) proposed that teachers demonstrate flexibility and empathy when challenged by the needs of survivor students, and that they focus on the competency and strengths of students.

Abubakar (2014) asserted that LINC instructors modify curriculum and testing requirements in order to better meet the needs of survivors. This may mean delivering lessons at a slower pace, repeating concepts, providing extra time on tests, or arranging for homework assistance. Finally, he recommended that teachers become knowledgeable on country conditions to understand the environments that newcomer children and youth are originating from, and that they become familiar with mental health agencies in order to refer students for counseling and more specialized support.

## **Problem Statement**

As post traumatic growth is facilitated by a number of services in the centre, LINC classes also have their fundamental share in this growth. Post traumatic growth is an outcome that is facilitated by transformative learning (De La Lama, 2007). Transformative learning is “a structural change in the way we see ourselves and our relationships” (Mezirow, 1978, p. 100). King (2002) added that the structural change is fundamental. When someone underwent such a change, s/he had, in essence, “transformed” his/her view of himself/herself of the world or of how s/he interacted with others and his/her environment.

However, there is not much awareness and understanding of how the teacher’s role, teaching techniques and curricula affect transformative growth from the lens of Transformative Learning theory (TL) within the context of victims who have experienced trauma. Re-evaluating teachers’ roles, the effects of teaching strategies to initiate post traumatic growth through the lens of TL will provide a better understanding of the nature and the triggers of transformative leaning experiences among survivors of torture. It will also provide an opportunity to identify the strengths of LINC classes for survivors of tortures where to build upon and gaps for improvements.

Not everyone can experience growth and transformation (Shields, 2013). “Growth does not occur as a direct result of trauma. It is the individual’s struggle with the new reality in the aftermath of trauma that is crucial in determining the extent to which posttraumatic growth occurs” (Wortman, 2004, p. 90). Concluding from this viewpoint, task based learning in LINC classes is not enough to produce transformative experiences. For many ESL programs, their focus might be only on task based learning such as exam preparation or typically “the can-do statements “of Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB, 2013). However, for those ESL

programs that look beyond a task based approach, TL may provide a platform for higher motivation and better integration of their learners in society.

Research on transformative learning and especially on perspective transformation has revealed changes among adult learners in many settings including cross - cultural settings, higher education and medical rehabilitation (King, 2009); however, until now TL has not been used to examine the experiences of adult ESL victims of trauma.

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this mixed method research, through the use of surveys and interviews, was to investigate the effect LINC classes for victims of trauma had on students' transformative learning experiences and the nature of transformative experiences.

### **Research Questions**

Quantitative data were gathered by surveying LINC students at the centre for survivors of trauma. Participants were asked to complete a 13- item modified version of Learning Activities Survey (LAS) originally written by King (2000) that tried to answer the following questions:

1. What percentage of students have experienced transformative learning due to their participation in LINC classes?
2. What are the factors that initiate transformative learning for victims of torture?
3. What common themes are evident in the transformative learning experiences from the learner's perspective?

Qualitative data were gathered through interviews with LINC students who demonstrated from the data of the survey that they had experienced transformative learning. Participants were asked a series of open-ended questions to enrich understanding of TL experiences based on the answers provided in their survey.

### **Definition of Terms**

*Transformative learning*: “transformative learning is learning that transforms problematic frames of reference—sets of fixed assumptions and expectations (habits of mind, meaning perspectives, mindsets)—to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change” (Mezirow 2003, p. 58).

*Post Traumatic Growth*: Positive psychological change experienced as a result of the struggle with highly challenging life circumstances” (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004, p.1)

### **Theoretical Framework**

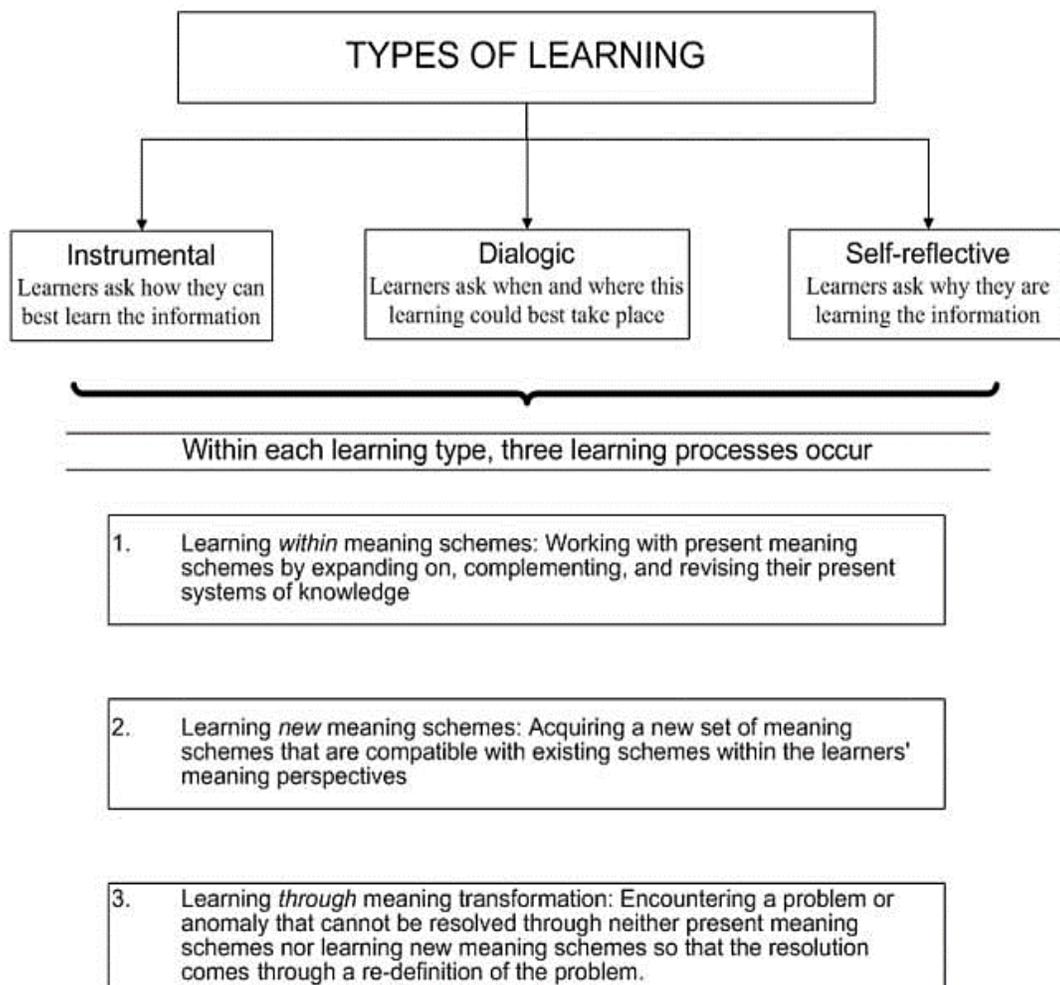
In this section I will provide a brief overview of Transformative Learning (TL) Theory from the perspective of the architect of the theory Jack Mezirow. The process and conditions that need to be present to foster transformative learning from his perspective are discussed. Also, influences of Freire and Habermas to Mezirow’s TL theory are mentioned to provide a context of TL evolving history including a critical review of the theory.

Transformative Learning Theory is a theory of adult education where the learner reflects on previous experience to direct his/her future action. It offers an explanation “for change in meaning structures” (Mezirow 2000, p.162). Transformative learning, according to Mezirow, could be viewed as “an enhanced level of awareness of the context of one’s beliefs and feelings, a critique of one’s assumptions, and particularly premises, and an assessment of alternative perspectives” (Mezirow, 1991a, p. 161). TL is a meaning making activity. Meaning is “making sense of or giving coherence to our experiences” (Mezirow, 1991a, p. 11). More recently, Mezirow wrote that transformative learning is learning that transformed problematic frames of reference—sets of fixed assumptions and expectations (habits of mind, meaning perspectives,

mindsets)—to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change” (Mezirow, 2003, p. 58).

**Domains of Transformative Learning.** Mezirow was influenced by Habermas (1971) who proposed three types of learning (technical, practical, and emancipatory), which became (a) instrumental learning where learners ask how they could best learn the information, (b) dialogic learning which dealt with when and where this learning could best take place, and (c) self-reflective which tried to answer the question why learners are learning the information (Mezirow, 1985). (See Fig. 1)

*Figure 1 Revised Transformative Learning Theory*



Within each of the learning types, three learning processes take place: learning within meaning schemes, learning new meaning schemes, and learning through meaning schemes.

Mezirow considered both *dialogic* and *self-reflective* learning as communicative learning, which involved understanding the meaning of what others “communicate concerning values, ideals, feelings, moral decisions, and such concepts of freedom, justice, love, labour, autonomy, commitment and democracy” (Mezirow, 1991a, p. 8)

**Phases of Transformative Learning.** Initially Mezirow argued that transformations often followed some variation of 10 phases of meaning becoming clarified (see Table 1). While these steps are experienced in a variety of orders all ten stages must be satisfied to accomplish TL (Mezirow 1990; 2000)

*Table 1: Mezirow’s Ten Phases of Transformative Learning*

Phase 1	A disorienting dilemma
Phase 2	A self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame
Phase 3	A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions
Phase 4	Recognition that one’s discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change
Phase 5	Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
Phase 6	Planning of a course of action
Phase 7	Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plans
Phase 8	Provisional trying of new roles
Phase 9	Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
Phase 10	A reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s perspective

Mezirow believed that TL usually results from a "disorienting dilemma," which was triggered by a life crisis or major life transition, although it may also result from an accumulation

of transformations in meaning schemes and meaning perspectives over a period of time (Mezirow 1995, p. 50). A meaning perspective referred to “the structure of cultural and psychological assumptions within which our past experience assimilates and transforms new experience” (Mezirow, 1985, p. 21).

Mezirow (1985) came up with three types of meaning perspectives: epistemic (related to knowledge and how a person uses knowledge), sociolinguistic (related to language and how it is used in social settings), and psychological (related to the way people viewed themselves).

Kitchenham (2008) affirmed that Mezirow was highly influenced by the work of Freire. Freire’s added to transformative learning the concept of “*conscientization*” as an antidote of traditional education banking method of learning, where the teacher deposited knowledge to those students who had the gift of receiving knowledge (Freire, 1973). Developing a *consciousness* led to acquiring a power that transformed reality. He defined *conscientization* as “learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions—developing a critical awareness—so that individuals could “take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (Freire, 1973, p. 19).

Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory has evolved in time being influenced by the work of Habermas’ domains of learning (1971) which resulted in another stage – emancipatory learning. With this stage Mezirow (1981) changed transformative learning into *perspective transformation*, which he defined as:

The emancipatory process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions came to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships, reconstituting this structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understandings (p. 6).

The aforementioned 10 phases of transformative learning which produced personal transformation, Mezirow (1991a) expanded the phases to 11 to include an additional phase, “renegotiating relationships and negotiating new relationships” (Mezirow, 1994b, p. 224), between the original Phases eight and nine. This new phase reflected the importance of critical self-reflection as a crucial component of Perspective Transformation.

### **Assumptions**

The main assumption of this research was that LINC instructors had adapted transformative learning as a priority and not as a by-product of their teaching. It was expected that students surveyed had experienced the first phase of transformative learning (the personal dilemma) due to trauma caused by torture and immigration. However, it was recognised that each individual is unique in the way that individual perceives and interprets the world. Mezirow, (1991b) maintained that each individual has a distinct frame of reference. As such the level of transformation is unique for each individual.

