

Title of the paper. Transformative learning: from critical reflection to emergence through guided introspection?

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Transformative learning: from critical reflection to emergence through guided introspection?

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'There is more wisdom in your body than in the deepest philosophy' (Friedrich Nietzsche)

Introduction

The centrality of learning to Human Resource Development (HRD) is emphasised by Wilson (2005:3), who describes HRD as representing 'the latest evolutionary stage in the long tradition of training, educating and developing people for the purpose of contributing towards the achievement of individual, organizational and societal objectives'. Yet the ways in which HRD processes such as coaching lead to learning are poorly understood.

In this paper we are interested in learning as experienced by the individual person. Our focus is on the type of learning that involves discontinuous change, and idea that several overlapping theories can address in relation to HRD. One is the framework of 'levels of learning' that Gregory Bateson developed in the 1960s and 1970s (Bateson 2000:279). A second is Argyris' notions of single and double loop learning (Argyris 1999). A third example explored here, and one that remains relatively little known in HRD, is Mezirow's theory of transformative learning (Mezirow 1991).

Mezirow's theory gives a central role to *critical reflection* in the process of transformative learning. We question the assumption that reflective discourse is a necessary or even primary route to transformative learning, and explore the potential of reflection through forms of *guided introspection* that emphasise the embodied nature of cognition. Here we focus on one such method, called 'Psychophenomenology' (Vermersch 2004), illustrated with extracts from empirical work.

The implications for HRD practice include better understanding of the processes of learning through facilitated forms of reflection such as coaching. Implications for HRD theory include further exploration of the relevance of transformative learning theory. The paper also opens up questions for further research into the experiential dimension of 'critical HRD'.

Background

This paper itself began through noticing embodied experience, at the 2008 UFHRD conference. There, I (PT) was struck by noticing my bodily responses when attending some sessions on theme of 'critical HRD'. I realised that

(according to my notes at the time) I felt heady and heavy, serious and a little sad; I noticed lots of wordy slides and sensed worry about what one should (or should not) think or do.

Another session further sparked this curiosity by using contemporary art as a device, raising the possibility of a criticality through aesthetic as well as intellectual modes. We had presented a paper ourselves at Lille (Tosey, Mathison, & Langley 2008) that explored Bateson's emphasis on the aesthetic (as distinct from conceptual) qualities of higher orders of transformative learning, based on his interests in art and story as holistic expressions of complex understandings. Anderson and Thorpe (2004), for example, note the use of imagery and storytelling to develop criticality.

I began to wonder about the form and process of 'critical HRD', as distinct from its contents or its purposes. What world, in Maturana and Varela's terms (1998), was being brought forth by this activity?

This paper builds on that curiosity, albeit indirectly; that is, not (yet) by exploring critical HRD per se, but by addressing the notion of critical reflection in the theory and practice of transformative learning through an embodied approach.

Transformative learning theory

The theory of transformative learning:

'refers to the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind-sets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action'.

(Mezirow 2000:7-8)

Concerned with changes in people's meaning perspectives and assumptions, its development has been led by Mezirow (e.g. Mezirow & Associates 2000), largely within the context of adult education (e.g. Cranton 1996).

Influenced by his own experience of a personal dilemma (Mezirow 1991:xvi), Mezirow built on and adapted Habermas' (1981) theory of communicative action. Mezirow emphasises a view of learning as meaning-making, and with changing frames of reference through which people interpret experience. 'Transformation' is understood to involve a qualitative change of cognitive perspective, and a revision of the self-concept, as autonomous thinking is developed. Such changes are enacted by the learner, and become 'lived', in pursuit of justice and social change: 'full development of the human potential for transformative learning depends on values such as freedom, equality, tolerance, social justice, civic responsibility, and education' (Mezirow 2000:16).

The relevance of this theory to HRD has yet to be explored extensively. Marsick and Watkins (1997:302-3) suggest that Mezirow's theory shares its roots with ideas about incidental learning, and Yorks and Marsick (2000) discuss transformative learning for groups and organisations. Gray (2006) has proposed that the theory of transformative learning may help to underpin the learning process involved in executive coaching, especially in order to provide an alternative to psychotherapeutically-derived models. Our own previous work has shown how this theory can be applied to management learning (Tosey, Mathison, & Michelli 2005).

