

A Study on the Process of Continuous Transformative learning in Global Service-Learning

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1. Introduction

For more than a decade, service-learning educators have been voicing their concerns about the need to develop a more systematic and rigorous research process and agenda to better understand, improve, and substantiate the theory, practice, and value of service-learning in higher education (Billig & Eyler, 2003; Giles, Honnet, & Migliore, 1991; Furco, 2000; Furco & Billig, 2002; Howard, Gelmon, & Giles, 2000; Welch & Billig, 2004). Recent increases in volume and attention to rigor in research have led some educators to conclude that the service-learning field is at a “methodological crossroads” (Ziegert & McGoldrick, 2004).

With regard to the theoretical background of S-L, Kolb’s model and Dewey’s experiential learning have been largely accepted (Moore, 2000). However, a number of experiential learning theorists have questioned the dominance of constructivist, reflective experiential learning traditions (Fenwick, 2000, 2003; Heron, 1992; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Michelson, 1996; Yorks & Kasl, 2002; Wilson, 1993). They offer other explanatory frameworks for understanding the nature of the relationship between learning and experience that go beyond constructivist approaches that rely on reflection (Fenwick, 2003). Kolb’s model has been critiqued for not providing enough detail on the social and contextual aspects of experiential knowing (Fenwick, 2003; Jarvis, 1987; Wilson, 1993).

Kiely (2004), Eyler & Giles (1999) and Feinstein (2004) found that Mezirow's model is useful for explaining the transformative impact of service-learning on students' personal, civic, moral, and intellectual learning and development (Kiely, 2005).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the process of transformative learning in Global Service-Learning (G S-L) and figure out how to enhance the students' continuous transformative learning. Also we will find out which factors are needed in order to maintain their transformative learning.

Therefore, the study is guided by three main research questions;

1. Through G S-L, how do the undergraduate students develop their transformative learning?
2. To continue their learning, what do the universities need to do?

2. Theoretical framework/literature review

Transformative Learning

Transformative learning theory is an approach to adult learning that contrasts its potentially transformative nature with the formative, socializing and acculturating process of learning. Mezirow (1991, 2000) describes how transformative learning may lead adults to experience 'perspective transformation', a shifting of their 'world-view'.

Service-Learning and Transformative Learning

With his idea, Eyler & Giles (1999), Kiely (2004), and Feinstein (2004) found that Mezirow's model is useful for explaining the transformative impact of service-learning on students' personal, civic, moral, and intellectual learning and development (Kiely, 2005).

Kiely (2005) presented a 'transformative learning model' for service-learning. He found five categories that describe how students experienced transformational learning in service-learning: contextual border crossing, dissonance, personalizing, processing, and connecting

Bamber & Hankin (2011) explore student learning within a local service-learning context, and found that actual transformative learning occurred within a local context. Challenges to

stereotypes and personal values and other previously accepted presuppositions, in a domestic context, are similar from those experienced by students involved in G S-L.

3. Methods

Participants

This study explores the process of transformative learning of students who conducted GS-L outreach projects in Mongolia. For two weeks in the summer of 2018, nine students carried out the service-learning activities.

Table 1.18-Summer G S-L Participants

Name	Major	Year	Role
Min	Industrial design	4	Team Leader
Sky	Korean language and literature	3	Assistant Team Leader
Dahye	Chemistry	4	Report Documentation
Jinkyong	Children education	2	Education
Huikyong	Educational phycology	2	Education Design
Woo	Korean language and literature	3	Time keeper
Rim	Mathematics	4	Accounting
Yerin	English linguistics and literature	1	Material management
Sebin	Fashion industry design	1	Photo Documentation

The students were selected through interview among those who had applied for this program, and they get a financial support and one-credit from the university. The researchers interviewed these students about their attitude, expectation, motivation, and so on. The years of these students are varied from freshmen to senior, and also their majors are also various such as science, mathematics, fashion, education, language, design and so on. These different kinds of students get together as a team and went to Mongolia in the summer of 2018

Since this program is required to be professional for the international volunteer work, SWU Global Service-Learning(GS-L) program has cooperated with Asian Friends(AF), which is a non-government organization specialized in an international volunteer work in Korea.

