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A Pedagogy of Deep Listening in E-Learning

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines deep listening as a pedagogy in 21st century online education. The topic is situated in the intersubjectivity of computer-mediated communication in learning environments that foster transformative experiences. The transdisciplinary orientation of the paper includes the complex and overlapping lenses through which multiple ways of teaching, learning, and knowing are viewed and experienced in the context of fostering transformation in online education in a time of rapid growth in technological innovation, globalization, and significant environmental change. It transcends an individual disciplinary research and focus, bridging epistemologies to consider the felt sense of deep listening in the educator's role.

Keywords: complexity theory, computer-mediated communication, deep listening, e-learning, embodiment, epistemology, intersubjectivity, online education, transdisciplinarity, transformative learning theory

Introduction

E-learning, also referred to as online learning, has a long history of criticisms regarding learning efficacy when compared to face-to-face, or traditional classroom learning experiences (Alstete & Beutell, 2004; Collins & Pascarella, 2003; Ross & Bell, 2007; Weigel, 2002). While valued for its lower cost, easier access, and scheduling flexibility, which traditional environments are at a disadvantage to offer, the quality of the learning experience continues to be debated. A growing emergence of contemporary learning theories that focus on learner-centered designs, communities of practice, and transformative experiences look to leverage new technologies as tools for shifting the current education paradigm (Chapman, 2012; Frick, 1991; Jonassen & Land, 2000). Educators are increasingly challenged by emerging technologies, education reform, and alternative learning theories that question existing paradigms; yet these challenges go with the territory of educating individuals for an uncertain future in the 21st century. Deep listening is tool for deepening personal understanding, connecting deeply with others, and opening one's mind and heart to new perspectives, new ways of thinking and knowing oneself, others, and the world in which we live. This paper explores how deep listening can be used as a tool for transformative teaching and learning in new and emerging educational technologies in the 21st century. The intersubjectivity of deep listening in e-learning environments is a key focus of this paper.

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Understanding Deep Listening

Much of the research and articles available to date use different terms that speak to the same phenomena and practice of listening deeply to one's self, others, and world in order to change or deepen one's understanding and way of being in the world. Psychotherapist and philosopher Eugene Gendlin (1982) developed a technique called Focusing, which is a psycho-therapeutic process that involves deep inner-awareness, a "felt sense" of inner knowledge experienced in the body that is beyond thought or language. This bodily felt sense is implicit and he aligned his philosophy with phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty's work that posits perception, specifically as experienced by the body, is pre-verbal, prior to linguistic communication (Gendlin, 1992). "Our bodies sense themselves in living in our situations. Our bodies do our living. Our bodies *are* [emphasis in original] interaction in the environment...Our bodies don't lurk in isolation behind the five peepholes of perception." (Gendlin, 1992, p. 345). Gendlin's process is designed to bring implicit knowledge that is felt into focus in order to be able to articulate, or explicate said knowledge.

David Rome and Hope Martin (2010) base their practice on Gendlin's work and defined deep listening as "listening, from a deep, receptive, and caring place in oneself, to deeper and often subtler levels of meaning and intention in the other person. It is listening that is generous, empathic, supportive, accurate, and trusting" (p. 58). It includes tuning in, with body, speech, and mind, and listening to the in-between spaces. (Rome & Martin, 2010). These authors consider deep listening as an approach to improve the quality of communication and to transform "dysfunctional and damaging social habits" (Rome & Martin, p. 57). Rome wrote about deep listening within the context of mindfulness and focusing practices that he has studied for many years, and suggests that deep listening is a way of teaching these disciplines, including Buddhist mindfulness, the Alexander Technique, and Eugene Gendlin's Focusing technique. Rome and Martin (2010) differentiate deep listening from active listening with an emphasis on the more contemplative quality of listening that goes beyond the techniques of active listening.

Pauline Oliveros is a composer and philosopher who has written and studied extensively on Deep Listening, a term she coined for her work in 1991. She teaches trained and untrained musicians the art of listening and responding to environmental conditions that emphasize improvisation and conscious empathy (Oliveros, 2005). Like Rome and Martin, Oliveros' links Deep Listening to cultural transformation. For her, Deep Listening is "to heighten and expand consciousness of sound in as many dimensions of awareness and attention dynamics as humanly possible" (Oliveros, p. xxiii). Essentially, Oliveros distinguishes her definition of Deep Listening from others who use the term by emphasizing the elements of sound and patterns. Oliveros' process of Deep Listening involves "bodywork, sonic meditations, interactive performance, listening to the sounds of daily life, nature, one's own thoughts, imaginations and dreams, and listening to listening itself" (p. 1). She values deep listening as "a desirable practice or tool for living, learning, and creative work" (Oliveros, p. 1). While Oliveros emphasizes the value of deep listening as a way of being in the world, she writes and practices Deep Listening within the context of performance arts. In the arts, she points to improvisation, creativity and healing as additional areas that Deep Listening can be used to deepen one's practice. In this way, Oliveros incorporates a somatic knowledge into the teaching of Deep Listening. She too discusses the perceptions of subtle patterns and shifts in the practice of Deep Listening as she explains how new fields of thought can open and how individuals can expand their conscious awareness

(Oliveros, 2005). Her philosophy is transdisciplinary, intertwining with spirituality, psychology, epistemology, and pedagogy.

Psychologists Watkins' and Lorenz' (2002) description of deep listening in the field of depth psychology is presented here:

> the kind of listening that requires one to place oneself along the others, in an apprenticing rather than a hierarchical expert relationship. Such a listening invites what is silenced to voice, taking care to include in dialogue the multiple voices that comprise a situation. It entails a witnessing that is both patient and vulnerable; that is able to bear conflict and dissent. It has an ear for the symbolic and the mythical; an eye for images that convey experience and longing; an open invitation for the imaginal to body forth in poem, music, dance, drama, and image. (p. 3-4).

Watkins (2008) also noted that dialogue, listening for multiplicity, and seeing-through are concepts of "noticing [that] involves a gift of careful attention that is sustained, patient, subtly attuned to images and metaphors, tracking both hidden meanings and surface presentations" (p. 419). Canadian therapists and academics Shari Geller and Leslie Greenberg (2012) said that relational presence is "to be aware in the moment of what is occurring in one's self, in others, and between self and others" (p. 255). Mindfulness, presence, state of being, bearing witness, and attunement are several key terms that align closely with and often speak to the phenomenon of deep listening. Geller and Greenberg also added to their explanation of the intersubjectivity of deep listening, the aspect of being "guided by this dance of awareness and attunement with self and other, pausing between what is known and what is not known, and listening deeply from that still place that exists between self and other." (p. 257). They go on to say:

> When we engage with others from our own inner terrain of receptive awareness, nonjudgment, nonreaction, and grounding, in the service of the other's healing, there emerges the possibility of being at peace and effectively evolving from a place of deeper wisdom in a relational and collective movement toward growing with and from each other (Geller & Greenberg p. 262).