Second, ESL classes provided an optimal environment to foster transformative learning due to the interaction, collaboration and ESL instructors’ approach while students were introduced to a new frame of reference, which meant new language and culture. Kasper (2000) affirmed that in an ESL environment the learners’ interaction enabled them (the learners) to both share and question their own and others’ frames of reference, allowing critical reflection to occur

### **Limitations of the Study**

1. The sample size for the survey was relatively small because of the specific characteristics of the sample population.

2. The results of this research represented data only from a single facility for LINC classes with specific results concerning survivors of torture and could not be generalised for other LINC centres.
3. This study did not include any participants who reported a negative experienced due to TL.

## **Chapter 2: The Literature Review**

### **Why Transformative Learning**

Transformative learning (TL) has been used in different educational settings generating different outcomes. Some of the outcomes included recovery from medical conditions and trauma (De Barbieri, 2007; Johnson, 2011), creating a “greater good” (Allison & Out, 2007), integration of different disadvantaged groups into society (Kung, 2007), instilling hope, purpose and confidence (Bishop, Cabrales, Ginsburg, Mapp, Mayorga, Olinger & Torres, 2012), and creating lifelong learners (Manson, Poitras, & Hong, 2000).

The work of Johnson (2011) was monumental in reaching traumatised adult learners through TL. Trauma was considered a “chisel that shapes a brain to contend with strife, but at the cost of deep, enduring wounds” (p. 25). According to Perry and Szalavitz (2006), a factor viewed in many traumatized adults returning to school was the inability to internalize new verbal cognitive information, which depended on having portions of the frontal and related cortical areas active. That required a state of what he called “attentive calm.” Johnson (2011) argued that through TL it is possible to assist adult students to gain experience in taking on a critically reflective posture, potentially reaching the traumatized adult learners and bringing their level of learning from the primitive brain to the frontal cortex, thus producing better plasticity and ability to reflect. Regurgitating information did not bring such restoration.

TL facilitated recovery of medical conditions. The research of De Barbieri (2007) on recovering from bulimia, found that recovery involved a succession of experiences, which when reflected upon, often in connection with others, stimulated learning. Changes in meaning-making often resulted from disorienting dilemmas. Reflective thinking, affiliation with others, and the development of one’s voice were found to be the facilitators for learning to recover from

bulimia. Internal and external barriers to reflection impeded learning. The internal barriers were reported as non-reflective thinking and negative emotional states. The external barriers most frequently reported came from an unsupportive environment and survival issues such as lack of money and/or no medical insurance (pp. 19-22).

TL transformed the “negative” to a “greater good”. Allison and Out (2007) project was based on analysing personal stories that could be coded as a redemptive sequence - stories beginning with an event that could be described as having a negative charge, but ended with a positively charged legacy or “greater good”. Within these stories, participants described a process of growth that could be seen as the transformative learning process, beginning with the negative event (disorienting dilemma). The redemptive sequence referred to a narrative that was emotionally negative followed by a narrative that was emotionally positive and contained a positive outcome. Bowman and McAdams considered this positive outcome as the one which “redeemed and provided meaning for the negative events that preceded it (as cited in Allison & Out, 2007, p. 8). This study added to Mezirow’s TL (2000) the concepts of loss and adversity as essential to redemptive sequence as “The person who is experiencing loss and adversity possesses greater opportunity for wisdom to grow, as opposed to a person whose life is relatively free from loss and adversity” (Allison & Out, 2007, p.10)

TL helped international students to integrate into the mainstream of the society. Kung (2007) studied the efforts of 18 international students to integrate in American Society. Her study revealed that their transformative learning experiences included mindfully observing and examining of themselves and their surroundings, carefully reflecting upon their feelings and actions, constantly engaging in dialogues with themselves and others to challenge and assess their beliefs and assumptions, openly networking with the Americans and other international

students for intellectual and cultural exchanges, critically thinking through their decisions and integrating their experiences, and consciously modifying or transforming their frames of reference and habits of mind while coping with changes in the U.S. academia and culture. “This process reoccurred spirally each time when they encountered a new challenge or challenges” (p. 225). Furthermore, for some participants their perspective transformations were a long, cumulative process. For others it was evoked by one specific event or incident” (p. 226).

TL provided purpose and hope. TL was used as a tool to create a sense of purpose for prisoners to reintegrate into society after serving their time. Bishop et al. (2012) studied a program in which prisoners taught ESL classes, supported by volunteer teacher-trainers. The benefits of those programs included the building of trust and lending a sense of purpose to their time in prison. They helped the prisoners shift from “a passive recipient to a contributor to society” (Bishop et al., 2012, p. 69). What the authors call transformative was the concept of sacrifice related to their choice of serving their time in prison which is as follows:

The learners and teachers have all chosen in some way to sacrifice certain privileges for the sake of becoming better people. Instead of spending time playing cards or dominoes the learners and teachers are in their cells doing homework or coming up with lesson plans or activities for class. If one did not have an assignment (job) or attended classes, one could be locked in the cell for 21 hours a day. The remaining hours could be spent in the dayroom or the common area where they could play cards, dominoes, or socialize.

Considering that sacrifice was a choice with following consequences, transformative learning experiences were self-initiated in such as specific setting as the prison.

TL was found to be a natural approach in ESL environments. It built language learning skills, confidence and created more cultural competent learners. Manson, Poitras, and Hong

(2000) found in their study of ESL learning for international students a number of important insights concerning the use of TL in the ESL classroom. First, all of the participants improved their English language skills, implying that a TL approach is effective in ESL teaching. Second, a significant number of students became more confident in their English language abilities, indicating that TL can bolster students' self-efficacy in language learning. Third, using TL principles when creating course content and devising teaching strategies was most effective in prompting learners to challenge their views of what the ESL learning process involved. Fourth, many of the students enrolled in the course had never studied in a multicultural classroom intentionally designed using TL principles. The experience led learners to question assumptions they may have had regarding other cultures, suggesting that TL fosters a more inclusive worldview. Finally, the majority of learners experienced changes in their perspectives on a variety of social issues, indicating that TL led learners to challenge many of their long-held views.

TL could create lifelong learners. Tcherepashenets (2011) showed evidence that critical reflection of TL process enhanced independent thinking, engaged citizenship, and facilitated the formation of cosmopolitan views and perceptions. Based on the review of 42 students' projects, Tcherepashenets found that students developed a need to "fight for the right laws" and not take any opinion and information for granted. Above all, those students were converted to lifelong learners who could form their own opinions in a responsible way.

### **Components of Transformative Learning**

**Support.** Supporting environment is crucial while TL process is gradually enriched. "As the learning process is enhanced students can then be supported through the trying out of new

roles these ideas imply, practicing skills necessary to implement them, and gaining confidence in their new world view” (Brock, Florescu, & Teran 2012, p. 4).

Previous research on TL (Cranton & Wright, 2008; King, 2009; Taylor, 2000) confirmed the concept of support provided by educators as the perspective transformative practice suggested by Mezirow (1991a). Taylor (2007) argued that “Educators are those who enable our learning – colleagues, friends, neighbors, parents, children, organizational leaders, spiritual leaders, artists, researchers, teachers, mentors – especially those who enabled us to learn as we live and work and inspire us to a life of inquiry – openness and discernment” (p. 22).

Cranton and Wright (2008) explored how the educators deliberately and consciously built trust and helped learners overcome their fears. Six themes emerged from the narratives:

Support was necessary to create a sense of safety. “A transformative educator acts as a learning companion who provides a safe place of exploration and discovery, through shared trust and a sense of possibility” (Johnson & Taylor, 2006, p.66). Daloz (1999) called the holding environment between a mentor and a learner, a space where the learner felt uniquely seen by the mentor, valued and safe. Schore (1994) noted that the orbitofrontal cortex, or higher regions of the brain, could actually be stimulated through eye contact (as cited in Johnson & Taylor, 2006). Johnson and Center (2011) also confirmed that caring social signals could activate the higher region of the brain and promote learners to feel empathetic and secure (p. 67). Support means trust between educator and learner. Johnson and Taylor (2006) argued that social cognitive neuroscience supports the role of emotions in learning, the need for dialogue and affective attuning, the creation of a safe space or holding environment, and the learners’ need for encouragement. These concepts are true as long as there is “dialogue between a trusted, affectively attuned mentor/teacher and a learner which creates the *holding environment*”

(Johnson & Taylor, 2006, p. 213). Zull (2002) also emphasized the concept of reflective dialogue as a tool that could assist the student in understanding and acquiring reflective skills and move the student into higher order thinking and creating trust and a safe space (p. 83).

Providing support in TL encouraged a sense of possibility for discovery within self. As learning companions, educators believe in students before they believe in themselves. In other words they hold that sense of possibility until the learner can (Zull, 2002, p.103). Furthermore, "teaching is about asking people to remember who they are." Cranton (2006) described developing a sense of self, or becoming authentic as a transformative experience in itself, and it "simultaneously leads to further transformation and further authenticity in a kind of spiral of learning"

The teacher had also a great role in Freire's concept of "*conscientization*". Freire (1973) argued that "the teacher has to be democratic, form a transformative relationship, political in nature, and has to get over the instilled certainty (p. 52). Freire argued that the teacher could perform his/her role through conscientization and its related critical consciousness through three stages of consciousness growth, intransitive thought, semi-transitive, critical transitivity (Freire, 1993).

Can an online context support TL? The online ESL for Educators course studied by McClinton, (2005) provided opportunities for learning. However, there was minimal evidence to support the claim that the course overall was an ideal context for transformative learning experiences. Therefore, not every learning context could provide optimal conditions to reap the benefits of TL theory. Barriers such as "lack of connection, difficulty keeping up with the work, challenges in finding a routine, frustration with participating in superficial and repetitive discussions, fear of miscommunication, lack of instructor feedback, and limitations of typing

versus verbalizing thoughts” did not provide a fertile ground for TL to happen (p. 53). Other factors that did not provide support but inhibited transformative learning were laid out by Taylor (2000) which included rules and sanctions imposed, unequal distribution of group responsibilities, emphasis on task completion instead of reflective dialogue and rigid role assignments, curricula and assessments (pp. 183-184).

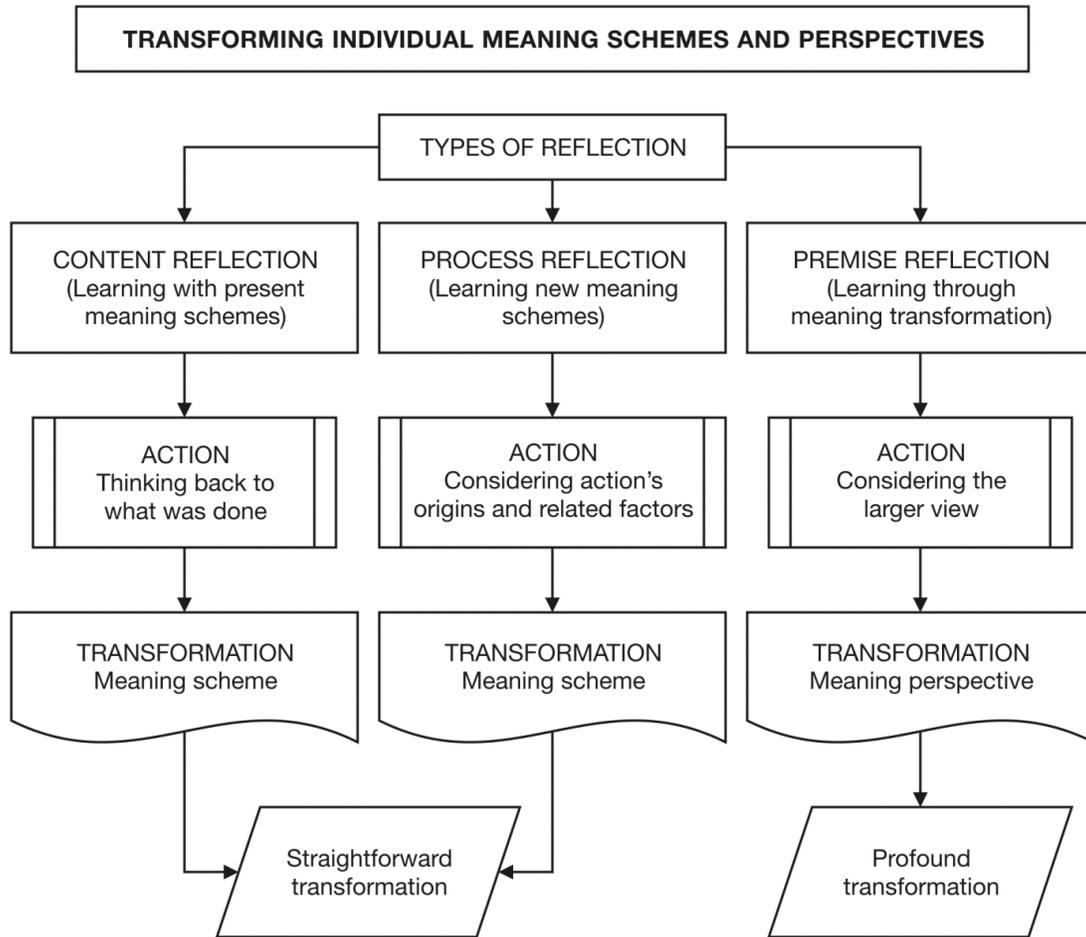
Almost all research agreed that support should be a companion of transformative learning. Even comfort if it was not considered a companion of TL was not transformative (Taylor, 2000).