We note that the apparent desirability of 'transformative' learning itself needs to be questioned. Contu, Grey and Örténblad (2003) and Holmes (2004) identify a value-laden rhetoric in the field of management, such that 'learning', and related conceptions of 'the learning organisation' and 'organisational learning' are seen as a 'good thing'. For Mezirow, transformative learning is worthwhile because it contributes to democratic participation (Mezirow 2003:61), even if a change of world view can be disconcerting. By contrast, Bateson conceives of transformative learning as potentially leading to either desirable or undesirable consequences.

The role of critical reflection in transformative learning theory

How does transformative learning come about? Taylor (1998:vii) says that, 'although the theory is much discussed, the practice of transformative learning has been minimally investigated and is inadequately defined and poorly understood'.

Mezirow indicates a series of stages (summarised by Marsick & Watkins 1997:303); (Gray 2006:488), which begin with a disorienting dilemma. Critical reflection and critical self-reflection are portrayed as the heart of this process (Mezirow 2003:60). Brookfield contends that 'transformative learning cannot happen without critical reflection' (Brookfield 2000:125), and regards the essence of critical reflection as 'ideology critique'.

What, according to these authors, does critical reflection consist of? Mezirow refers to the ability to reinterpret a previously learned experience in a new context. Whilst acknowledging the roles of emotion, imagination, art, music, dance, intuition, dreams and more in meaning-making, he emphasises *reflective discourse* (Mezirow 2000:10) as the means to examine and justify assumptions.

This reliance on reflective discourse can be challenged on several grounds:

1. Alternative theories of cognition: embodiment

Dominant theories of transformative learning may underplay insights into the embodied nature of mind (Varela, Thompson, & Rosch 1993); (Lakoff & Johnson 1999), and hence over-emphasise a rational, analytical mode of

learning. Dirkx (2000) comments that Mezirow's approach has a strong cognitive emphasis and may neglect modes of knowing such as intuition.

2. Alternative notions of transformation through learning

According to our reading of Bateson's work (Tosey & Mathison 2008), transformative learning can be emergent (Goldstein 1999), arising through repeated experience of changed *contexts* of action (Bateson's framework has been portrayed, incorrectly in our view, as a hierarchy of levels of reflection). Other conceptions of discontinuous learning, such as that of the 'symbolic growth experience' (Frick 1987), describe profound insight and change of self-perception that arise through experience, without depending upon critical reflection.

3. Variations in the transformative learning literature.

Cranton and Roy (2003:90) acknowledge a less prominent, strand of transformative learning theory (Boyd 1991) that is influenced by Jung's notion of individuation, and which emphasises symbolic and imaginal dimensions of experience. McWhinney and Markos (2003) describe an archetypal form of transformative learning based on a Navaho healing ritual. Robinson (2004:107) discusses meditation as a 'gateway into the deeper dimensions of learning.'

Guided introspection: an embodied route to transformative learning?

In recent years we have been interested in methods of facilitating learning that utilise what has been described as *guided introspection*. In essence, guided introspection facilitates the learner's exploration of their own sensory and/or symbolic 'inner landscape' of experience. Language is the main medium through which that exploration is facilitated; the purpose is to direct the learner's attention in certain ways, however, not to discuss concepts.

We are interested especially in two contemporary practices that operate through this type of introspection. One of these, called 'Symbolic Modelling' (Lawley & Tompkins 2000), is based on the work of David Grove, a New Zealander, originally working with victims of trauma (Grove & Panzer 1991)¹. It focuses on embodied metaphor, utilising a framework for questioning that is known as 'Clean Language' (Sullivan & Rees 2008). We intend to explore this method in future publications, as we think it holds promise as an approach to coaching and as a method for researching first-person experience.

¹ Neuro-Linguistic Programming's 'modeling' (Dilts 1998) and Gendlin's 'Focusing' (Gendlin 1981) are related types of practice

A second approach, called Psycho-phenomenology², has been developed in France by Pierre Vermersch (Vermersch 2004). Psycho-phenomenology is derived from the phenomenology of Husserl; what distinguishes it from its Husserlian roots is that it focuses directly on practical ways of investigating the complexities of the 'act of reflection'. Many of its findings are published in the *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, and Vermersch edits a French journal, *Expliciter*³, dedicated to communicating developments in the field.