Data Collection

The data set of the study includes a collection of surveys, follow-up discussions and reflective journals. **Table 2** demonstrates the overview of the procedures for the data collection.

Table 2. Procedures of the Data collection

Pre-education	During G S-L Activity in Mongolia	Post-meeting	After one-year
*Survey	*Daily reflective journals	*Survey	
*Six reflective journals	*Follow-up discussion	*Final reflective journals *Presentation	*Interview
*Follow-up discussion			

Before going to Mongolia, we have provided orientation and six times of previous educations for the activity. The contents of these education are about the concepts of Service-Learning, global issue, diversity, global citizenship, simulation and the like. Also each team gets together after the education to get to know each other. It was an obligation to participate in the prior educations, and every student has to write down the reflection journals and discuss with the team members. During the G S-L activity, SWU students and the supervisor are sent to Mongolia and implement G S-L activities that they have prepared when they had a prior education. At this time, the students have to write daily journal and get together every night to reflect themselves and share their stories.

After coming back from Mongolia, the students gave a presentation to assess their activities. They discuss and share their experiences with everyone, and wrote down their final reflective journals.

Finally, after one year, the researcher gathered the nine students and conducted an interview with them.

Data Analysis

An analysis of students reflective journals were used to investigate the process of transformative learning of these students using the six areas identified by Kiely (2004).

Table 3. Transformation Form

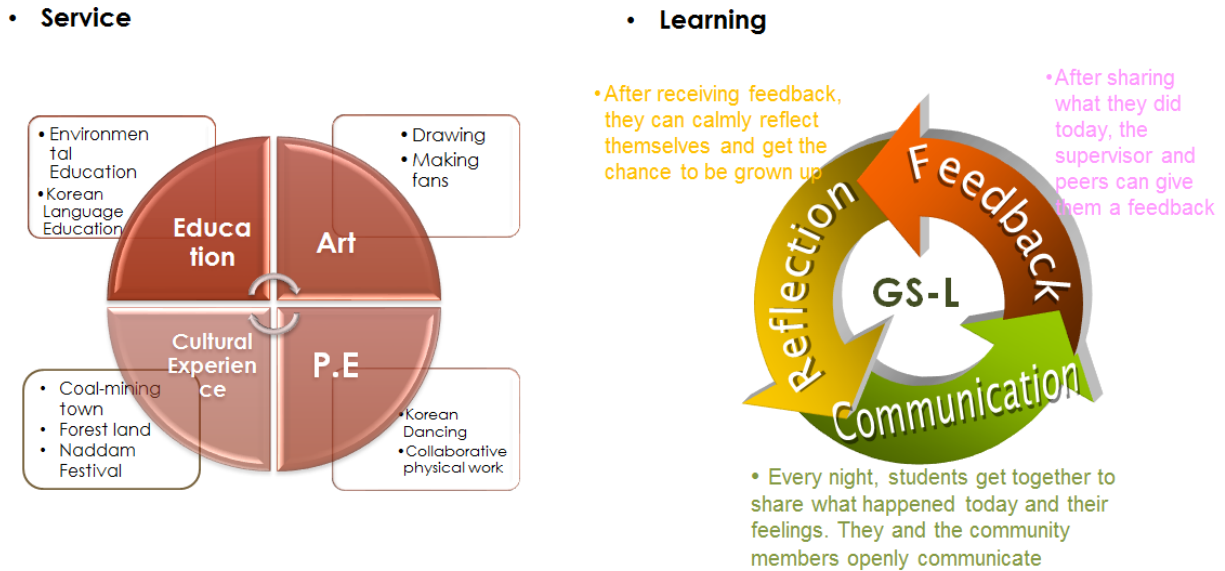
Transforming form	Meaning of Transformation
Political	Expanded sense of social responsibility and citizenship that is both local and global
Moral	Develop relationships based on mutual respect, care and sense of solidarity
Intellectual	Question assumptions re: origins, nature and solutions to problems
Cultural	Rethink dominant cultural and social values, norms and rituals
Personal	Rethink previous self-concept, lifestyle, relationships and career
Spiritual	A movement towards deeper un(conscious) understanding of self, purpose, society and greater good

According to these six transforming forms, six reflective journals in prior education and daily reflective journals in Mongolia were analyzed in order to understand their short-term changes. The elements of transformative learning will be also found from the follow-up discussions, and enable them to continue their learning. An analysis of in-depth interviews (voice recording included) with these students one year after the GS-L projects reveals both their personal and social changes in transformative learning.