**Relationships.** Taylor (2000) found that the key ingredient most common in the process of transformational learning was the context of relationships. One of the seminal works in the field on the nature of relationships was the work of Taylor (2008). Taylor mentioned a typology which included: utilitarian relationships (acquiring skills and knowledge), love relationships (enhance self-image, friendship), memory relationships (former or deceased). Another study by Chouduri (2007) found that the relationships students developed with each other were much closer, supportive, and enriching when they were struggling through than when they competed with each other or were isolated from each other. This study also explained that relationships were not easy, but also that vulnerability and disclosed flaws heightened intimacy (Chouduri, 2007). As the process of building relationships continued, students began to depend less and less on the teacher. The role of the instructor was crucial in the nature of these relationships. Chouduri stated that “Where they began with often asking me to instruct, guide, intercede, or mediate, lessens as they become more comfortable and self-directed with handling the complexities of the relationship” (Chouduri, 2007, p. 92).

**Reflection.** Mezirow (1995) differentiated between straightforward reflection and critical reflection. Straightforward reflection is the act of “intentional assessment” of one’s actions, whereas critical reflection (profound reflection) not only involved the nature and consequence of one’s actions but also includes the related circumstances of their origin (p. 44). He presented three types of reflection and their roles in transforming meaning schemes and perspectives: content reflection, process reflection, and premise reflection. While content and process reflection led to straightforward transformation (see Figure 2), premise reflection led to profound transformation.

Content reflection involved thinking back to what was done and, therefore, could involve a transformation of a meaning scheme. Process reflection caused a person to consider the aetiology of actions and whether there were other factors yet to be unveiled; this form of reflection could also transform meaning schemes. Premise reflection required the person to see the larger view of what was operating within his or her value system, and could transform a meaning perspective rather than a meaning scheme. Thus, critical reflection was the process of premise reflecting (Kitchenham, 2008). Critical self-reflection of assumptions was akin to premise reflection (Mezirow, 1995). For example, learners examined their worldview in light of their own particular belief or value system.

*Figure 2: Three Types of Reflection*



To sum up, TL is a guided meaning making process where two domains of learning, instrumental and communicative, use reflection as the conduit for learning to create the conditions for transformative learning to happen.

**Instructional Strategies to Foster TL**

Educational techniques of transformative learning include ten phases of transformative learning as described by Mezirow (2000), challenging environments and teaching tools such as stories, biographies, arts, experiential activities, class discussions and mostly the very act of writing.

Brock, Florescu, and Teran (2012) in their quantitative research confirmed the value of the 10 precursor steps proposed by Mezirow (2000) in predicting transformative learning in college classrooms. Their research indicated that educational techniques that especially encourage 5 of the 10 transformative learning precursor steps were most effective in fostering this type of learning. These are “reflecting critically on assumptions, as well as experiencing disorienting dilemmas, trying on new roles, acquiring skills to make a change, and building confidence.

Bridwell (2007) was the first to present perspectives of transformational learning using a constructive-developmental lens based on race as the primary focus of inquiry. Bridwell suggested that there was a need for creating environments that more appropriately support and challenge learners at different developmental stages toward more complex ways of knowing that could support feminist and critical theory empowerment goals. None of the women in this study who were not challenged by instruction exhibited capacity for making meaning of their experiences at the level of a self-authoring knower (2007). Chouduri (2007) agreed that simply presenting students with information and hoping that they would examine and engage with it was not possible for TL to happen. He suggested that “the classroom is and should be a place where there is a sense of struggle” (p. 90).

While Buck (2007) recognised the importance of spirituality in reflection, he did not acknowledge the importance of Bridwell’s concept of a challenging environment. However, Buck’s work shared similarities with Bleyl’s study (2007). They both emphasized the importance of stories in triggering critical reflection. Buck suggested that group settings for telling one’s story might enhance the ability to self-reflect, engage in dialogue, build relationships, and accept others through learning about similarities and differences. While Bleyl

viewed cultural proverbs, ritual, histories, and spiritual creation as the personal dilemmas which assisted in questioning, reflecting upon and transforming the worldviews.

Johnson R. (2003) found autobiography to be a fluid teaching tool that triggered transformative learning. Prompted by assignments designed to induce self-reflective practice, her composition students revealed highly dramatic events in their lives. She explained that students' risking "risking and sharing opened up pathways that allowed new information to be assimilated with the old—new information about themselves, their thinking, and their world as it filtered through their evolving selves" (p. 243). Use of biography as a strategy of TL helped students to "build relationship group and promotes personal transformation" (p. 244). She also found that students "began seeing themselves as writers, not just students learning about writing. They connect with each other as writers creating a "writing community" (p. 243).

Lewis and Viato (2007) suggested using activities where experiential learning create moments of encountering the 'other' followed by time for reflection and dialogue. That allows the learners an opportunity to examine their assumptions and beliefs and to change or transform them into a more inclusive perspective. They used *Reader's Theatre* as a transformative learning tool within the area of teaching and training of human diversity and the development of multicultural competence. They found *Reader's Theatre* to provide deeper levels of understanding and awareness (Lewis & Viato., 2007). *Reader's Theatre* was used as a vehicle to question underlying assumptions and beliefs about immigration, and undocumented immigrants in both the workplace and undergraduate classrooms. "As a dramatic oral reading tool, it offered an opportunity for staff and students to be open to the experiences of others and provided for a better understanding of immigration issues on a logical, ethical, social, cultural, economic, political and spiritual plane" (p. 242). Another study by Bean and Kroth (2007) showed that

participants in the research experienced profound transformative change because of an encounter with a transformational figure. Dalos (1999) defined transformational figures as guides along the journey providing opportunities for those who followed to have success along the way. The results of the study by Bean and Kroth (2007) challenged the notion that disorienting dilemma must be accompanied by shame and guilt.

In a study TL experiences of 139 adult ESL learners, class discussions (reflective discourse) were the major contributors to perspective transformation (King, 2000). “The predominance of class discussions as a contributor to perspective transformation was evident as it was ranked first in both the questionnaire and interview data” (p.88). Other learning activities that contributed were essays, group projects, personal journals, and role plays. The research found that there was a synergistic link among discussions and writing and perspective transformation when they aimed at finding one's voice. The adult ESL learner also noted that “their teachers, friends and classmates had a prominent impact on them (p. 87).

Larsen's action study (2007) focused on using arts as a tool to increase discourse, understanding and application of art and creative processes for usable knowledge to a more diverse group of learners and educators. He found that arts contributed directly to possibilities for teaching and learning because they offered students multiple modes of expression and communication. Utilizing and promoting art media in learning, more meaningful learning could occur. Larsen (2007) suggested that the use of arts could increase discourse of factors and realities in transformation and bring transformative learning through art and creative processes into clearer understanding and application for usable knowledge to a more diverse group of learners and educators.

The very act of writing was found to be a powerful strategy in a research done with adult refugees and immigrants in the inner city of Winnipeg (Magro, & Ghorayshi, 2011). This kind of writing invited reflection by both students and teachers, which took place in journals, letters, poems, speeches, formal essays, or more informal personal essays. The study suggested that “Whatever the form used, students should see writing as a means of thinking through changes and dilemmas that they and others face” (pp. 26-27).

McGonigal (2005) suggested a number of other teaching techniques that encouraged transformative learning including understanding students ‘background, identifying assumptions, but offering counter examples and alternative scenarios, helping students to evaluate their predictions and talk through their thinking of problem solving, justifying a critique while evaluating a specific position, keeping a class journal of questions, observations and experiences, encouraging students to keep track of “aha” moments, creating a perspective history timeline, analysing an approach comparing it with previous assumption especially when introducing a new strategy, concept, or paradigm; playing devil’s advocate in discussions; assigning group projects that involve analysis, comparison and integration of ideas, reading or approaches.

### **Critical Analysis of TL**

Critics of TL theory argued on the psychological and cognitive development of the subject and the holistic nature of TL. Merriam (2004) asserted that while TL led to a more mature, autonomous and developed level of thinking, Mezirow neglected to mention it required a certain level of cognitive development before TL could be undertaken by the learner. Therefore, not all learners would be ready to make this critical assessment and educators had to be prepared for the learners.

Tennant (1993) warned educators that they could not expect learners to experience psychological development. However, they could expect students to experience perspective transformation only in the realm of cognitive development.

Pietrykowski (1996) argued that Mezirow, along with Freire and Habermas, claimed an emancipatory end state of the perspective transformation. However, Illeris (2004) theorized that a comprehensive learning theory should include cognition, emotion, and environment as a reflection of a whole person in society.

Newman did not agree with the term *transformative*. His concept was “change into another shape or form, change in character and condition, function or nature, to metamorphose (Newman, 2010). He proposed to abandon the term *transformative learning*, and adopt the straightforward term *good learning*. Also, he considered transformative learning as “inappropriate learning” (Newman, 2014). He considered the process of self-analysis of transformative learning as not instrumental learning when “there is no time nor the need for introspection” (p. 346). Newman considered the role accorded to transformative learning by O’Sullivan as too much to be implemented in learning. O’Sullivan, 2012) defined transformative learning as the following:

Transformative learning involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; our body awareness, our visions of alternative approaches to living; our sense of possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy (as cited in Newman, 2014)

Newman (2014) suggested that some items in the list introduced by the aforementioned definition could be achieved through TL using reflection; however, others could be achieved by good old-fashioned information gathering; others by reading, talking, and listening; and still others by political action. “All these activities will involve learning, and some of that learning may be profound, but there is no need, as O’Sullivan does, to invoke the terms deep transformation, transformative learning, and integral transformative learning” (p. 350). Newman considered Mezirow’s Steps of Perspective Transformation as a finite process. The first phase is a new experience, described as “a disorienting” and there was a final phase “a reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s new perspective” Newman said that “this position is tenable if we see learning as a continual process” (p. 19).

Critical analysis of the theory of TL as described by Mezirow revealed that Mezirow’s theory should not be viewed as a complete and universal theory of adult learning and adult development. However, this theory should remain open to further questioning and further research to clarify Mezirow’s language for describing it and its theoretical underpinnings (Cranton, 2006; Mezirow, 2000; Taylor, 1998).