First person accounts arrived at through introspection have tended to be mistrusted by researchers. Psycho-phenomenology was developed as a response to a perceived need for a more methodical approach to investigating introspection and eliciting accounts. It claims to access embodied knowing, and to extend significantly the degree to which people can offer detailed descriptions of their experience, through a method called the explicitation interview (Vermersch 1994) which makes use of insights into language and internal imagery.

The idea of *embodiment* is central to Psycho-phenomenology, where it is conceived of as encompassing both the lived embodied experiential structure, and the context in which cognitive mechanisms operate. Vermersch studied in Paris with Francisco Varela, who criticised contemporary cognitivism, arguing that the time was ripe for cognitive science to go beyond the dominance of the computational metaphor and enlarge its horizons to investigate the broader phenomenon of actual lived human experience (Varela, Thompson, & Rosch 1993)⁴.

Psycho-phenomenology seeks to 'map' conscious experience in fine detail:

'Describing an act's structure requires that one describes its temporal unfolding at different levels of density: the linkage between subordinate goals, the succession of stages and at the heart of each stage, elementary actions seen as both acts to be accomplished and as information-gathering acts, then micro-operations etc.'

(Vermersch 1999:31)

Psycho-phenomenology is predominantly inductive. Indeed Vermersch conceives of it as both a research tool and an approach to discovery; hence its potential application in coaching.

² The term 'Psychophenomenology' has also been used by Pekala and Kumar (2007) to describe a different, measurement-based approach to researching consciousness developed in the USA.

³ http://www.expliciter.fr/rubrique.php?id_rubrique=11, accessed 22nd April 2009.

⁴ Varela developed 'Neuro-phenomenology', which uses procedures similar to the explicitation interview to investigate possible correlations between reported conscious experience and data obtained simultaneously from fMRI scanners.

The explicitation interview

The central method of Psychophenomenology is the explicitation interview, ('l'entretien d'explicitation', Vermersch 1994). This protocol aims to elicit precise descriptions of an experience by exploring the detail of people's inner landscapes.

Vermersch's writings (which are mostly in French) address the skills and procedures needed to guide a person's introspective journey. He has incorporated various tools for the exploration of subjective experience from the field of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). While NLP is a contested field (Tosey & Mathison 2009), there is support for its view of the relationship between language and thought from contemporary cognitive linguistics such as Fauconnier (1997).

Published examples of this method include a study of the unfolding of the intuitive experience (Petitmengin-Peugeot 1999). Petitmengin has also used this method to enable sufferers of epileptic seizures to become aware of very small sensory changes that herald an attack, but of which they had so far been unconscious (Petitmengin, Navarro, & Baulac 2006).

To illustrate the themes of this paper we use to data from explicitation interviews with two participants who wished to gain insight into their experiences. The first, K, wished to explore her practice of photographing Butoh dancers (Butoh is a Japanese dance form). Specifically, she wanted to understand how she knew how a particular location was 'interesting' while others were not. We explored this through a series of four interviews. The second consisted of a single interview with S, who, wished to explore his experience of having an insight in order to complement academic knowledge of this subject.

There is not space here to describe the detail of the explicitation process, or to illustrate in full the ways in which language is used as an epistemic device to direct the interviewees' attention. A comprehensive description of the explicitation interview is given by Petitmengin (2006); here we summarise three key features:

- Evocation
- Granularity
- Emergence

Evocation

The first stage of explicitation is to guide the interviewee to associate fully into a memory or re-enactment of the experience being investigated. The language used by the interviewer to accomplish this is something like:

'Remember a time when you had that experience, be there, see what you see, hear what you hear, and notice whatever you are feeling...'

Initially S responded with the comment:

S. ...I tend to think of it in theoretical and conceptual terms. [...] When invited to give an example of my own insights it's a little more difficult. Let me think, let me think, let me think.

This was followed by a long silence. When he finally said: *'I'm driving a car'*, the interviewer knew that he had accessed a specific memory, which could then be further investigated.