Personal transformation and therapeutic healing are key outcomes of deep listening in the research literature within the discipline of psychology (Geller & Greenberg, 2012; Gordon-Giles, 2010; Espiner & Hartnett, 2012; Watkins & Lorenz, 2002).

Many researchers present a transdisciplinary view of deep listening. Dance therapy research, for example, suggests that listening deeply is a way to manifest empathy not only towards one's self but also towards others, as a way to "reconnect with their inner strength [and] have the potential to promote justice, peace and healing in our society" (Gordon-Giles, 2010, p. 73). The inclusion of physical movement in embodied listening is a subtler aspect of the definition that is not always acknowledged. Articles across disciplines include aspects of improvisational movement, walking meditations, dance, drumming, and theatre as embodied listening activities. Listening involves the sense of hearing at its very fundamental level; yet it is also used to describe the focused attention and attunement that deepens one's presence in the world. Because listening is understood as a physical experience, it is possibly easier to recognize and connect with the bodily felt sense of the act of listening, giving this concept of embodied listening an advantage when teaching and learning to listen deeply for greater wisdom or inner-

healing. Other considerations regarding deep listening as a way of knowing, healing, and transcending include power dynamics, trust within relationship, respect, and reciprocity.

A Brief History of E-Learning

The history of online learning begins in the 1980s with the use of "computers to replicate autocratic teaching styles" that were designed for knowledge transfer (Rickard, 2010, p. 3). By the mid-1990s, amidst the technology boom, higher education institutions explored e-learning to leverage information technology as an opportunity to extend course access to more students, improve quality of learning, and reduce the cost of education (Twigg, C., 1994). E-learning provided a new platform for teaching and learning, and the industry began to explore options for teachers to innovate instruction and provide new ways for students to experience learning (Rickard, 2010, p. 3). By the mid 2000s, e-learning had become an integral part of mainstream education and training environments. John Giles, CEO of the United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA) wrote, "Indeed, integration of online learning into their curricula has become almost as common among colleges as e-mail accounts among our friends" (Rickard, 2010, p. 1).

U.S. Department of Education reported that online courses and educational programs produce stronger learning outcomes than traditional classroom environments, and that blended learning environments offered even greater advantages (Rickard, 2010). Critics question the assessment of these learning outcomes as well as the variables not considered in the efficacy-based research. For example, these measures of success in e-learning remain within the traditional educational paradigm of knowledge transfer. Weigel (2002) argues that the true measure of course effectiveness is related more to whether it promotes deep learning, the critical analysis of new ideas and linking them to already known concepts and principles, over surface learning, the unchallenged acceptance of information and memorization of facts. Most often, e-learning is criticized for the surface learning that students experience, the lack of social presence of professors, and a sense of isolation that students report (Ulmer, Watson, & Derby, 2007; Zhang & Walls, 2009).

Online learning as a transformative learning experience is the exception rather than the rule in 21st century education. Learner engagement, interactivity, and summative assessment are key themes for evaluating online learning efficacy (Kagawa & Selby, 2012; Rickard, 2010; Swan & Shih, 2005), yet research and innovation in these areas have rarely produced evidence of transformative learning experiences. Research correlates transformational change and communication based on conversation where there is genuine two-way dialogue that is focused on listening and probing for more information (Dobbs, 2010). Deep listening in online environments as a pedagogy can foster opportunities for transformative learning experiences.

Framing Deep Listening in E-Learning

An exploration into deep listening as a pedagogy in e-learning environments requires an orientation to the context within which the topic is situated. E-learning in the 21st century integrates technology, social networking, contemporary learning theories, and alternative epistemologies to meet the complexities of these uncertain times. Questions about how intelligence is defined, how diversity in learning and knowing can be fostered, what skills and talents will be valued and demanded in the future, and how transformation, creativity, intuition, and innovation can be experienced are all prevalent in this inquiry. This section introduces a

framework of epistemologies of embodiment, complexity theory and transdisciplinarity, transformative learning theory, computer-mediated communication, and intersubjectivity within which a pedagogy of deep listening can be discussed.

Epistemologies of Embodiment

The various philosophies of embodied knowledge and embodied epistemologies expand the relatively narrow definition of knowledge found in traditional theories of analytic epistemologies. Loise Antony (2002) described analytic epistemologies as a 'Cartesian' epistemology, "the idea being that, for all this brand of epistemology cares, knowers could be completely disembodied—pure Cartesian egos" (p. 464). Antony said, "That analytic epistemology has presumed a uniformity of intuition among all its participants has both obscured the existence of diversity and forestalled a needed discussion about what such diversity would or ought to mean for our conception of 'the knower'" (p. 468). Instead of knowledge based on transmitting objects in controlled and measured ways for efficacy, alternative learning theories such as transformative learning theories make room for different ontologies and epistemologies for the process of meaning-making informed by conscious, contemplative experiences (Cook & Brown, 1999; Jonassen & Land, 2000; Mezirow, 1991; Zajonc, 2006). Tara Amann (2003) explains somatic knowing as working in conjunction with the mind, where the body's experiences of "emotion, sense, or movement, for example, simultaneously engages in taking in and making sense of information" (p. 2).

Ferrer, Albareda, and Romero (2004) go deeper into the meaning and possibilities of embodied knowledge by postulating "the existence of an intelligent and creative primordial energy or Mystery that is the ultimate principle of life and reality" (p. 10). There are two polar energetic states—Dark Energy and the Energy of Consciousness—of which Dark Energy is "unactualized spiritual energy in a state of transformation, saturated with potentials and novel possibilities" and therefore has "an experiential dimension" (Ferrer et al., p. 10). In contrast, "The Energy of Consciousness is the Mystery's transcendent life and dynamic telos of the cosmos toward the expansion of outreaching love and wisdom…[It] is the source of our self-awareness and spiritual discernment" (Ferrer et al., p. 11). They suggest that by integrating these traditionally viewed, polar-opposite energies via embodied participation, society can move toward integral growth and holistic health, "a developmental process in which all human dimensions—body, instincts, heart, mind, and consciousness—collaboratively participate as equals in the multidimensional unfolding of the human being" (Ferrer, 2003, as cited in Ferrer et al., 2004, p. 12). They go on to explain how the results of the embodied participation in Mystery "would result in a state of vitalized peace characterized by an unconditional openness toward life and a grounded love that would naturally engage the person in the transformation of his or her surroundings" (Ferrer et al., p. 12).