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

#### **Research Methodology**

A mixed mode study was used as the research methodology in order to explain and interpret transformative learning experiences through surveys and compliment the strengths of the survey instrument through interviews. A sequential explanatory approach was chosen as the model of mixed method design (Creswell, 2003, p. 211) which was characterized by collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by a collection and analysis of qualitative data. The purpose of this model was “to use qualitative results to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of a quantitative study” (p. 212). The focus of this research was to capture triggers, TL growth and themes of transformative learning. The results of the survey determined the conditions of who the potential candidates for an interview could be.

The survey instrument was chosen on the assumption that there was transformational learning happening due to PTG approach of the program as suggested by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) that “surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions” (p.205).

A semi structured interview guide approach was chosen to increase the comprehensiveness of the data and make data collection somewhat systematic for each respondent. The style of this type of interview was fairly conversational and situational which met the sensitive characteristics of the sample (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 353). Topics and issues covered were specified in advance in an outline form. The interviewer decided sequence in advance and working of questions in the course of the interview. This approach allowed for gathering “substantially different responses, thus reducing the comparability of responses” (p. 353).

The research consisted of two stages: Surveying followed by interviewing. Surveying intended to collect data from all students from LINC levels three to five. It collected data from 56 students. The survey responses qualified those who could participate in an interview. The most important criteria was that interviewee had to show through the survey data that s/he had experienced TL. The interview was on volunteer bases. Depending on time available, the response rate and the criteria, only eight students were qualified to be interviewed.

**Qualitative data:** Interviews were performed in order to have a deeper understanding of the nature of transformative learning experiences from the perspective of students and validate the answers of the surveys. Considering the ESL factor and the sensitive issues related with trauma, it was necessary to do interviews in order to capture more insights and information of transformational learning experiences. Interview questions were based on the survey answers trying to capture a story associated with the change (see appendix B). For example, if they answered “Yes” to the first question of the interview, then the interview question was: “What has changed?” Students who showed higher transformational learning and volunteered to be interviewed were contacted in person in order to arrange a convenient time for the interview. A spare room within the centre was used as the location for the interviews. The researcher followed the instructions of King (2009) on the interview procedure and on what to focus while performing interviews based on her modified survey model.

### **Data Collection**

Fifty six students who had attended LINC classes for at least one month, from levels three, four and five, responded to a 13-item questionnaire which collected quantitative data on triggers of transformative learning, life event changes, demographics, prior education and levels of experiencing 10 stages of perspective transformation. .

A modified version of The Learning Activities Survey (LAS) developed by King (2009) was used for surveying LINC students (see Appendix A). The author granted permission to freely reproduce the LAS to anyone for their own research efforts as long as the copyright and acknowledgment of the original author, Kathleen P. King, were displayed on all copies. (pp. 34-35). The author also provided instructions on modifying the tool without compromising its validity (p.35). Modifications were made in terms of language appropriateness for victims of torture. Also, question seven of the survey, first section, was modified to reflect the activities students participated in class. Question two of the original LAS was deleted. It was a free response which asked students to write briefly the type of change. First, answering the question required writing which was a weak skill among survey participants. Second, the researcher was advised by the manager of the centre that it could have been a deterrent for learners to participate in the interview as it asked personal information. Therefore, the researcher determined to gather that information through interviews. All modifications were done in consultation with the LINC instructors and the manager of the centre.

The beginning of the original LAS probed the perspective transformation experience through free-response questions about changes the respondents may have had experienced. This item was used as an interview question. The modified LAS version (See Appendix A) asked only whether any ideas or points of view had changed since participating in LINC classes. Following this, Mezirow's stages were paraphrased in a 13- checklist item where respondents chose all that applied to them. The second section of the questionnaire included a list of possible learning activities, persons/support, and life changes contributing to transformative learning. The other section that followed gathered demographic information. The final section invited participants to volunteer for a follow-up interview by contacting the researcher through the

provided email. Students' surveys were done in a classroom setting without the presence of their instructors and were collected by the researcher in person as there was no direct connection between the respondents and the researcher.

After an initial analysis of the data which identified potential candidates for the follow-up interview (the second stage of the research), several volunteers were contacted in person and eight interviews were conducted among participants who had a perspective transformation within the context of the LINC program. The interview draw further explanations of TL experiences and examples from the participants. There were two criteria to identify the potential participants for the follow-up interview. The participant had attended LINC classes for at least one month and had shown from the initial data analysis that s/he had experienced transformative learning. The interviews took place in a spare classroom of the LINC centre at a convenient time for the interviewee. All participants for both the survey and interview gave their consent before participating in the survey and interview.

### **Data Analysis**

The PT-Index file provided by King (2009) was used to analyse the data of survey (see Appendix C). During the initial analysis of the data, a PT-Index category out of three was assigned to each completed questionnaire in order to identify whether the participant had had a perspective transformation. These categories included whether the survey participant had had a perspective transformation due to participation in LINC classes, whether they had perspective transformation not related to participation in LINC classes and, whether they had not had a perspective transformation.

The final analysis included individual effects, frequencies, proportions, correlations and coding of free entry-responses and interviews to identify unifying themes.

Descriptive statistics were used to provide answers for research questions one and two, namely (1) what percentage of students' experienced transformative learning, and (2) what were the factors that initiated transformative learning experiences for victims of tortures. Data screening of results were conducted to check if all information collected had been checked correctly. Descriptive statistics of variables in the survey was summarized and presented in a tabular form. Analysis of frequency was conducted to determine percentages for responses to questions in the survey. Pearson chi-square technique helped to identify if there were differences among participants in relation to transformative learning experiences, and to investigate the relationship between educational, non-educational factors, and transformative learning experiences of victims of torture across demographics.

Pearson chi-square technique for the independent values was compared to the two sets of categories to determine whether the independent and dependent variables were distributed differently among the categories. This helped to determine the distribution of observations (frequencies) if no relationship existed.

Qualitative data were coded to identify themes and construct a narrative. According to Creswell (2009), in qualitative analysis, the researcher should (a) organize and prepare the data for analysis; (b) read through all the data, ascertain a general sense of the information and ideas participants are saying, and determine the tone of the ideas, analyze the impression of the overall depth, credibility, and use of the information; (c) code data by segmenting and labeling the text; (d) use codes to generate categories, and themes by aggregating similar codes together; (e) connect and interrelate themes; and (f) construct a narrative.

**Ethical Review**

In compliance with the ethical review policies of Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Central Michigan University, all ethical concerns were followed. A review application form, the survey instrument, letter of administrative approval and letter of consent were filed prior to starting the research project. The study started after the approval by Central Michigan University's research ethics process, conducted by the Master of Arts in Education program office.

An informed consent form (see Appendix D) addressed participants about their confidentiality right, and voluntary nature of participants. The consent form addressed participants of their guaranteed rights, and assured them of no anticipated risks. Participants were coded with numbers after a hand delivered version of the modified LAS had been returned and responses kept confidential.

In the qualitative phase, selected respondents for the follow-up interviews were assigned different names for use in the data reporting of results. For the purposes of confidentiality, all study data, interview recordings and transcripts, were only accessed by the principal investigator and were destroyed after the results were shared with the manager of the centre and the co-investigator of the study, David Lloyd.

### Chapter 4: Data Analysis

The purpose of this mixed method research was to investigate students' transformative learning due to participation in LINC classes. Transformative Learning Theory was used as the lens to identify the proportion of students having experienced TL, factors initiating TL and common themes that were evident in the transformative learning experiences from the learner's perspective.

#### Results of the Study

**Participants.** Fifty six adult LINC learners from LINC levels three, four and five participated in this study. The survey instrument was difficult to comprehend for LINC level two and was not administered for this level as initially planned for this study. Thirty five (62.5 %) of respondents were between the ages of 30-49; 12 (21.5 %) of learners were above 50 years old; the rest, 9 (16 %) of respondents ranged from 18-29 years old, 46 (82.2 %) of respondents reported to be married, five (10.9 %) divorced or separated and five (10.9 %) single. Gender served as another descriptor: 37 (66 %) were female, and 19 (34 %) male.

Prior education levels were dominated by the categories of "elementary school" – 30 (53.5 %) respondents followed by "high school" – 19 (34 %) respondents. Only seven respondents (12.5 %) had some university education or a Bachelor's Degree. Twenty nine (51.8 %) of respondents, more than half, had been taking LINC classes for more than one year; only seven (12.5 %) students were new students who had been there for less than three months. The rest, 20 respondents (35.7 %) had been taking LINC classes for more than four months but less than one year. There was a broad range of time that the learners had been in Canada, from less than three months to more than five years. However, due to the small number of respondents in several groupings, the respondents were regrouped into three categories – two (3.5 %)

respondents reported less than three months; 14 (25%) of respondents reported more than three months but less than one year; 40 (71.5 %) of respondents reported that they had been in Canada for more than one year. The last demographic item of the survey instrument had to do with the status of living alone or with family. Almost more than three thirds of the respondents, 48 (85 %) of respondents, lived with family while the rest, eight (14 %) of respondents lived alone. A typical profile of this study was a married, female in her 40s with some prior, formal elementary schooling living with family.

**Proportion.** This research among LINC learners who had experienced trauma indicated an 85.7 % (N=56) rate of occurrence of transformative learning due to participation in the LINC program. The respondents demonstrated their identification with perspective transformation experiences by their selection of Mezirow's stages as represented in the survey instrument.

**Initiators of Transformative Learning.** This research probed the continuing role of the learning activities, support and life change events among ESL learners who had experienced trauma from torture and violence during the time of participation in a LINC program.

**Learning activities.** Initially, the survey instrument involved 12 learning activities as regularly used in adult ESL classrooms. After discussing the learning activities with two instructors of the centre, the researcher modified the category of the learning activities. Journal writing and essays were deleted as they were not used as regular teaching instruments by ESL instructors. The item of "worksheet activities" was also deleted as the instructors suggested that the terminology was too general and could not be clearly understood by the learners. It was also suggested to drop the item of "class discussions" as it was considered too general. Therefore, the item of "class discussions" was broken down into three frequent activities happening in this centre including biography, story and video discussions. Two more items were added to the

survey instrument, talking about your concerns and guest speakers, as suggested by the instructors. The learning activities section of the instrument resulted in a 13-item category.

Among the respondents who had experienced a perspective transformation ( $n=48$ ), talking about the concerns and dialogue with the teacher ranked as number one facilitators of transformative learning followed by dialogue with a friend, story discussions and reading assignments (see table 2).

*Table 2: Ranking of Learning Activities*

Dialogue with a teacher	48 (100 %)
Talking about your concerns	48 (100 %)
Dialogues with a friend	47 (98 %)
Story Discussions	44 (92 %)
Reading Assignments	44 (92 %)
Story Telling	42 (88 %)
Video Discussions	40 (83 %)
Guest Speakers	39 (81 %)
Group Projects	38 (79 %)
Biography Discussions	38 (79 %)
Field Trips	16 (33 %)
Writing Assignments	15 (31 %)
Writing about your concerns	11 (23 %)

Both writing activities, writing assignments and writing about your concerns, ranked at the bottom of the least. It should be noted that since multiple activities were selected, the percentages did not necessarily total one hundred percent. In the eight follow-up interviews, the participants also cited dialogue with the teacher (9 times), writing (5 times), talking about their concerns with the teacher (5 times), dialogue with a friend (6 times) and story discussions (8 times) as important contributors to perspective transformation in their lives. The predominance of dialogue with the teacher and talking about their concerns with the teacher and classmates as contributors to perspective transformation were the most evident, as it was ranked first in both the questionnaire and interview data.

Learning activities could also be regrouped into three categories as they are displayed in Table 3. As King (2009) suggested “the categories offer a way to conceptualise and generalise patterns among the learning activities” (p. 79). In this study they are assigned to three general, nonexclusive groupings: critical thinking activities, guided activities, and discovering one’s voice. The first two categories included general teaching strategies that were quite distinct from one another which engaged the learner in critical reflection, analysis and interpretation of the content area (Brookfield, & Preskill, 2012). The “guided activities” grouping was more for reinforcing the learning experience. Examining the mean score of each of these categories in Table 3, it became apparent that there was not much difference (from  $\mu=75$  to  $\mu=78$ ) among these groups in terms of the impact they had on TL experiences.