Vermersch refers to this state as being *in evocation*. Inviting the participant to see, hear and feel whatever was happening encourages them to re-enact the event in their inner world, as much as possible as if it were happening now. It is suggested that the physiological concomitants of the event may thus be re-experienced, and the 'reference point for understanding perception is no longer a pre-given, independent world but rather the sensory-motor structure of the perceiver' (Varela, Thompson, & Rosch 1993:173)

This distinct quality of attention is crucial to the method. By asking the interviewee to become aware of different layers of consciousness, their attention is drawn to the background process, rather than to the figural content, of the experience. The guide ensures that the participant does not return to their habitual levels of description, beliefs or viewpoints, and remains genuinely engaged in exploring the unfamiliar dimensions of their inner landscape.

Granularity

A central aim of Psycho-phenomenology is to elicit information about conscious experience at increased levels of 'granularity' (Vermersch 1994). This means accessing details of the complex dynamics of awareness (which Psycho-phenomenology assumes is possible), and bringing these into consciousness. The aim is to investigate conscious experience at ever finer levels of detail, placing even fleeting mental events under a microscope, as it were. It is common for an explicitation interview to explore very small segments of time – perhaps five seconds or less.

When the participant is fully in evocation, the guide invites them to notice what is happening in their interior worlds at the sensory level. Questions are used to direct the participant's attention to more specific information. The guide may ask the interviewee to slow down a memory in order to notice even finer distinctions, or features of which they were not previously aware. What do they see, hear or feel? What qualities do these representations have?

For example, inviting K to evoke photographing dancers on a staircase at a London Underground station, the interviewer said:

I: Just allow yourself to experience that feeling, being in your body, observing what's happening through your eyes, through your hands, with your feet...

After a pause, K replied:

K: I can clearly see the camera in front of my eyes

This indicated that she was attending to internal visual information. Noticing K's shoulders tensing, the interviewer continued guiding her evocation:

I: ...and what sort of tension there is in your shoulders and how it makes you feel...

K: I can feel that I use muscles, I can feel that my body is made of muscles.

The interview went on to explore the physical component of K's knowing, and enabled her to identify subtle but significant sensory distinctions between subjects that were 'interesting' and 'not interesting'.

S reported what he experienced just after he evoked the insight that he identified for the purpose of the interview:

S: What happened then was the feeling of sliding out of control was just replaced by calmness, stillness.

I: How did you know it was calmness, stillness?

S: Because there was no movement, it was as though above my head there was space that went on forever.

Here, S's abstract words (calmness, stillness) were translated into a more precise description of an embodied *sensation* of space, experienced physically as having size, location and extension.

Emergence

One of the aims of guided introspection is to enable inquirers to arrive at *epoche* (Depraz, Varela, & Vermersch 2003:47), which consists of a cycle of three stages; the suspension of existing patterns of thinking, a redirection of attention towards interior processes so as to become more aware of the details and variety, and a 'letting go', accompanied by the strangeness of unknowing - a conscious choice to be passive, to slow down so that insights can emerge and make themselves known.

In the explicitation interview the aim is to *elicit* descriptions at ever finer levels of detail, not to *alter* the interviewee's experience. The interviewer can therefore be alert to new qualities or features that may emerge.

The final stages of this procedure involve de-briefing, with checks to ensure that the guide has properly understood what has been communicated about the participant's inner journey. There may be further sharing, reviewing and discussion of the findings (sometimes with a group of collaborators), from which new insights and viewpoints may emerge.

Can we say that this method facilitates transformative learning?

There are no established criteria or measures for transformative learning. In our previous work we, like others in the field (McWhinney & Markos 2003), have argued for the adoption of a framework such as Bateson's 'levels of learning' for this purpose.

The literature has been characterised by writers' self-referenced, accounts of their experiences, interpreted in relation to conceptions of transformative learning - for example, (Clark 1997); (Foster 1997). While valuable as learners' stories, these accounts appear highly dependent on their authors' interpretations of their own experiences.

Based on a study that analysed transcriptions of a senior manager's reflections over four time intervals during an experience of organisational change (Tosey, Mathison, & Michelli 2005), we proposed that the types of empirically identifiable change that could, taken together, indicate transformative learning, might include:

1. Changes in a person's sense of identity
2. Change in beliefs about (for example) learning
3. Changes in organising or core metaphors
4. Evidence of paradoxical thinking, especially of change toward integrating or resolving dilemmas, and a movement away from either-or thinking
5. An experience of transition or liminality, which occurs as embodied cognition is restructured.