The concept of embodied knowing is sometimes referred to as tacit knowing, which privileges the experienced skill or knowledge that is bodily assimilated and the subsequent potential of the body's capacity to perform (Kontos & Naglie, 2009; Polanyi, 1966). Tacit knowledge is dynamic and growing; it is an experiential knowledge. Hungarian-British chemist and philosopher Michael Polanyi wrote extensively about tacit knowledge, starting with the premise that "*we can know more than we can tell* [emphasis in original]" (p. 4) and that all knowledge is personal. Kantos and Naglie explain that just as dispositions are embodied in practice, selfhood is also embodied and manifests socio-culturally as ways of being-in-the-world.

Similarly, educator and psychologist Ian Grand (2006) believes that "Human development happens as the creative enactment of individuals and groups throughout the lifespan of the individual in specific historical conditions" (p. 34). He said:

> In all this we develop multiple embodiments. We enact a variety of selves, with ourselves and with others. We live various bodies as we go through our daily worlds and identify with different aspects of our embodied repertoire in any given moment. These enactments are performed both consciously and unconsciously. (Grand, p. 27)

Scott Cook and John Seely Brown (1999) also consider the nature of embodied knowledge in their work, writing about the concept of bridging the "epistemology of possession" and the "epistemology of practice." Instead of replacing the traditional "epistemology of possession" (a similar concept of Antony's Cartesian epistemology), with an "epistemology of practice" (or embodied knowing), they propose that "knowledge is a tool of knowing, that knowing is an aspect of our interaction with the social and physical world, and that the interplay of knowledge and knowing can generate new knowledge and new ways of knowing" (Cook & Brown, p. 381). Ferrer (2003), Kontos (2004), Grand (2006), Antony (2002) and many others align with this idea of generative knowledge creation through the interplay of multiple and diverse ways of knowing.

Masciotra, Roth, and Morel (2007) put forward the concept of enaction—learning in action—explaining how all learning is a process of adaptation of old forms of knowledge transforming into new forms of knowledge. Enaction, as well as bridging epistemologies, use participative inquiry through dynamic interaction with the exterior world, beyond the interiority of self-inquiry or "a continuous interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge" (Cook & Brown, 1999, p. 397). Similarly, Gendlin (1992) explains how the living body can be understood as environmental information through the interaction with its environment. Unlike Cook and Brown, Gendlin places significant emphasis on the process of making explicit what is understood tacitly via his Focusing technique in his definition of new knowledge creation.

These philosophies of embodied knowing share a commonality with Merleau-Ponty's (1945) belief that the living body is living primal knowledge of its world (Gendlin, 1992; Welsh, 2007). Merleau-Ponty's (1945) philosophy of the embodied self includes "a horizon latent in all our experience and itself ever-present and anterior to every determining thought" (p. 92, as cited in Welsh, p 3.). He purported that the body is more than a container for the mind to cognate; instead it is "the condition of possibility for understanding any object" (Welsh, p. 3). Welsh (2007) explains his stance on embodiment as the "primal meaningful engagement with the world" (p. 3).

Complexity Theory and Transdisciplinarity

The idea that relationship building and generative dialogue in online communication can provide opportunities for transformational learning requires greater consideration of the complexities of 21st century learning and living. Phil Slater (2009), author of *The Chrysalis Effect*, suggested that we are living in a time when an alternative culture, a new integrative system, is slowly replacing the dominating control culture of the past because the authoritarian systems cannot adapt quickly enough to this rapidly changing world. This shift in the global culture is to one of unity, and the possibility of a new planetary consciousness, one where uncertainty replaces certainty, and greater generative dialogue emerges that is both complementary and antagonistic, promoting original thought and creative inquiry (Bohm, 1996;

Gergen, 2009; Morin, 1999; Slater, 2009). Slater (2009) believed that society is in an awkward age of transition, experiencing conflicts in the desires to simultaneously protect and exploit the environment, distrust and depend upon technology, "never more ego-driven and never more hungry to lose ourselves in something beyond ego" (p. 24).

Embracing a paradoxical state of flux that the world is experiencing today is explored in alternative educational approaches that promote open-ended discoveries, open dialogue, and the idea that understanding is a living thing. Scientist Karl Pribram said, "children should learn about paradox in grade school, since the new scientific findings are always fraught with contradictions" (as cited in Slater, 2009, p. 73). By exploring the tension between paradoxical understandings of meanings and beliefs, rich conversation emerges that crosses disciplines and makes rich connections, expanding interdisciplinary approaches to teaching. The traditionally linear, separate, compartmentalized approach has left society without the skills to join together in a collective inquiry about the world and self (Bateson 1994; Bohm, 1996; McCarthy, 1996; Morin, 1999; Slater, 2009).

A deeper understanding of complex systems requires re-thinking and attuning to the subtleties of relationships and dialogue, adaptation, levels of organization, and how systems are embedded in other systems. "Systems are composed of a *suprasystem* containing numerous *subsystems*, each with its own organization and goals, and there competing as well as cooperating" (Rohmann, 1999, 395-396). A transdisciplinary approach promotes a transcendence of established ways of looking at the world, an approach that is "multireferential and multidimensional" (Morin, 2008, p. 271). Patricia Leavy (2011) suggested that "synergy is the key factor that distinguishes transdisciplinarity from all other models of knowledge production" (p. 19). An inquiry into the future of e-learning, given today's greater global connectivity and increasingly new tools and technologies shaping social, economic and political organizations, and questions how the potentiality within co-creative e-learning spaces might be masterfully nurtured by teachers, qualifies as an inquiry with a "social, human, or 'life-world' purpose" (Leavy, 2011, p. 24). Alfonso Montuori (2005) described transdisciplinary research as "self-and-other inquiry, insomuch as the assumption is not that we are 'discovering facts' about the world 'out there', but rather that there is an ongoing inter-subjective co-evolutionary process of construction" (p. 157).