*Table 3: Percentage and Mean Score of Grouped Learning Activities*

<i>Grouped Learning Activities</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Mean Score</i>
<i>Critical Thinking Activities</i>		78

Dialogue with a teacher	48 (100 %)	
Dialogues with a friend	47 (98 %)	
Reading Assignments	44 (92 %)	
Group Project	38 (79 %)	
Writing about your concerns	11 (23 %)	
<i>Guided Learning Activities</i>		
Dialogues with a friend	47 (98 %)	75
Story Telling	42 (88 %)	
Guest Speakers	39 (81 %)	
Field Trip	16 (33 %)	
<i>Discovering One's Voice</i>		
Dialogue with a teacher	48 (100 %)	76
Talking about your concerns	48 (100 %)	
Dialogues with a friend	47 (98 %)	
Story Discussion	44 (92 %)	
Video Discussion	40 (83 %)	
Group Project	38 (79 %)	
Biography Discussion	38 (79 %)	
Writing Assignments	15 (31 %)	
Writing about your concerns	11 (23 %)	

The interviews also emphasised this fact. All the interviews confirmed that dialoguing with their teacher and classmates and discussing their concerns in classroom had helped students to trust themselves and others more, be more confident to deal with difficulties, be more open to speak up for injustice, have a better focus and direction with their life and be more hopeful for a better life for themselves and their families.

**Support.** In the objective items on the questionnaire, the adult ESL learners also noted that their teachers, friends and classmates had a prominent impact on them. Teacher support ranked number one – 40 (84 %) of respondents; a classmate friend - 33 (69 %) of respondents; a family member – 15 (32 %) of respondents, and other person – 11 of respondents (22 %). In the eight interviews, family members were mentioned four times, friends five times and teachers eight times. In these accounts, the respondents spoke especially about family, teachers and friends supporting them through perspective transformation. This is illustrated in one salient response from a learner who had participated in the LINC program for more than one year:

I felt dumb. People were foreigners. Although I had two close friends here, they could not help me because I was strong headed (stubborn) to listen. This program teach me to listen and now I get the support of my friends, counsellor and teacher who help me to live here.

In the interviews, the learners were also asked if they received any additional support that was not mentioned in the interview. All of them mentioned the coffee/tea and snack that were provided as free provision during breaks helped create a sense of community and closeness with each other. That was considered a good time to spend with a friend. They were also asked what other additional support was needed. Three interviewees mentioned that they wanted to have a friend who knew Toronto and spoke English better than them in order to improve their English, and above all have a friend to share their concerns and Canadian experience. The centre had implemented “the Befriending” program that four of the interviewees were not aware of. In addition, all of them mentioned that they wanted to have more field trips and more support for public transport. They were receiving only one token a day to come to the centre.

**Life change events.** The core of Mezirow’s Transformational Learning Theory involved the role of disorienting dilemmas that served as catalysts for perspective transformations; a

catalyst could be an incident or experience outside a person's control that triggered transformation (Mezirow, 1978). One recognized group of such trigger events was prominent life changes (Cranton, 2006; Mezirow, 1990; Taylor, 2008). This study built on the fact that the LINC learners in this centre might have experienced life changes during their time in the centre. Those life changes might have served as trigger events. In order to document and assess this expectation, the participants were asked to reveal whether any life changes may have contributed to their perspective transformation experience.

The survey instrument had nine items of changing events – immigration, marriage, birth, moving, divorce/separation, death of a loved one, found a job, volunteer work and loss of a job. All respondents selected immigration as the main trigger of change. Other frequently chosen life changes that contributed to perspective transformation were loss of a job – 38 (79 %) of respondents; death of a loved one – 37 (77 %) of respondents; divorce/separation – 32 (66 %) of respondents; and moving 29 (60 %) of respondents. It is worth mentioning here the importance of support during life change events. Seven out of eight interviewees mentioned the emotional support they had from their classmates, especially the support they received from instructors during the bereavement time of a loved one and the encouragement they got while experiencing noticeable life changes such as divorce/separation. A direct quote from an interview illustrates the effect and support of life changing events:

When my sister was died back home, I want to speak to someone. I knew that the only place understand me is my class and my teacher. That is my family... they are for me and I am for them. I told them how life different now without her and need to be stronger in Canada

**Demographics and Perspective Transformation.** Cross tabulations were done to examine where there were meaningful relationships between demographic information (age,

marital status, gender, prior education, and status of living alone or with family as well as time being in Canada versus time being in the LINC program). The Chi-square values were determined in order to examine the frequencies among these categories and perspective transformation. The calculated Chi-square scores for all demographics except the time being in LINC program were very low and were not significant at the  $p < .05$  confidence level. Therefore, none of these factors could predict a greater or lesser likelihood to experience perspective transformation experiences. The Chi-square score (3.34) for the time being in the LINC program determined that the participation in the program had led learners toward TL experiences.

The Chi-square score for the time being in the LINC program was much higher (3.34) than the Chi-Square score of time being in Canada which was 0.0008 (see Table 4).

*Table 4: Differences between Canada Time and LINC Time*

	<i>&lt; 3 months</i>	<i>4-12 months</i>	<i>&lt; one year</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>
<i>LINC TIME</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>3.34</i>
<i>CANADA TIME</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>0.0008</i>

For the learners of this study, it became evident that the more time learners were in Canada, the less time was required to experience TL and the more ongoing length of time in the LINC program increased the likelihood of them having experienced TL experiences.

**Themes.** Three themes of perspective transformation emerged from the accounts of eight interviews: language learning, cultural change and personal change. They could be summarised

in the words of one of the interviewees who had lost the whole family back home and he was the only one to survive violence and torture, although torture impaired his eyesight.

What changed? My philosophy of life. I appreciate every day being here. As I learn more English, I have also learned more about the beauty of cultures around me and how beautiful each person is. ... I consider my life a gift and it's worth living every day as a new opportunity to enjoy my day. People like my joking around with them. I make them smile and that gives hope.

A strong subtheme within personal change was related to a higher personal strength – discovering being stronger than they thought and a higher self-reliance to deal with difficulties. All participants agreed that the program helped them to improve language skills. Before joining the program seven interviewees considered learning English language a very difficult language to learn. However, they do not have that presumption anymore. Learning had become fun and an enjoyable practice. The main theme related with culture dealt with the acceptance of other cultures, which consequently resulted in a higher sense of closeness with other members from other cultures. Interviewees also mentioned the fact that learning the language helped with learning Canadian history and culture. That made them more confident to sit for the Canadian Citizenship test. Three interviewees mentioned managing themselves better in terms of respecting boundaries. The following salient response from someone in LINC level five illustrated this cultural subtheme.

... did not know much how to deal with people from so many cultures here. Once, someone told me that I do not let other people speak. I have learned to share the air and respect boundaries as that put me in many conflicts before.

## Summary

The purpose of the study was to survey students who had attended LINC classes for at least three months from levels two to five responding to a 13-item questionnaire. The survey aimed to collect quantitative data on triggers of transformative learning, demographics, prior education, and transformative learning experiences in order to identify the proportion of students experiencing TL, triggers of TL and nature (themes) of TL experiences. After consultations with two instructors of the centre, it was determined that the language of the survey was not appropriate for level two, therefore the Learning Activity Survey was administered only for levels three, four and five. Also, “race” as one of the variables of demographics was deleted from the questionnaire, as the manager of the centre considered it inappropriate to ask. While piloting the questionnaire with three learners of levels three and four, the researcher found that the respondents did not provide an answer to the free responses asking about incidents of TL experiences. After discussing the matter with two instructors, the researcher decided to remove the free response items, as writing was not a strong skill among participants. Therefore, the data about TL experiences was collected only through eight interviews.

There was a good rate of response to the survey considering that the learners of level two were not involved in the research – 56 students out of 57 registered in the LINC levels three, four and five. This study found out that students who had attended LINC classes for less than three months had not experienced TL. The proportion of learners who had experienced trauma indicated an 85.7 % ( $n=48$ ) rate of occurrence of transformative learning due to participation in the LINC program.

Triggers of TL included learning activities, support, life changes events, and the ongoing length of time participating in the LINC program. None of the demographics had any impact on

triggering TL experiences. Learning activities that had a high rate of impact included dialogue with the teacher, dialogue with a friend, story discussions and reading assignments. Writing was the least influencing activity to initiate TL. The main support came from the instructor. The “Befriending” program was also mentioned during interviews as a good support to improve language, get to know Toronto and break isolation. As expected, immigration was the main catalyst of TL. Other frequently chosen life changes that contributed to perspective transformation were loss of a job, death of a loved one and divorce/separation. One of the factors initiating TL experiences was the ongoing length of time in the LINC program. The more time learners spent in the LINC program, the more the likelihood of students experiencing TL.

Three themes of perspective transformation emerged from the accounts of eight interviews: language learning, cultural and personal change. Higher personal strength to deal adverse circumstances was the most evident subtheme within personal change.

## **Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **Summary**

The purpose of this mixed method research, through the use of surveys followed with interviews, was to investigate the impact LINC classes for victims of trauma on transformative learning experiences and on the nature of transformative experiences. A 13-item questionnaire collected quantitative data on triggers of transformative learning, demographics, prior education, and transformative learning experiences in order to identify the proportion of students experiencing TL, triggers of TL and nature (themes) of TL experiences. The survey instrument was followed by eight interviews to validate the findings from surveys and identify themes related to the nature of TL experiences. There was a high proportion of learners who had experienced trauma, 48 (85.7 %) out of 56 respondents reported to have experienced transformative learning due to participation in the LINC program. Main TL catalysts identified from this research were learning activities, support, life change events, and the ongoing length of time participating in the LINC program. None of the demographics had any significant impact on proportion of students experiencing TL. The accounts of eight interviews revealed three main themes including language learning, cultural and personal change.

The first rounding of data collected through surveys identified learners who had experienced TL which helped to select the interviewees. The last part of the survey provided the invitation to learners to participate in an interview by contacting the researcher through email. Initially, only one survey participant contacted the researcher for the interview. A. Abubakar explained that with the lack of writing and computer skills which made the learners reluctant to respond through email. (Personal communication, December 16, 2014). Being advised by the manager of the centre, the researcher changed the mode of contact from email to phone. The

manager advised the instructors to provide the researcher's phone number in order to increase the rate of interview participation. It should also be emphasized that the researcher considered the language barrier during interviews and he was assured that the centre could help with translators which did not happen as none was available at the time of the research. Therefore, there were only two options to qualify the interview sample in terms of language barriers. They had to speak Albanian, spoken by the researcher as well, or they had to be from LINC level four or five. Eleven learners responded to the invitation. However, only eight could be qualified while considering the language factor. Being conditioned by these factors, the interview sample did not represent a fair distribution of participants across demographics especially those related to age, nationality and prior education. There were four participants who shared the same group age, nationality and prior education. Therefore, the results of the interview could not strongly confirm the results of the survey related to the above mentioned variables of demographics.

The mixed design method utilized in this study proved to be useful especially for the identification of one of the most crucial components of TL – critical reflection. The original LAS (King, 2009) survey instrument included two questions (five and six) related with the reflective practice and nature of the students. Question number five: “Would you characterise yourself as one who usually thinks back over previous decisions or past behaviours?” intended to identify the reflective nature of the learners. While question number six, “Would you say that you frequently reflect upon the meaning of your studies for yourself, personally?” intended to identify the reflective practice associated with the LINC program. During piloting phase of the survey, it became evident that the learners could not see the difference between the two questions. Both items related to critical reflection were not included in the modified version of LAS used in this study. However, the interviews captured snapshots of reflective experiences

related with LINC program typically initiated by instructor with questions such as: “what other decisions could you have taken at that time? What else could you have done?”