Guided introspection does not, of course, necessarily lead to profound transformative learning in some formulaic way. Typically it seems that it can generate useful insight; the question of when and whether that entails other changes, or results in changed behaviour, has yet to be addressed.

There was no suggestion from S, for example, that the outcome was transformative. He gained a new perspective into his experience of insight, and awareness of the different types of attention that the explicitation interview entails. The process involved the slowing down and emergence of awarenesses that characterise *epoche*.

For K the outcome felt more significant. In her de-briefing interview, K realised that the explicitation process had opened up the whole dimension of her physicality, and how this engaged her creativity. She reported a change in her sense of self as an embodied individual. Her new awareness of the bodily dimension of her creativity was surprising and profound, apparently stemming from a subtle insight in the explicitation interview. This not only changed the way she took photographs but also altered the direction of her research.

To illustrate further the emergence of new understandings, we refer to a study (Mathison & Tosey 2008) in which Mathison took part in a course of riding lessons in order to research the methods of a certain coach, who had a reputation for her distinctive approach. The coach, in effect, used a form of guided introspection that was characterised by the use of questions to direct the rider's attention to their sensory experience. In this the coach was explicitly influenced by language models learnt through NLP, as have been incorporated into Psycho-phenomenology. For example, instead of giving instructions (e.g. 'sit up straight') the coach would use questions to encourage the rider to become more acutely aware of distinctions in their own sensory experience.

Mathison describes her experience of the emergence of new understanding as follows (2008:81-2):

'At one critical point in the lesson, I learn that I have a distortion in my upper body, which the coach points out to me. I make an attempt to correct the distortion.

The coach comments:

M. ... OK, just keep really keeping the distortion that keeps you face left. ... What words do you think are going to most hold you in this place when you go to trot?

My mind went blank; there was darkness, and for a split second there were no sounds or images, as if someone had dropped a shutter in front of my eyes. I do not know how long this suspension lasted. Only then did an image emerge. As if from nowhere, I saw a yacht in full sail with its spinnaker bowed outward by the wind. There was a momentary connection with the sense that my upper body needed to feel curved round in a similar way to the spinnaker.

Spinnaker I found myself telling her.'

In this account, the spontaneous emergence and physical experience of the image of a sailing ship with its spinnaker fully extended in the wind, apparently re-organised the rider's whole body in the saddle, was experienced as a new and profound metaphor. The image was accompanied by an unexpected, inexplicable and strong physical sensation. The description of 'suspension' relates to the way a change of meaning perspective is marked by confusion or uncertainty, a liminal space (McWhinney & Markos 2003:21).

What these examples lack, on the other hand, is the insights into ideology that are emphasised by Mezirow and Brookfield.

Synthesis and critique

This empirical work represents exploratory research into the experiences of individuals, as is appropriate to a naturalistic paradigm (e.g. Lincoln & Guba 1985). The data are limited in quantity; the aim is to illustrate how guided introspection takes place; to support the suggestion that it can (but does not necessarily) lead to learning that may be described as transformative; and to illustrate how guided introspection differs from critical reflection.

Clearly the specific experiences investigated here also vary in the directness of their relevance to HRD. Nevertheless, this process could be used to investigate a wide range of experiences, including many of interest within HRD.

Among criticisms of Psycho-phenomenology are, first, that it may make unwarranted assumptions about the possibility of re-accessing experience, especially in view of the unreliability of memory.

Secondly, Vermersch insists that the guide must have substantial experience of introspection themselves: 'a truly phenomenological experience has to be trained and cultivated' (Depraz, Varela, & Vermersch 2003:179). We infer from Vermersch's view that many researchers conducting phenomenological interviews today are insufficiently trained, both in the structures and features of inner landscapes, and in the subtleties of language, which are as important in Psycho-phenomenology as knowledge of statistical procedures in quantitative research. For example, a standard text on interviewing offers only a rudimentary categorisation of questions (Kvale 1996:133-5), and shows no awareness of the types of language patterns used in Psycho-phenomenology (or in Symbolic Modelling). These distinctions also appear to be unacknowledged in a contemporary method used in organisational research, Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (Smith 2008).

What of the relationship between critical reflection and guided introspection? While our title employs the metaphors of 'from' one 'to' the other, this appears complex and interwoven.