The challenges that educationalists face today are highly complex, with demands for higher student performance without deep thought into the relevance of standardized assessment of such performance, economic demands for efficiencies and cost savings, political demands for "no child left behind" and other policies that have attempted to address quality in education without considering the intricacies involved in school system dynamics. The complexity of considering deep listening as a pedagogy within an e-learning environment is situated in the context of globalization resulting in greater interconnectivity, diversity and adaptability, social media and communication changes, and new technologies that are transforming the workforce needs. This topic is complicated further by the meta-study of inquiring into the aspects of teaching and learning that are also aspects of the transdisciplinary approach to research. The discovery and continual awareness required to recognize social patterns, consider social contexts, and examine alternative constructs in the facilitation of transformative learning is life-work. "Transdisciplinary education revalues the role of intuition, imagination, sensibility and the body in the transmission of knowledge" (Morin, 2008, p. 272).

At the heart of an inquiry into deep listening as a pedagogy is an aspect of spirituality that must be reconciled with new learning and new knowledge creation. The relevance of this inquiry

to humanity is seen in the increasing concerns about the readiness of the 21st century workforce in the face of rapidly changing work environments. Skills such as higher-level thinking, social intelligence, adaptive thinking, cross-cultural competencies, and transdisciplinary thinking have been identified as critical skills for success, yet most educators are not proficient with or prepared to master these skill sets that are in higher demand (Davies, Fiddler, & Gorbis, 2011). By examining deep listening in 21st century learning, and exploring how teachers can foster transformative online learning spaces through the practice of being fully present in those spaces, I hope to understand more deeply what the future of education might aspire to, and possibly propose ideas for bridging the knowledge gap that continues to widen as digital natives adapt to a newly emerging world view more quickly than an older generation of teachers who are in formal positions to facilitate their learning.

Transformative Learning Theory

Learning theorist Jack Mezirow described transformative learning as a rational process of learning that involves "a metacognitive application of critical thinking that transforms an acquired *frame of reference* [emphasis in original]—a mind-set or worldview of orienting assumptions and expectations involving values, beliefs, and concepts—by assessing its epistemic assumptions" (Dirkx, Mezirow, & Cranton, 2010, p. 124). Mezirow emphasizes the explicit rational process of learning that takes place within awareness. Other transformative learning theorists such as Dean Elias (1997), Edmund O'Sullivan (2002), and John Dirkx (2010), however, emphasize in their definitions the dimension of the unconscious, the aspects of learning that take place outside of awareness. For example, O'Sullivan describes transformative learning as experiencing a deep, paradigmatic shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. Elias explained transformative learning as "facilitated through consciously directed processes such as appreciatively accessing and receiving the symbolic contents of the unconsciousness and critically analyzing underlying premises" (p. 3). Dirkx also includes both rational and extra-rational processes in his definition of transformative learning. He describes transformative learning as soul work that involves "profound change in one's cognitive, emotional, or spiritual way of being" (Dirkx et al., p. 133). Patricia Cranton, as facilitator of a dialogue between John Dirkx and Jack Mezirow, pointed out that "Mezirow acknowledges this [extrarational] dimension of transformative learning, adding only that the outcome must involve a critical assessment of assumptions to ensure that it is not based on faith, prejudice, vision, or desire" (Dirkx et al., p. 137).

In a critical review of research on transformative learning theory, Edward Taylor (2007) determined that greater attention needs to be given to context, catalysts, the increased role of other ways of knowing, relationships, and a defined outcome of a perspective transformation (p. 174). His findings regarding the role of critical reflection and relationships, as well as fostering transformative learning, are particularly relevant to research on deep listening as a pedagogy in e-learning environments. Taylor cited Cranton and Carusetta's (2004) study on authenticity in teaching as one example of research that supports the connection between transformative learning's critical reflection, relationships, and context (p. 178). While prior research established that trustful relationships allow for questioning discussions, sharing information openly, and mutual understanding, Taylor cited recent research on the complexity of relationships and their significance to transformative learning. For example, Carter's (2002) research on women's learning at work found that "love, memory and self-dialogue relationships proved significant to

transformative learning, with intimate relationship as most significant" (Taylor, p. 179). Peer dynamics were also identified as important to transformative learning, as found in Eisen's (2001) work, which identified relational qualities of "trust, non-evaluative feedback, nonhierarchical status, voluntary participation and partner selection, shared goals and authenticity" (Taylor, p. 179). Good communication is based on authenticity, which is the expression of the genuine self in the community (Cranton & King, 2003). The relational nature of transformative learning is most significant because the learning process depends on authentically communicating support, trust, friendship and intimacy. Research by Pohland and Bova (2000), MacLeod, Parkin, Pullon, and Robertson (2003), Mallory (2003), Feinstein (2004), and King (2004) on fostering transformative learning found that learning experiences that stimulate reflection upon experience are powerful tools for perspective transformation (cited by Taylor, p. 182). Taylor also identified writing as significant in promoting transformative learning, citing several studies that support the power of journaling and writing theses as a tool for strengthening the analytical capability and personal voice in transformative learning.

Another factor in fostering transformative learning is facilitating and supporting students through the "transitional zone, of students' knowing and meaning making" (Taylor, 2007, p. 187). Mezirow (1991) describes this phase as "disorienting dilemma" in his transformational learning process. Berger (2004) referred to this transitional space as "liminal space that we can come to terms with the limitations of our knowing and thus begin to stretch those limits" (p. 338). Montuori (2008) pointed to this same liminal space when he wrote about creative inquiry and how the student and teacher both approach the work with creative mindsets, full of wonder and passion for understanding the world and themselves in new ways. Through this creative approach, students are able to deeply engage in the learning, immerse themselves in knowledge and ideas. Teachers too immerse themselves in the co-creative relational space of making new meaning by letting go of the predictability and certainty that so often limits transformational outcomes.

Cranton and King (2003) identified individuation as a critical aspect of transformative teaching and learning, saying "Without individuation we have no foundation on which to question assumptions and norms because we cannot see ourselves as separate from those norms" (p. 33). They emphasize the way in which learners construct a sense of self by questioning assumptions and norms, and seeing oneself separate from those norms. Dirkx also focusses on subjectivity in his research, exploring the role and relationship of one's inner world in shifting a view of the outer world. Both perspectives are required to deepen understanding and to incorporate new ways of knowing. This aspect of subjectivity in the transformative learning process is also relevant to the discussion regarding deep listening in the context of the intersubjectivity of online transformative learning.