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

**Proportion.** The findings of this research had been remarkable compared to previous research among adult learners. Previous research had demonstrated a 32.5 % (N=422) rate of experiencing transformational learning in relation to their educational studies (King, 2000) and a 66.8 % (N=208) rate of occurrence among adult learners enrolled in college ESL programs (King, 2009). This research indicated a rate of 85.7 % (N=56), much higher as expected. This finding confirmed the expectations of the researcher and others (Brock, 2015, Foster, 1997; King, 2000, 2009) that the adult ESL experience had many possibilities for perspective transformation. The more we are able to learn and understand this experience, the more we can improve our teaching methods to foster TL. Considering the high rate of occurrence among adults who had experienced trauma, this research also confirmed that “the person who is experiencing loss and adversity possesses greater opportunity for wisdom to grow, as opposed to a person whose life is relatively free from loss and adversity” (Allison & Out, 2007).

TL occurrence confirmed the previous findings of King (2000, 2009) that perspective transformation provides an appropriate and insightful framework from which to view the adult ESL experience. The fact that not all learners had experienced perspective transformation confirmed that not all adult learners could be in the right stage of cognitive development for TL (Merriam, 2004).

**Themes.** Manson, Poitras, and Hong’s (2000) work on the value of TL had relevance to the findings of this study in terms of creating more confidence in language skills and cultural competence. First, all survey participants noted to have improved their English language skills,

suggesting that a TL approach was effective in ESL teaching. Second, five interviewees suggested that they became more confident in their English language abilities, indicating that TL could bolster students' self-efficacy in language learning. Furthermore, all interviewees had never studied in a multicultural classroom intentionally designed using TL principles. The experience led learners to question assumptions they may have had regarding other cultures, suggesting that TL fostered a more inclusive worldview.

The use of TL theory among adults who had experienced trauma to foster post traumatic growth was found valuable when considering TL with the potential of transforming the “negative” to a “greater good”. The stories collected from the interviews shared the same characteristics as those collected by Allison and Out (2007). They had a negative charge, but ended with a positively charged legacy or “greater good” where participants described a process of growth that could be seen as the transformative learning process, beginning with the negative event (their trauma) and ending with providing support and hope to one another. This narrative that was emotionally negative followed by a narrative that was emotionally positive provided meaning for the negative events that preceded it (Hoyle, 2010). True to the classic definition of perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1990, 1996), the accounts relating foundational changes in behaviour as acceptance to other cultures were consistent with previous research findings (King, 2000, 2009). Different from previous research on transformative learning, this research showed three new different perspective changes - a higher appreciation of life, stronger personal strength and more hope about future possibilities. All the three indicators are three of the five components of Post Traumatic Growth Scale (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2006). The identification of these three components supported Johnson's (2011) rationale that TL can be a useful tool to foster Post Traumatic Growth (PTG).

The above mentioned themes also agreed with Morrice's findings (2013) that social and cultural factors "shape transformative experiences" (p.267). Without support they might have led to "negative outcomes of learning on identity and conception of self" (p.268). Participating in the LINC program provided a social space and support toward acculturation which resulted in positive outcomes such as ability to support and provide hope to one another.

**Learning Activities.** The findings concerning learning activities provided a pattern that seemed to be a synergistic link among discussions and perspective transformation. The responses entailing discovering one's voice cited discussion as the main trigger for perspective transformation. Different from previous research (King 2000, 2002, 2009) where discussions and writing are scaffolded and/or built upon one another, this research provided a different framework where discussion could be scaffolded and/or built upon other skills such as reading and listening. Although critical reflection was not expressed highly through writing, it could also be expressed and scaffolded in the dialogue and discussions as learners coped with multicultural needs and problems (Brookfield & Preskill, 2012; King, 2000, 2009). Considering that this contributor was in a directly proportional relationship with the ongoing length of LINC time, one could conclude that these observations were consistent with perspective transformation theory that "recognizes many contributors over time to the perspective transformation" (King, 2000).

King (2000, 2009) suggested that educators should choose learning activities as selected by the learners to promote transformational learning in the classroom. King's suggestion to instructors to use those classroom activities which were most selected by the learner proved not to be relevant. The results of this study proved that the impact of learning activities was connected with the frequency of use of that learning activity in the classroom. Instructors could promote the activities of less frequency used (less selected by the learners) in order to enrich the

multitude of contributors to TL, and in the case of this study instructors should promote writing as one of the essential tools for instrumental learning and critical reflection. Magro, & Ghorayshi, (2011) advised that “whatever the writing form used, students should see writing as a means of thinking through changes and dilemmas that they and others face” (pp. 26-27).

**Support.** The results of this research about support were consistent with previous research findings (Foster, 1997; King, 2000, 2009) that teachers and classmate friends had a prominent impact on TL. Given the self-reflection nature of perspective transformation, it was not surprising to see that such support was highly appreciated and needed. Furthermore, while perspective transformation has a fundamentally intellectual character (King, 2009), the learners gained more than mere intellectual stimulation from their teachers; it was a vital importance for the learners to receive enduring encouragement and hope from their teacher and their classmate friends within the classroom LINC environment. The response “No one can understand me better than my teacher and my friends” demonstrated the needed support received as learners faced changes in their ways of thinking and acting.

This research supported Fredrickson’s (2001, 2003) theory that positive emotions broadened people’s patterns of thought and their preferences for variation in behaviors, which led to an un-doing of negative experiences. Fredrickson called this the *Broaden and Build* theory of positive emotions. The big surprise of the stories of the interviewees was that although they were painful as participants were uprooted from their homes, and for some physical signs of torture and war were still evident on their bodies, the interviewees did not express any negative emotions. Contrary to the Morrice’s research findings that learning to be a refugee was faced with varying degrees of hostility, which affected subjectivities and sense of self. In this context, Fredrickson’s theory had relevance because the experience of positive emotions in the LINC

centre had an *Un-doing* effect on the damage caused by negative emotions. This had a spiral effect: Fredrickson's theory described the spiral effect as the more positive emotions experienced, the more personal resources accrued, the more likely one was to experience positive emotions in the future, accrue more positive emotions, and the more negative emotional damage was undone.

**Life Changes.** King (2000) advised that investigating the dynamic between life changes and perspective transformation could help future research to present a more complete picture of adult ESL learners' perspective transformation experiences. While immigration was found to be the main trigger of change, death of a loved one, 32 (66 %) of the respondents, was also a significant contributor. Instructors of the centre could use the data of this research to view TL experiences as building on life changing events of the learners, adding an additional contribution to the experience provided through the LINC program. Life change events "can easily serve as disorienting dilemmas and opportunities of perspective transformation" (King, 2000). However, they have to be monitored and managed as "they can be further shaped by adult learning experiences" (Taylor, 2007).

### **Recommendations**

The research demonstrated TL learners' experiences in their frames of reference as they identified themselves with the Mezirow's stages of Perspective Transformation. The participants also indicated that these experiences of perspective transformation were facilitated by specifically cited learning activities and life changes and they emphasized the support they received and needed through this process. It also evidenced snapshots of other TL contributors. Two major implications for this research were presented here: implications for classroom practice, and further research.

**Classroom Practice.** This research confirmed that perspective transformation was happening among learners due to the learning activities, life changes and support. As this research evidenced, TL theory is a strong tool to foster language learning. As such instructors can reflect on “Is TL a focus of my teaching practice? If so, then this research suggests learning activities to promote such changes. The results of this research can redirect some of the focus of teaching practice. Instructors can incorporate more learning activities that lead to TL, especially writing as a core component of TL. The use of writing as a medium to foster TL is strongly emphasised as a format that strengthens the analytical capability of TL (Cohen, 2004; King, 2000, 2009). In essence writing “forces an externalization of communication, wrests discussion away from merely affective and/or psychological domains and forces a kind of reconciliation with the material-inherently perspective altering, socio-communicative activity” (Burke, 2006, p. 85).

Perspective transformation provided “a new way to examine the classic experience of acculturation, intercultural awareness, and language acquisition” (King, 2000). As such educators can reflect on the prevalence and nature of changes in the lives of their learners gaining new insights and perspectives to approach their daily teaching practice.

One of the most powerful tools to foster transformative learning is providing learners with direct, personally engaging and stimulating reflection upon experience (King, 2009; MacLeod et al., 2003; Mallory, 2003; Pohland and Bova, 2000). One of the activities utilised in the centre as direct experience were the *field trips*. However, they scored very low as learning activities to foster TL. This result implied two assumptions. First, it might be that such direct experiences are less often utilised in the centre as this study evidenced a directly proportional relationship between the frequencies of an activity used with the potential of that activity to

trigger TL. Second, direct experiences such as field trips might have not been associated with any critical reflection which could have triggered higher levels of TL. Instructors can look into these assumptions and consider utilising direct experiences in a more efficient way in order to trigger TL experiences through their teaching practice.

This research identified positive emotions as an accrued resource that replaced negative feelings. Positivity and positive emotions might be fundamental in fostering TL among learners. Therefore, TL instructors, by acknowledging their fundamental importance in triggering TL experiences, can increase their active participation in the learner's TL process. Their participation includes, challenging, supporting, providing vision, assisting with personal issues, while attending to the power relationships and maintaining the health of the learner-educator relationship. While challenging might pose a risk in harming the relationship, it also opens an opportunity to develop longer-term relationships. This process might include "surfacing, confronting and resolving negative experiences and emotions, from which TL practitioners should not shy away" (Watkins, & Cooperrider, 2000).

**Further Research.** Investigating TL experiences through quantitative methods was a challenge when considering that the free responses were erased from the survey instrument due to lack of writing skills. In these conditions, further research employing other methods of research such as action research might provide better evidence of critical reflection teaching practices. Taylor (2006) suggested that action research "are good models for future researchers interested in transformative learning" (p.177).

In addition, this research demonstrated that oral mediums were the main triggers of TL. The design of this research could not capture how the oral mediums were used to tap onto a "deeper well" of life experiences from which to draw upon and react to discussion. Therefore, a

research design where data could be drawn from instructors or natural observation in the classroom could better explore how oral mediums (discussions and dialogues) trigger critical reflection especially when writing was not a skill often used for critical reflection.

This study was the first one in the realm of TL research to identify the relationship between ESL learning and post traumatic growth. Further investigation on identifying the TL triggers that produce higher PTG rates can help instructors working with victims of torture to utilise the classroom time and teaching activities in a more effective and efficient way.

### **Summary of the Discussion and Conclusions**

This research revealed that survey participants experienced LINC program in two general ways – eight participants as *No Direct Effect* (NDE) and 48 participants as *Direct Positive Effect* (DPE). The *DPE* participants experienced a change in their meaning schemes such as the higher acceptance of other cultures and meaning perspectives (habits of mind) such as a more positive outlook toward life. These changes in meaning schemes and perspectives were successfully integrated into their lives, which met the basic definition of TL for these participants. They reported to have experienced Mezirow's ten stage model of TL. The *No-Direct Effect* (NDE) was related with the shorter time learners had participated in the LINC program. The demographics did not have any significant impact on the proportion of students experiencing TL. The high rate of TL occurrence compared to previous research proved that when support is in place, the person who had experienced loss and adversity possesses greater opportunity for growth and change.

The insights reported by the participants from the interviews ranged from a sense of personal empowerment and discovering their voice to being better able to understand and accept others from a different culture. Insights also included realizations of the importance for enduring

encouragement and providing hope by instructors and classmates. Participants also reported that LINC program was vital to improve communication with others and increase their level of confidence in language skills. During the course of this research, it became clear that a self-examination could happen with positive feelings as a counterpoint to the self-examination with negative feelings.

This research documented that the learning experience of ESL learners who had suffered consequences of trauma was permeated with change. The lens of TL theory provided a different vantage point to examine this personal change. TL theory highlights the role learning experiences play in development and growth (King, 2000). The LINC learning experiences among victims of trauma extended across not only language and cultural areas but also reached personal domains.