The rational-analytical process and propositional outcome of 'critical reflection' contrast with the embodied process and sensory-aesthetic outcome of guided introspection. Certainly the intrapersonal, psychological emphasis of guided introspection may distinguish it from the focus on ideology and concern for social action shown by Mezirow and Brookfield. The diverse purposes of that form of critical reflection and of Psycho-phenomenology may be disparate, distinct discourses that should not be shoe-horned together.

Alternatively, they may be seen as representing different perspectives on a similar process, as in Grabove's view (1997:90) that Mezirow's critically

reflective and Boyd's symbolic strands of transformative learning are interconnected.

Thus they might be located on a tentative matrix, adopting Mezirow's use of Habermas' distinction between communicative and instrumental learning (Mezirow 2000:8):

	Communicative learning	Instrumental learning
Propositional	Critical reflection (Mezirow)	Double loop learning (Argyris)
Embodied	Embodied reflexivity (Hein)	Psycho-phenomenology (Vermersch)

Among the similarities, critical reflection and guided introspection are both purposeful activities that typically are catalysed by an expert facilitator (Marsick & Watkins 1997:304). They are both talked of as yielding epiphanies or 'sudden insights' that may be regarded by the people concerned as revelatory. Both K and Mathison experienced this to some degree. Brookfield comments in a similar vein that 'to transform something is to provoke an epiphanic, or apocalyptic, event – a shift in the tectonic plates of one's assumptive clusters...' (Brookfield 2003:142).

On the other hand, there is nothing in explicitation, for example, that directly seeks to identify and challenge the meaning structures (such as organisational belief systems) that are the focus of Mezirow's approach. There is a risk that the outputs from guided introspection may be taken as 'natural' and needing no further examination; as Marsick and Watkins (1997:300) say, writing about incidental learning and its apparent naturalness; 'when learners do not question their interpretations, their false assumptions can lead them to inaccurate conclusions'.

Conversely, critical reflection surely has an embodied aspect (although it is possible to deny or ignore the role of the body). Cranton and Roy (2003:90) note that 'Taylor (1998) suggested it is not critical reflection that is at the center of transformative learning but discernment – a holistic orientation including receptivity, recognition, and grieving', which sounds highly suitable for exploration through Psycho-phenomenology. We note the relevance here of Metcalfe's (2008) advocacy for 'embodied reflexivity' (Hein 2004) as part of a feminist poststructuralist approach to HRD.

A possible way to indicate the complementarity of these processes is through Heron's 'up-hierarchy' of forms of knowledge, to which Mezirow refers (Mezirow 2000:5).

Forms of Knowledge	Description
Practical	'Knowing how'
Propositional	Conceptual knowing using language
Presentational	The imaginal mode (movement, sound, colour, shape, etc. that connects perceptual imagery)
Experiential	Knowledge by acquaintance, through participation; feeling.

(adapted from Heron 1992:174)

Heron conceives of a flow through these layers from experiential to practical. From this perspective, critical reflection and guided introspection represent different emphases within an overall process, critical reflection focusing primarily on propositional knowing, with guided introspection focusing on experiential knowing (as in the explicitation interview) and/or on presentational knowing (as in symbolic modelling).

Conclusions and implications for HRD

In conclusion, theories of transformative learning appear relevant to HRD's interest in learning. Guided introspection may provide an alternative to, or complement, critical reflection as a way to facilitate transformative learning. The specific experiential processes involved in critical reflection have yet to be mapped out satisfactorily, and the principles and products of critical reflection appear to be discussed more than the process. The embodied emphasis of guided introspection also appears under-represented in dominant theories of transformative learning.

Among the implications for HRD:

First, methods of guided introspection such as the explicitation interview may have applications to HRD practices like executive and leadership coaching. The explicitation interview can be used as a reflective process, and one that may lead to significant learning, whether about performance or for developmental purposes. While the full explicitation protocol, as Vermersch conceives it, is quite specialised, the principles by which language can be used to guide awareness are widely applicable.

Second, participant accounts such as those from our explicitation interviews may offer insights into how processes such as coaching can facilitate emergent learning for managers and leaders.

Third, Gibson and Hanes (2003) acknowledge that phenomenological research has a potential contribution to make to HRD; methods such as the explicitation interview could be used to investigate the processes involved in

critical reflection, with interest especially in how it is embodied and enacted. This could prove illuminating for students of critical HRD who seek guidance on how to accomplish critical reflection.

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