Intersubjectivity

Knowledge is not a fixed and unchanging object; instead, it is living thing, an ever-growing, ever-changing relationship to that which can be known. Co-creative meaning-making is the combined individual and social relational process of understanding the world. Understanding is formed through interaction with diverse ideas, people, experiences, and environments (Antony, 2002; Berger, 2004; Cook & Brown, 1999; Ferrer et al., 2004; Gendlin, 1992; Grand, 2006; Masciotra et al, 2007; Welsh, 2007). It is through conversation and the exchange of perspectives and ideas that meaning is made or deepened for all participants (Bohm, 1996). The

mastery of opening and holding this co-creative space for transformational learning is the essence of enaction—knowledge experienced in action—the meeting place of internal learning conditions, external learning conditions and the evolving learning situation (Masciotra et al., 2007). Cook and Brown (1999) recognize this concept of knowledge in action as bridging epistemologies of possession and practice. This intersubjective space is a relational field "shifting and moving to the reciprocal inputs of the actors who participate in it" (Deslauriers, 2011, p.91).

Co-creative, generative meaning-making is complex, paradoxical, and messy. Social constructs and histories, environmental variables, and individual experiences and diversities are interwoven into every conversation and collaborative exchange. It is within this deeply intricate space that teaching and learning live. The interpersonal dynamic shared between participants in a transformational learning experience provides for deep inquiry into the aspects, qualities, and variables that are interacting, expanding, and possibly collapsing the experience. This relational field formed in teaching and learning considers the individual's interpersonal skills development and the influencers that various levels of skills development can have on the optimization of learning and communicating.

The study of intersubjectivity as it relates to teaching and learning has not been a primary focus in teacher education. It is typically addressed peripherally, via internships or in discussions on class management techniques. The lack of attention to this topic may be a carryover of the industrial education model—what Antony (2002) calls Cartisian epistemology and what Montuori (2006) calls reproductive education—that has deemphasized the power of intersubjectivity in the potentiality of learning. In reproductive education, learners are viewed as machines or computers that can receive set knowledge through one-way transfer without any distortion of the set of information and with predictable outputs for proof of transfer. In this paradigm, information is the same as knowledge, simplifying a highly complex, creative experience into a non-human exchange.

Alternatives to traditional education provide models that represent a living system of learning, including concepts such as "education as nurturing into being that which sustains life" and orderly disorder within communities that create conditions for potentiality (Widhalm, 2011). These conditions are made up of the behaviors and qualities we show up with. Jim Garrison (2010) has observed that listening is largely overlooked as a means of transformative communication. "Compassionate listening involves spiritual transcendence and shared creativity that benefits both teacher and student" (Garrison, p. 2765). In addition, he emphasizes the need for maintaining a precarious balance between the extremes of self-eradication and egotistic self-assertion, in favor of self-eclipse (Garrison, p. 2765). This self-eclipse involves "compassionate, spiritual, and creative listening in teaching and learning" (Garrison, p. 2763). Garrison points to skills that enhance the potential of the relational field that is established between the teacher and learner.

The development of the potentiality within the intersubjectivity of teacher and student is discussed by Masciotra et al.(2007) as a development of "a whole range of educationally desirable dispositions related to self-knowledge: for example, self-discipline, self-mastery, availability, self-confidence, open-mindedness, presence of mind, critical sense, awareness, and respect for others" (p. 114). Mastery of these skills is characterized by "an inextricability of thinking and acting, that is, by *relationality* [emphasis in original]" (Masciotra et al., p. 196). When a masterful teacher asks a poignant question at the perfect moment, which on the surface seems too simplistic, but in reflective silence takes on a new dimension, then pauses two beats

longer than anyone is comfortable with, creative space is held for students to think and act in authentic, courageously new directions.

Computer-Mediated Communication

Before turning the focus to exploring deep listening further, the environment within which it is considered should first be discussed. The field of technology is a fast-growing industry that continues to shape and reshape social interactions, access to information, and course design. A connection between new technologies and paradigmatic shifts in education have a history, as seen with the invention of the printing press and its correlation with the increase in literacy due to increased access to books (Frick, 1991). The inventions of radio and television are evidence of another technological advancement that triggered social transformation in communication and learning. These shifts are sometimes subtle in the way they influence behaviors that are not directly connected to the technologies. For example, radio and television are most commonly associated with entertainment, even though a great deal of information and educational materials are shared via these channels. While educators and instructional designers are not directly involved in the field of broadcast media, it is important to acknowledge that learning occurs outside of formal learning environments, which is a critical aspect to consider when looking at research on computer-medicated communication (CMC) (Frick, 1991; Herring, 2004; Walther, 2011).

The field of instructional design is grounded in behavioral psychology and communications theory, which may be the reason why most educational research on CMC is focused on the nature of human behavior and how it can be optimized in specific contexts of use (Herring, 2004, p. 1). CMC research grew in relation to the popularity of the Internet in an effort to understand the phenomena that this new technology introduced, and specifically, computer-mediated discourse analysis (CMDA) is a key focus for online educators due to the application of text-based discussion technologies in online learning communities (Herring, 2004). Herring cautioned researchers to consider the community aspect when researching CMDA because historically the medium and situational variables are not distinguishable due to anecdotal and speculative findings, often rendering the research invalid. Like Walther, Herring recognizes the multimodal aspect of CMC and factors it into her suggested approach to computer-mediated discussion analysis.

Joseph Walther (2011) explained how computer-mediated communication (CMC) has "become increasingly integral to the initiation, development, and maintenance of interpersonal relationships" (p. 443). He believes that "they are involved in the subtle shaping of almost every relational context" (Walther, p. 443). Walther researches the changing landscape of CMC and interpersonal communication, highlighting the obsolescence of research in this arena due the rapidly changing and emerging technologies. His perspective is unique because he factors in the radically multimodal aspects of relationships to how interpersonal communication is studied. Through Walther's and Herring's proposed lenses of multimodal communication that seeps into all aspects of life, the boundaries of online learning environments can be expanded into live classrooms as well as virtual learning environments. In other words, computer-mediated communication must be considered as a part of learning beyond the designated formal mode and location of instruction, and it must be considered as a part of communication in general in 21st century teaching and learning.