This research had several implications for practitioners of TL. Among them, the inclusion of positivity and positive emotions, writing, and critical reflection after direct experiences in the self-examination and change of frames of reference. This presents the TL practitioner with an opportunity to develop longer-term relationships with the learner. This research also highlights the need of other methods of research in order identify more effective tools to foster TL experiences and consequently higher rates of post traumatic growth.

## References

- Abai, M. (2003). Community Practice at the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture. *First Light*, (7), 4-4. Retrieved November 17, 2014, from <http://ccvt.org/assets/ccvt-first-light-2003-spring-summer.pdf>
- Abubakar, A. (2014). Language Instruction and Skills Training Report. *CCVT Annual Report 2013*, 18-19.
- Allison, E. T., & Out, A. A. I. W. (2007). From Adversity to Wisdom: How People Experience Transformative Learning to Redeem Adversity and Serve a Greater Good. *Transformative Learning: Issues of Difference and Diversity*, 7.
- Bean, B., & Kroth, M. (2007). I am Michelangelo: Exploring the role of transformational figures in the lives of others. *Transformative Learning: Issues of Difference and Diversity*, 24.
- Bishop, H., Cabrales, J., Ginsburg, R., Mapp, J., Mayorga, Olinger, Torres, A. (2012). Prisoners Teaching ESL: A Learning Community among "Language Partners" *40*(1), 68-82. Retrieved November 2, 2014, from [www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/.../TETYC0401Prisoners.pdf](http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/.../TETYC0401Prisoners.pdf)
- Bleyl, M. F. (2007, September). Becoming Wiser Through Proverb and Story: Transformative Learning across Centuries and Cultures. In *Transformative Learning Conference: Issues of Difference and Diversity* (pp. 47-52).
- Bridwell, S. D. (2007). Transformative Learning and Constructive-Developmental Theory Intersections: Expanding Diversity beyond Race, Class and Gender to Cultures of Mind. *Transformative Learning: Issues of Difference and Diversity*, 42.

- Brock, S. E. (2015). Learning and Transformation. In *Exploring Learning & Teaching in Higher Education* (pp. 233-250). Springer Berlin Heidelberg.
- Brock, S., Florescu, I., & Teran, L. (2012). Tools for Change: An examination of Transformative Learning and its Precursor Steps in Undergraduate Students. 2012. Retrieved November 11, 2014, from <http://www.hindawi.com/journals/isrn/2012/234125/>
- Brookfield, S. D., & Preskill, S. (2012). *Discussion as a way of teaching: Tools and techniques for democratic classrooms*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Buck, M. A. (2007). Discovering the transformative learning potential in the spirituality of midlife women. *Transformative Learning: Issues of Difference and Diversity*, 65.
- Choudhuri, D. (2007, September). Fostering parallels of relationships and meaning making towards transformative learning. In *Transformative learning: Issues of difference and diversity. Proceedings of the 7th International Transformative Learning Conference, Albuquerque, New Mexico* (pp. 89-94).
- CLB (2013). Canadian Language Benchmarks Can Do Statements. Retrieved September 18, 2014, from [http://www.language.ca/documents/CLB\\_Can\\_Do\\_Statements\\_web.pdf](http://www.language.ca/documents/CLB_Can_Do_Statements_web.pdf)
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). London: Routledge Falmer.
- Couto, S., & Wembo, M. (2013). Impact of War and Torture on the Education of Newcomer Children and Youth. *CCVT Publications*, Page 4-Page 4. Retrieved November 4, 2014, from <http://ccvt.org/assets/impact-of-war-and-torture-on-the-education-of-newcomer-children-and-youth.pdf>
- Cranton, P. (2006). *Understanding and promoting transformative learning* (2nd ed.).

- Cranton, P., & Wright, B. (2008). The transformative educator as learning companion. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 6(1), 101-106.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Daloz, L. A. (1999). *Mentor: Guiding the journey of adult learners*. San Francisco CA, Jossey-Bass.
- Dauvergne, C. (2012). International Human Rights in Canadian Immigration Law—: The Case of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada. *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 19(1), 305-326.
- De Barbieri, P. W. (2007). Learning to Recover from Bulimia: Voices of transformation. *Transformative Learning: Issues of Difference and Diversity*, 18.
- De La Lama, L. (2007). Trauma, Transformative Learning, and Posttraumatic Growth. 4-8. Retrieved October 18, 2014, from <http://counselingoutfitters.com/vistas/vistas07/DeLaLama.pdf>
- Foster, E. (1997) Transformative learning in adult second language learning. In P. Cranton (Ed.), *Transformative learning in action: Insights from practice* (pp. 3340). *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, No. 74. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). "The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The Broaden and Build theory of positive emotions." *American Psychologist* 56(3): 218-226.
- Fredrickson, B. L. (2003). "The value of positive emotions." *American Scientist* 91(4).

- Freire, P. (1973). *Education for critical consciousness*. New York: Continuum.
- Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York NY, Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Habermas, J. (1971). *Knowledge of human interests*. Boston: Beacon.
- Hoyle, R. (2010). *Handbook of personality and self-regulation*. Chichester, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Illeris, K. (2004). Transformative learning in the perspective of a comprehensive learning theory. *Journal of Transformative Education* 2(2): 79-89.
- Johnson, R. (2003). *Autobiography and Transformative Learning: Narrative in Search of Self*. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 227-244.
- Johnson, S., & Center, N. F. (2011). The Neurobiological Impact of Trauma on the Developing Brain. *"The intense, wondrous encounters between mentors and students, shining four, five, six times a day, every day in our offices, flicker and wink across long dark distances. How shall we make a visible posterity?" Lee Herman and Miriam Tatzel, 40.*
- Johnson, S., & Taylor, K. (Eds.). (2006). *The Neuroscience of Adult Learning: New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, Number 110* (Vol. 81). John Wiley & Sons.
- Kasper, L. F. (2000). New technologies, new literacies: Focus discipline research and ESL learning communities. *Language Learning & Technology*, 4(2), 105-128.
- King, K. P. (2002). A journey of transformation: A model of educators' learning experiences in educational technology. In J. M. Pettit & R. P. Francis (Eds.). *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Adult Education Research Conference*, (pp. 195-200). Retrieved November 17, 2014, from <http://www.adulterc.org/Proceedings/2002/papers/King.pdf>

- King, K. P. (Ed.). (2009). *The handbook of the evolving research of transformative learning based on the Learning Activities Survey*. IAP.
- King, KP. (2000). The adult ESL experience: Facilitating perspective transformation in the classroom. *Adult Basic Education: An Interdisciplinary Journal for Adult Literacy Educators*, 10(2), 69-89
- Kitchenham, A. (2008). The evolution of John Mezirow's transformative learning theory. *Journal of transformative education*, 6(2), 104-123.
- Kung, H. C. (2007). I Come, I Learn, and I Conquer: International Students' Transformative Journeys in the USA. *Transformative Learning: Issues of Difference and Diversity*, 226.
- Language and Skills Training. (2012). Retrieved November 4, 2014, from <http://ccvt.org/language---skills-trainig.html>
- Larsen, E. (2007). Creative Art Processes and Transformative Learning in Adult Classrooms. *Transformative Learning: Issues of Difference and Diversity*, 406.
- Lewis, M. T., & Viato, L. (2007). Reader's theater: A tool for transformative learning in diversity teaching and training. *Transformative Learning: Issues of Difference and Diversity*, 243.
- Magro, K. M., & Ghorayshi, P. (2011). *Adult refugees and newcomers in the inner city of Winnipeg: Promising pathways for transformative learning*. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Manitoba.
- Manson, B., Poitras, E., & Hong, Y. J. (2000) Enhancing Language Skills and Fostering Perspective Transformation in Adult ESL Education: A Transformative Learning Approach.

- McClinton, J. (2005). Transformative Learning: The English as a Second Language Teacher's Experience. *CATESOL Journal*, 17, 57.  
<http://newsmanager.commpartners.com/tesolteis/issues/2013-12-10/sdewing2@uccs.edu>
- McGonigal, K. (2005). Teaching for transformation: From learning theory to teaching strategies. *Speaking of teaching*, 14(2).
- Merriam, S. B. (2004). "The role of cognitive development in Mezirow's transformational learning theory." *Adult Education Quarterly* 55(1): 60-68.
- Mezirow, J. (1978). Perspective transformation. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 28(2), 100-110
- Mezirow, J. (1985). A critical theory of self-directed learning. In S. Brookfield (Ed.), *Self-directed learning: From theory to practice* (New Directions for Continuing Education, 25). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. (1990). *Fostering critical reflection in adulthood*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. (1991a). *Transformative dimensions in adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. (1994b). Understanding transformation theory. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 44(4), 222-232.
- Mezirow, J. (1995). Transformation theory of adult learning. In M. R. Welton (Ed.), *In defense of the life world* (pp. 39-70). New York: State University of New York Press.
- Mezirow, J. (1996). Contemporary paradigms of learning. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 46(3), 158-172.
- Mezirow, J. (2000). *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. (2003). Transformative Learning as Discourse. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 1(1), 58-63. Retrieved November 1, 2014.

- Morrice, L. (2013). Learning and Refugees Recognizing the Darker Side of Transformative Learning. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 63(3), 251-271.
- Newman, M. (2010). Calling transformative learning into question: Some mutinous thoughts. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 0741713610392768.
- Newman, M. (2014). Transformative Learning Mutinous Thoughts Revisited. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 0741713614543173.
- Perry, B., & Szalavitz, M. (2006). The boy who was raised as a dog: And other stories from a child psychiatrist's notebook – What traumatized children can teach us about loss, love, and healing. New York, NY: Basic Books
- Pietrykowski, B. (1996). "Knowledge and power in adult education: Beyond Freire and Habermas." *Adult Education Quarterly* 46(2): 82-97.
- Pullenayegem, C. (2014). The Face of Canada. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Retrieved November 21, 2014, from <http://www.ureachtoronto.com/content/face-canada>
- Shields, C. (2013). Conclusions. In *Transformative leadership in education: Equitable change in an uncertain and complex world*. New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Statistics Canada (2003). *2001 Census: Analysis Series. Canada's Ethnocultural Portrait: The Changing Mosaic*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 96F0030XIE2001008. <http://www.statcan.ca/english/IPS/Data/96F0030XIE2001008.htm>
- Taylor, E. (2006). An Update Of Transformative Learning Theory: A Critical Review Of The Empirical Research (1999-2005). *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 173-191.
- Taylor, E. W. (1998). *The theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review*. Columbus, OH: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education.

- Taylor, E. W. (2000). Analyzing research on transformative learning theory. In J. Mezirow and Associates (Eds.), *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress* (pp. 285-328). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Taylor, E. W. (2007). An update of transformative learning theory: A critical review of the empirical research (1999–2005). *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 26(2), 173-191.
- Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. *New directions for adult and continuing education*, 2008(119), 5-15.
- Tcherepashenets, N. (2011). Transformations: Lifelong Learners in the Era of Globalization. *ALL ABOUT MENTORING*, 6.
- Tedeschi, R. G., & Calhoun, L. G. (Eds.). (1998). *Posttraumatic growth: Positive changes in the aftermath of crisis*. Routledge.
- Tennant, M. (1993). "Perspective transformation and adult development." *Adult Education Quarterly* 44(1): 34-42.
- Watkins, J. M., & Cooperrider, D. (2000). Appreciative inquiry: A transformative paradigm. *OD PRACTITIONER*, 32(1), 6-12.
- Wortman, C. B. (2004). Posttraumatic growth: Progress and problems. *Psychological Inquiry*, 81-90.
- Zull, J. E. (2002). *The art of changing the brain*. Sterling Virginia: Stylus.

## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### Modified Learning Activity Survey

This questionnaire is about your experience as an adult LINC student in Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture. The questionnaire only takes a short time to complete. After completing the survey, you will be asked if you would like to participate in an interview related to your experiences mentioned in the survey. Thank you for being part and supporting this project.

- 1. Since you began taking ESL classes in CCVT, do you think any of your ideas or points of view have changed? (Your ideas about Canada, Toronto, English language, your native country, etc.)*

Yes  No

- 2. Here is a list of possible changes that you may have experienced. Please check off the square that applies based on the explanation of numbers below.*

1 = Not at all

2 = Very Little

3 = Somewhat

4 = Quite a bit

5 = A great deal (too much)

*My LINC classes have helped me to...*

	<b><i>Possible Changes</i></b>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>1</i>	Think of how I act					
<i>2</i>	Feel more comfortable when I do not agree with my classmates					
<i>3</i>	Reflect more on what happens in my life					
<i>4</i>	Understand that other people reflect on their life as well					
<i>5</i>	Explore a new path for my life					
<i>6</i>	Plan my life better					
<i>7</i>	Speak more confident in English language					
<i>8</i>	Learn more about Canadian life					
<i>9</i>	Try new things that I was afraid to try before					
<i>10</i>	Do better things with my life					
<i>11</i>	Ask if I need help					
<i>12</i>	Help others more					
<i>13</i>	Trust myself more					
<i>14</i>	Other:					

3. *Which of the followings might have helped you in the change?*

*a. Did a class work influence the change? (Check all that apply)*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Class discussion            | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing about your concerns | <input type="checkbox"/> Story Telling           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talking about your concerns | <input type="checkbox"/> Dialogue with a friend  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal journal            | <input type="checkbox"/> Dialogue with a teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Role plays                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Field Trip              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Group project               | <input type="checkbox"/> Guest Speakers          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Essays                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____             |

*a. Did a person influence the change? (Check all that apply.)*

- Another student
- A friend
- Your teacher
- Your family member
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

*b. Did a significant change in your life influence the change? (Check all that apply)*

- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration | <input type="checkbox"/> Moving               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage    | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce/Separation   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birth       | <input type="checkbox"/> Death of a loved one |

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Found a job    | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of a job |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer work | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____   |

*c. Which of the following(s) have you experienced recently?*

- Death of a loved one
- Change of job
- Loss of job
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**4. I see my LINC instructor as ...**

- Mentor ( someone I trust for advise)
- Facilitator (helps me with learning English)
- Friend
- Enemy
- Motivator (moves me to action)
- Other .....

**5. Sex**    Male    Female

**6. Country of Origin:** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. What other languages beside English do you speak?**

---

8. *How long have you been in this program?* \_\_\_\_\_

9. *How long have you been in Canada?* \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Education**

- Elementary education
- High school
- Some university
- Bachelor degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Age**

- 18-29  30-49  50-69  Over 70

**12. Marital Status:**

- Single  Married/Common Law Partner  Divorced/Separated

**13. Do you live alone or with other family members**

- Alone  With other family members

*Thank you for completing this questionnaire.*

---

### **Interview Invitation**

If you are willing to be interviewed to discuss further your experiences in LINC classes, please email me at [email4alqi@yahoo.ca](mailto:email4alqi@yahoo.ca)

## Appendix B

### Follow –up Interview Questions Based on the Survey Response

This survey is part of research that included the survey you took. I believe that important things happen when an adult re-enter school and learn new things. Only with your help, we can learn more about this. This interview should only take only half an hour to complete and your responses will be anonymous. Thank you for being part of this project. Your participation is greatly appreciated. The interview questions are designed to gather information about the topics covered in the survey and some of the questions might sound familiar to you.

1. In the survey, you are mentioning that change has happened during the time you have been in the LINC program. What has changed specifically?
2. Can you describe that experience?
3. Going back in time, how did it started? What/who triggered it? How?
4. Let's go back to the list of activities you selected in the survey. You have mentioned that (mention the activities that the learner has selected), were the activities you have participated and have helped you to think about (mention the change (s)). Do you remember specifically any of these activities? What was it? How did it help you?
5. What else could have been done in class to help you more with this change?
6. How did this event (mention the event(s) from the survey) has helped you to change? How did you become aware of this change?
7. How did you feel about the change?
8. Who supported in this centre for (mention the change)?
9. How would you describe your LINC instructor?
10. Do you have any questions for me?

Appendix C

**TABLE 13.1 Variables and Assignments**

Variable Name		Position	Variable Name		Position
ID		1	TCHRCHLG	Challenge from teacher	22
PTINDEX	Persp Transf index	2	Value	Label	
	Value	Label	1	no	
	1	no	2	yes	
	2	yes pt	TEACHER	teacher's support	23
	3	yes ed pt	Value	Label	
PTIA	M Persp Transf stages	3-15	1	no	
	Value	Label	2	yes	
	1	no	OTHERP	Other person	24
	2	yes	Value	Label	
PT2YN	PT yes/no	16	1	no	
	Value	Label	2	yes	
	1	no	CLASSASG	Class assignment	25
	2	yes	Value	Label	
	3	no answer	1	no	
PT3	Describe experience	17	2	yes	
	Value	Label	PROJECT	Project	26
	1	na	Value	Label	
	2	educ pt	1	no	
	3	pt only	2	yes	
PERSON	Person change	18	WRITING	writing	27
	Value	Label	Value	Label	
	1	no	1	no	
	2	yes	2	yes	
STUDENT		19	JOURNAL	Journal writing	28
	Value	Label	Value	Label	
	1	no	1	no	
	2	yes	2	yes	
CLSSMT	Classmate's support	20	STRUC	structure of the course	29
	Value	Label	Value	Label	
	1	no	1	no	
	2	yes	2	yes	
ADVISOR	Advisor's support	21	COOP	Coop/Internship	30
	Value	Label	Value	Label	
	1	no	1	no	
	2	yes	2	yes	

**TABLE 13.1 Variables and Assignments (continued)**

Variable Name		Position	Variable Name		Position
THOUGHT	Deep thought	31	OTHCRC	Other class assignment	40
	<i>Value</i>			<i>Label</i>	
	1			no	
	2			yes	
PLA	Prior learning assessment	32	CHANGE	Change in life	41
	<i>Value</i>			<i>Label</i>	
	1			no	
	2			yes	
DISCUSS	Discuss concerns	33	MARRIAGE	marriage as change	42
	<i>Value</i>			<i>Label</i>	
	1			no	
	2			yes	
PAPERS	Term papers/essays	34	CHILD	Loss of job	43
	<i>Value</i>			<i>Label</i>	
	1			no	
	2			yes	
SELFEVAL	Self-evaluation	35	MOVING	Moving	44
	<i>Value</i>			<i>Label</i>	
	1			no	
	2			yes	
EXERCISE	Class exercise or activity	36	DIVORCE	Divorce/separation	45
	<i>Value</i>			<i>Label</i>	
	1			no	
	2			yes	
LAB	lab experience	37	DEATH	Death of a loved one	46
	<i>Value</i>			<i>Label</i>	
	1			no	
	2			yes	
REFLECT	Personal reflection	38	JOBCHANG	change of job	47
	<i>Value</i>			<i>Label</i>	
	1			no	
	2			yes	
READINGS	Assigned readings	39	JOBLOSS	Loss of a job	48
	<i>Value</i>			<i>Label</i>	
	1			no	
	2			yes	

**TABLE 13.1 Variables and Assignments (continued)**

Variable Name		Position	Variable Name		Position
RETIRE	Retirement	49	ANYTCHR	any teacher's support	58
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
1	no		1	no	
2	yes		2	yes	
OTHERL	other life change	50	ANYOTHP	any other person	59
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
1	no		1	no	
2	yes		2	yes	
SCHOOL	school and persp transf	51	ANYPROJ	any class project	60
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
1	not answered		1	no	
2	nothing		2	yes	
3	ok		ANYWRIT	any writing	61
REFLPERSA	reflective person	52	<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		1	no	
1	no		2	yes	
2	yes		ANYJOURN	any journal writing	62
REFLPERSB	reflective person	53	<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		1	no	
1	no		2	yes	
2	yes		ANYSTRUC	any structure of the course	63
ANYSTU	Any student support	54	<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		1	no	
1	no		2	yes	
2	yes		ANYCOOP	any Co-op/Internship	64
ANYCLASS	Any Classmate's support	55	<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		1	no	
1	no		2	yes	
2	yes		ANYTHOU	any deep thought	65
ANYADVIS	Any Advisor's support	56	<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		1	no	
1	no		2	yes	
2	yes		ANYPLA	any prior learning assessment	66
ANYCHALL	any challenge from teacher	57	<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		1	no	
1	no		2	yes	
2	yes				

**TABLE 13.1 Variables and Assignments (continued)**

Variable Name		Position	Variable Name		Position
ANYDISC	any discussion of concerns	67	ANYCHILD	Any birth/adoption of child	76
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
1	no		1	no	
2	yes		2	yes	
ANYPAPR	any term papers/essays	68	ANYMOVE	any moving	77
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
1	no		1	no	
2	yes		2	yes	
ANYSELFE	any self-evaluation	69	ANYDIV	any divorce/separation	78
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
1	no		1	no	
2	yes		2	yes	
ANYEXERC	any class exercise or activity	70	ANYDEATH	any death of a loved one	79
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
1	no		1	no	
2	yes		2	yes	
ANYLAB	any lab experience	71	ANYJOBCH	any change of job	80
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
1	no		1	no	
2	yes		2	yes	
ANYREFLC	any personal reflection	72	ANYJOBL	any loss of a job	81
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
1	no		1	no	
2	yes		2	yes	
ANYRDG	any assigned readings	73	ANYRETIR	any retirement	82
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
1	no		1	no	
2	yes		2	yes	
ANYOTHIC	any other class assignment	74	ANYOTHRL	any other life change	83
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
1	no		1	no	
2	yes		2	yes	
ANYMARR	any marriage as change	75	SEX	sex	84
<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Label</i>	
1	no		1	male	
2	yes		2	female	

## Appendix D

### Letter to Participants for Anonymous Surveys

December 17, 2014

Dear LINC Student,

My name is Alqi Beqo and I am a graduate student in the Masters of Arts in Education program at Central Michigan University. As part of my course work I am completing a research project for a Capstone thesis in the course Issues of Education, EDU 776.

The purpose of my research is to identify triggers in transformational learning in order to improve the learning experience while you are attending the LINC program. This research will attempt to identify changes that you might have experienced by participating in LINC classes. I will be conducting this research by inviting you to complete a survey for this study. It is hoped that these experiences will help the instructors to better serve your needs.

This survey is completely voluntary and no names will be recorded on the survey. The completion of the survey should take no longer than 15-20 minutes. There are no known risks to participating in this study and there is no compensation for being a participant.

All information collected for this study will be kept strictly confidential and only the researcher and the capstone advisor will have access to this information. As this survey is anonymous, even the presentation of this data at the end of the research will not allow for the identification of any individual.

By completing and returning this survey, it is assumed that you are giving informed consent to participate in the study. Thank you for your time and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

You are free to refuse to participate in this research project or to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation in the project without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. However because of the anonymous nature of the survey it will not be possible to remove your data once submitted. Your participation will not affect your relationship with the centre and/or the instructors involved in this research project.

Sincerely,

Alqi Beqo  
Central Michigan University  
(647) 854-2574  
[email4alqi@yahoo.ca](mailto:email4alqi@yahoo.ca)

Faculty Advisor Contact Information  
Dr. David Lloyd, Faculty  
Central Michigan University  
[David.Lloyd@cmich.edu](mailto:David.Lloyd@cmich.edu)  
416-675-6622 x 564

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which this study is being conducted, you may report (anonymously if you so choose) any complaints to the MA in Education program office at 989774-3784 or 1 800 950-1144 ext. 3784.