Most researchers within the field of educational technology do not share Walther's and Herring's perspective on the infiltration of CMC. They tend to view online learning environments as an alternative to in-person environments and design accordingly (Giles, 2011; Harasim, 2012; Swan & Shih, 2005). In the either/or paradigm of learning environments, researchers promote online learning platforms for the advantages that the educational technology can support, such as asynchronous conversation, rich media via images, video, and audio clips (Chapman, 2012; Rickard, 2010). Social equity in the form of "equal access to shared conversation" (Wegerif, 1998) is also considered an advantageous aspect of online learning platforms. The online forum is often praised for leveling the playing field for participation, reducing the ability of students who tend to dominate an in-person conversation to control the dialogue online. It also increases the diversity of student populations due to the increased accessibility to more geographical regions, putting students from diverse locations virtually together in online environments. Another interesting factor that researchers Swan and Shih (2005) identified in their study on the nature and development of social presence in online course discussions is the correlation between perceived high social presence and engagement in online discussions. They suggested that "social presence can be fostered through pro-social instructor behaviors and careful design of online discussions, as well as faculty development focusing on social presence issues" (Swan & Shih, p. 131).

The question of whether new and emerging technological advantages are unique to online education is nontrivial. The online education industry has historically remained focused on reproducing a version of the traditional classroom model (Giles, 2011; Harasim, 2012; Swan & Shih, 2005), yet many researchers continue to challenge the traditional belief that in-person learning experiences are superior to online learning experiences (Chapman, 2012; Wegerif, 1998). More recently, CMC research has focused on optimal application of technologies beyond how the technology is formally situated. As with all new technologies, users will leverage what is most efficient for their needs and leave what doesn't work for a better solution. Learner attrition in online courses is often attributed to aspects of CMC, such as difficulty navigating the new technology and feelings of being outsiders (Swan & Shih, 2005; Wegerif, 1998). The future success of computer-mediated communication for transformative learning purposes will holistically leverage new technologies in order to maximize the transformative outcomes of learning. When transformation is considered as a key outcome, technology can then be considered as a tool for fostering transformation beyond offering an alternative learning environment. This mindset regarding technology and CMC is important to a discussion about deep listening as a pedagogy in e-learning because it orients instructional designers in the goal and outcome of learning as transformation before considering the channel or technology of the experience.

Into A Pedagogy of Deep Listening

Pedagogy is the "art, science, or profession of teaching" (Merriam-Webster, 2013). I present here the idea of a pedagogy of deep listening as the art of teaching using the process of listening deeply to one's internal and external environments, listening deeply to a student or a group of students, and nurturing a generative co-creative space for students to process experiences, deepen their knowledge of what is known and unknown, and attend to disorienting perspectives that all lead to transformative learning. Higher education researchers Murphy and Brown (2012) believe it is an appropriate time to explore alternatives to a narrow understanding

of relationships in education by emphasizing the intersubjective nature of learning and teaching (p. 643). They explained the complex context within which teachers face challenges in implementing a new pedagogy for higher education:

> The construction of the subject (student teachers) takes place against a background of tensions between…personal care…and the desire for a conforming, controllable other squeezes out opportunities to think critically about one's development or to prepare professionally for a role that calls for caring attitudes and approaches and rich personal relationships (Murphy & Brown, p. 645).

Deep listening as a way of teaching considers three key perspectives: teacher as deep listener, student as deep listener, and the teacher-student relational field. Most of the research on deep listening in education is embedded in mindfulness studies, contemplative inquiry, generative dialogue, and the quality of teacher presence. Most definitions of deep listening within the context of education touch on attentiveness, perceptions, and consciousness itself (Barbezat & Pingree, 2012; Dewey, 1938; Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006; Zajonc, 2006). Deep listening meets the challenge of teachers being "deeply focused on the relationship of the student to what she or he is learning, as well as the interrelatedness of personal relationships to the rest of the world" (Barbezat & Pingree, p. 179). Subtle listening, listening to what is not said, listening for resonance, listening intuitively, and listening for deeper understanding are valued and discussed in literature that explores transformative learning experiences.

The exploration of deep listening as a pedagogy in e-learning invites questions about traditional views of epistemology, ontology, and pedagogy because it brings to the forefront an embodied way of teaching and learning that often goes unconsidered in the teaching conversation, and even more often in the online teaching conversation. In addition, research on tacit knowledge, somatic learning, and enaction reveal the use deep listening as a tool for fostering these experiences through contemplative studies, mindfulness, focusing, and generative dialogue. Consider the parallels with deep listening and somatic knowing defined as "an experiential knowing that involves sense, precept, and mind/body action and reaction—a knowing, feeling, and acting that includes more of the broad range of human experience" (Matthews, 1998, p. 236). The overlap in somatic learning and deep listening involves whole-person learning or experiencing, the embodied connection including senses, movement, and emotion that "often result in a feeling of connectedness, which touches on the spiritual realm" (Amann, 2003, p. 9). Central descriptors in the literature that discuss deep listening in education include trust, empathy, authenticity, intersubjectivity, and reciprocity (Amann, 2003; Barbezat & Pingree, 2012; Matthews, 1998; Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006; Zajonc, 2006). In this section, I explore deep listening as a pedagogy in e-learning with a specific focus on contemplative studies and generative dialogue within the context of online discussions.

Deep Listening: Internal World

A practice of deep listening begins with a practice of listening deeply inwardly to one's thoughts, feelings, and senses. This inward listening requires mindful reflection, an ability to silence the noise of the outside, external world. Through practices such as meditation, mindful focusing, silent nature walks, and "listening to listening itself" (Oliveros, 2005), an individual tunes in and brings focused awareness to one's internal world. Thich Nhat Hanh (1993) said,

"First you have to look deeply into the nature of your anger, despair, and suffering to free yourself, so you can be available to others" (p. 2). Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) "hold that reflective teaching cannot be reduced to a series of behaviors or skills, but is a practice that demands presence. As such, it involves self-knowledge…" (p. 266). Self-knowledge, introspection, and mindful awareness are not explicitly taught in teacher-education programs (Murphy & Brown, 2012; Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006; Zajonc, 2006). It is through reflection that one can become aware of "his relation to the surroundings, his manner of conducting himself with respect to things and other human beings, the changing perspectives through which the world presents itself to him" (Maxine Greene, 1973, p. 162, as cited by Rodgers and Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 269).

Contemplative learning theorist Arthur Zajonc (2006) promotes a contemplative and transformative pedagogy for educators, advancing the view "of the human being in which the individual develops the capacity to move among worldviews, transcending particular identities while simultaneously honoring each of them" (p. 1). He wrote:

> In reality, the interconnectedness of the world has its reflection in the connections among the diverse aspects of ourselves. When we find peace among the component parts of our own psyche, then we will possess the inner resources to make peace in a multicultural society (Zajonc, p. 1).

Zajonc believes that a contemplative practice can be one of the most powerful transformative interventions available. He said, "Contemplative practice works on the human psyche to shape attention into a far suppler instrument, one that can appreciate a wide range of worldviews and even sustain the paradoxes of life, ultimately drawing life's complexity into a gentle, non-judgmental awareness" (Zajonc, p. 2). Buddhist mindfulness, similarly, invites one to pay attention to the present moment with full awareness and concentration (Nhat Hahn, 1993).

Zajonc's contemplative pedagogy benefits students and educators by increasing their capacities for discomfort with the unknown, considering complex and conflicting perspectives, and challenging assumptions, which all foster transformative learning experiences. The ability to foster transformative experiences begins with one's own cultivation of a personal capacity for transformation. What Zajonc (2006) proposes as a contemplative pedagogy falls into two categories: "those that school cognition and those that cultivate compassion" (p. 3). He asked, "In a world beset with conflicts, internal as well as external, isn't it of equal if not greater importance to balance the sharpening of our intellects with the systematic cultivation of our hearts?" (Zajonc, p. 3). He advocates for a contemplative education that translates into outer capacities for peace-building, "the perception of interconnectedness and the enduring love for others, especially for those different from us" (Zajonc, p. 3).

Inner deep listening is a practice within a contemplative practice; it is the inner-listening to the silence, noise, and deeper presence that opens the universal door of compassion as defined by Avalokitesvara (Nhat Hanh, 1993). A pedagogy of deep listening requires a contemplative, mindful practice in order to foster a contemplative learning environment for students. The goal of a personal practice of inner deep listening for teachers and educators is to develop and expand one's individual capacity in order to "provide an environment that is inclusive of the increasing diversity" and "to create the opportunity for our students to engage with material so that they recognize and apply its relevance to their own lives, deeply feeling and experiencing themselves within their education" (Barbezat & Pingree, 2012).

In an e-learning setting, deep listening has the potential to be easily dismissed due to the virtual relationship with other participants. By emphasizing a personal practice of meditation, mindfulness, or contemplation, teachers have an opportunity to bring to the foreground of their own awareness the importance of being fully present to students, what Dewey (1933) described as giving "full time and attention to observation and interpretation of the pupils' intellectual reactions. [She] must be alive to all forms of bodily expression of mental condition---as well as sensitive to the meaning of all expression in words" (p. 275, as cited by Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 268). This practice of inner deep listening is an invitation for the teacher to empty her or his mind and stay open to what is. "And because of this radical self-openness, they can also face and accept others…Thus emptiness is the standpoint not merely for profound intellectual penetration of reality, but also for compassion and unconditional love" (Leonard Waks, 1995, p. 94-95, as cited by Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 269). Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) emphasize the importance of a connection to oneself as a teacher as a key aspect of being able to connect with students and their learning, saying, "the health of that connection [to students] is nurtured or jeopardized by the teacher's relationship to herself" (p. 271).

The practice of deep listening to self as educator brings forward a new way of teaching. This embodied self-awareness invites a suspension of one's personal beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and truths for the purpose of allowing creative, generative, imaginal perspectives, truths and attitudes to emerge collaboratively (Amann, 2003; Barbezat & Pingree, 2012; Bohm, 1996; Cook & Brown; Oliveros, 2005; Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006; Zajonc, 2006). The physical or virtual learning environment is irrelevant to the need for deep listening as a pedagogy. While the location may change the practice slightly, the nature of deep listening to self in order to listen deeply to others is a personal practice that resides wherever one is. A practice of deep listening requires teachers to be active learners in the e-learning environments that make up their virtual classroom spaces; participating in the ever-evolving, co-constructed, transformational meaning-making through the ongoing process of deep listening.

Deep Listening: External World

The practice of deep listening to others and the world around us cannot be separated from introspective listening. Instead, deep listening is the practice of holding the tensions created by contrasting voices and experiences of self and other, self and world, and self, other, and world. It is a whole-person invitation to listen to everything and nothing, embodying the known and the unknown, into a focused present moment where time and space are temporarily suspended as understanding is co-created in an experiential exchange. The application of deep listening in a shared physical space involves a felt sense, subtle or not-so-subtle, of the environment and other individuals. In an e-learning environment, there are both the virtual space and the physical space to consider. As teacher and student, human beings are always physically located somewhere, often in their respective home offices as they interact within the computer-mediated technology of e-learning platforms. The aesthetics and interpersonal dynamics within a physical space is a familiar concept and well researched as it relates to learning environments. Yet the subtle felt-sense of listening in the physical spaces is often only considered on a surface level of understanding. The virtual space, however, requires nuances that are less common and invite an opportunity to explore for deeper understanding because these spaces are not as often considered as fully-understood environments. The most tangible aspects of a virtual environment are the aesthetics of an e-learning environment, which include aspects such as the user interface, text-

based conversation threads, and conference-line noise and interference. The most common e-learning interactions for teachers and students reside within text-based forums, often referred to as learning communities, communities of practice, or discussion rooms. It is within these text-based dialogues that a further discussion of deep listening is situated. These intersubjective virtual environments invite deeper exploration into the imaginal aspect of teaching and learning. In this final section, I will explore a pedagogy of deep listening within the context of generative text-based learning conversations.

Scientist David Bohm (1996) introduced an approach to dialogue focusing on the process of conversation. In his process, referred to as Bohmian dialogue, "a free flow of meaning among and through a group of people" is fostered as participants agree to suspend judgment, share authentically and as honestly as possible, make no decisions, and build on others' ideas in the conversation (p. 1). Bohm's process emphasizes the collective intelligence of learning in communities. Griffor (1989) explained Bohm's dialogue process as "something different form an ordinary conversation or discussion where people argue from their fixed positions" (p. 26). Instead, Bohmian dialogue leads "beyond the meanings which constitute the participants' collective idiosyncrasy" (Griffor, 1989, p. 26). Bohm believes that the whole field of thought includes experiences, knowledge, and tacit thought that individuals participate in to create what can be collectively known, and that the act of knowing is a constant process.

Parker Palmer (2004) advocated for a very similar process of dialogue which he calls "circle of trust." While Palmer's approach is aligned with Bohm, his application is focused on personal insight and development, whereas Bohm advocated for no agenda within the dialogue. Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, and Flowers (2004) share Bohm's interest in the process of conversation and add a focus on organizations. Senge et al. wrote about a theory for fostering learning organizations, a theory to "distinguish different depths of perceiving reality and different levels of action that follow from that" (p. 87). Their process, called "Theory U" uses sensing, presencing, and realizing. It is explained as, "'Observe, observe, observe'—become one with the world; 'retreat and reflect'—allow the inner knowing to emerge; 'act swiftly, with a natural flow'" (Senge et al., p. 87). Within the description of presence, they wrote, "we began to appreciate presence as deep listening, of being open beyond one's preconceptions and historical ways of making sense" (Senge et al., p. 13). Senge et al. explained that presencing is about "consciously participating in a larger field for change" and when individuals practice deep listening, "the forces shaping a situation can move from re-creating the past to manifesting or realizing an emerging future" (p. 14). Finally, Kwame Appiah's (2006) cosmopolitanism is about promoting intelligence and curiosity in conversations amongst diverse cultures, which invites yet another perspective to dialogue. Appiah (2006) described conversation as an "engagement with the experience and the ideas of others" (p. 85).

These ideas of generative dialogue from Bohm (1996), Palmer (2004), Senge et al. (2004), and Appiah (2006) are discussed within the context of in-person interactions, but the concepts can be applied to computer-mediated communication. The fields of narrative research, hermeneutics, and social presence research provide ample evidence of generative, creative, and transformative text-based conversations and the issues and challenges that online discourse present. For example, social presence, "a student's sense of being and belonging in a course" (Piccianno, as cited in Swan & Shih, 2005, p. 117), is cited as a key indicator for the success of an online course. Tu identified three dimensions of course designs which influenced social presence—social context, online communication, and interactivity (Swan & Shih, 2005, p. 177). In addition, research on instructor presence has also been connected to the development of online

discussions. Within this context, the role of teacher as deep listener and active participant in fostering online dialogue is considered as a way of teaching.

In this section, I propose a correlation between deep listening and narrative analysis as a tool for teachers to enact deep listening as a pedagogy in online learning environments. Riessman (2008) described narrative analysis as "a diverse set of methods, a 'family' of interpretive approaches to spoken, written, and visual texts" (p. 183). She identified two practical issues in narrative analysis: validity and "ways to support a community for support and constructive criticism" (Riessman, 2008, p. 184). By applying the issue of validity of analysis to online dialogue, a teacher is invited to question his or her situated truths, or personal perspectives. In this process, the teacher returns to the practice of suspending judgment, listening deeply for what is expressed and left unsaid, and welcoming curiosity and creativity into his or her response. Consider also the parallels of deep listening with Wolcott's (1994) approach to interpreting qualitative analysis: "The goal is to make sense of what goes on, to reach out for understanding or explanation beyond the limits of what can be explained with the degree of certainty usually associated with analysis" (p. 10-11). As a way to approach analysis, he suggests looking for patterned regularities, contextualizing in a broader analytic framework, and asking "What can be learned from this experience?" (p. 35). He said, "The first place to look in this self-appraisal is for patterned regularities (or systematic neglect) in your own ways of observing and managing data that may have precluded the possibility of identifying important elements." (Wolcott, 1994, p. 35). Bentz and Shapiro (1998) said that hermeneutics makes "the interpretation of texts and contexts, central to awareness, and it thematizes the process of the flow of interaction between interpreter and text or event" (p. 42). Hermeneutics, "through presence and intention, allow for a release of new meaning to occur" (Bentz & Shapiro, p. 50).

The purpose deep listening is to nurture generative dialogue that opens new doors of learning co-constructively. Therefore, educators as facilitators of generative dialogue let go of establishing fixed truths and becomes a co-learner in the process of deepening the learning experience through dialogue. Students will not participate if they do not trust teachers to honor their contributions, or if they do not feel genuinely invited into conversation. Teachers must move from traditional roles of power as expert and enter the conversation with a beginner's mind. It is not an easy task to become a learner when society expects one to behave as a traditional expert. It involves a self-transcendence as well as a social process to induce change (Sztompka, 1993). The somewhat hidden assumption about the role of learner is the vulnerability in owning the ignorance in this role (Bateson, 1994, p. 71). Teachers must trust their students to respect and honor this new distributed power equilibrium. In a culture of education that has often coerced student participation and limited students' voices, teachers need new tools, new understanding, and new experiences and role models to succeed in an integrated culture.

What emerges from a creative inquiry and co-constructed expression of what is understood through the lenses of participants working together in dialogue to generate new knowledge is the shared intelligence within the learning community. In order to enact deep listening in this manner, the educator must also be free from personal preoccupations (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, p. 281). Within this state of open awareness and nonjudgment, individuals enter into a liminal space that fosters deeper learning. This liminal space is embodied, experienced as a whole-person learner and teacher, as discussed earlier in this paper. The relational field between teacher and student represents this liminal space, a threshold of meeting, co-constructing, and transcending old paradigms. In order to foster such transformational spaces, teachers must practice deep listening, master the process of holding this space of deep listening to other and world in online

dialogue, while simultaneously listening to internal cues and intuitive nudges that invite inspired action in the form of inspired responses. Deep listening is known tacitly, and therefore requires a learning approach that bridges epistemologies of possession and practice.

Conclusion

A pedagogy of deep listening challenges the commonly accepted paradigm of transmissive, controlled knowledge and invites educationalists to foster embodied, relational, creative knowledge co-construction in a time of complexity and uncertainty. This paper questions whether deep listening can begin to breath new life into a stagnant way of knowing; whether it can empower teachers to rethink the possibilities for learning environments and deepening individuals' understandings of how learning and knowledge is constructed. A pedagogy of deep listening in e-learning was explored through the frame of epistemologies of embodiment, complexity theory and transdisciplinarity, transformative learning theory, computer-mediated communication, and intersubjectivity. I proposed a pedagogy of deep listening through the fostering of online contemplation and generative dialogue. This topic of deep listening can be further explored by asking, "What are the possibilities for imaginal, creative way of knowing in 21st century e-learning?" Online education and the technology that is involved with it certainly offer opportunities to rethink the way we teach and learn and challenge social norms for teaching and learning. By inviting a practice of deep listening into the role of teaching, an opportunity to deepen relationships, experiences, and understanding of self, other, and world emerges.

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