4. Results and Discussion

This study has confirmed that each student went through the transformative learning from Global Service-Learning program. Nine students implement G S-L activities in Mongolia, and the activities are Figure 1 as below.

Figure1 . G S-L Activities



Students mainly did educational activities, art work, physical education and had some cultural experiences. With these activities, our students actually gave their knowledge and love to the children based on what they've learned in school.

Also, in learning aspects, every night, the students and teacher got together to share what they did and how they felt. After communicating each other, the teacher and peers openly give a feedback. It would be a good chance to be grown up and change themselves because students deeply reflect themselves during communicating and exchanging feedbacks. Therefore, the learning occurs. The finding through G S-L activities is that the students actually are having a wider perspective on the diverse world. As a Korean, they compare to Korean culture and learn the other cultures. During this activity, the students think and reflect themselves in every moment.

Table 4. Transformation patterns

Prior Education	During and Right after G S-L	One year after G S-L
Reflective Journal	Daily Journals Final Journals	Interview
Intellectual	Political	Intellectual
Cultural	Moral	Cultural
	Intellectual	Personal
	Cultural	Spiritual

Overall, the students successfully learned every areas of transforming form in which these nine students’ perspectives and view of the world were disrupted.

Shor-term Changes

During the prior education and in Mongolia, the students were getting changed their prior knowledge and learned the new knowledge.

Intellectual and cultural aspects of transformative form are strengthened through the prior education, and then these transformations continued during and right after G S-L. The other areas, political, moral, personal and spiritual are strengthened by G S-L activities in Mongolia cooperating with their peers and the local people.

According to their journals during the prior workshops and G S-L activities, they wrote a daily journal, and the researchers transcribed the passaged .

- 1) Intellectual

G S-L is effective to strengthen the intellectual transformation because the students can deeply reflect their future dreams according to the global leadership. In the first workshop, many students had a chance to think of their futures related to various global issues, to get motivation to study more and to decide to study hard for their meaningful future.

“I am not sure what can I do for living in the future. Today, Prof.Ryu taught us that we consistently throw the question to ourselves in order to train myself and arouse our future inside the global society. Aside from the reality, I will keep watching myself and get the confidence and knowledge suitable for this society.”

In the third prior education, the expert in Asian Friends came to educate the students and explained about the global issues.

“My dream is to work at United Nation(UN). Through this education, we newly knew the knowledge about Millennium Development Goals(MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs). I studied deeply about these issues about international cooperation and development. Thanks to the international aid, Korea has been developed, thus I study hard and firmly decided to help the developing countries.”

2) Cultural

In the 4th prior education, the students got educated about the cultural diversity. Since the Korean society is a homogenous ethnicity, it is necessary to educate the diversity. Also, Korea is divided into South and North, so South Korea is kind of isolated island. Especially, Japanese colonization tended to highly strengthen the belief that Koreans are unified. During that time, Koreans were forbidden to speak our own language and forbidden to learn our own history. So, Koreans struggled to learn the origin of Korea and be cohesive to be independent from others.

For this reason, Korean society focused on how we stick together, distinguishing Koreans from others. This tendency requires us increasingly to educate Korean students about these diverse

cultures, other languages, life styles, and ways of thinking in this global village. Therefore G S-L will be very good method in this society

“Today, I learned the cultural diversity. Prof. Lee taught us that the origin of the culture is from ‘cultivate’. I learned that we need to cultivate our attitude toward the diversity. Just understanding is not enough! I will face the difference in Mongolia and experience the diversity.

Also the professor taught that when we say ‘they are too dirty’, then they also can say ‘we are the neat freak’. Culture is not about right and wrong thing. Because the culture is relative, we have to accept the differences.”

“I think G S-L is very good educational method, because I could face the difference culture which is different from Korea and it is a good opportunity to deeply think about the global issue that I haven’t thought of.”

“When we went to Ulaanbaatar, one of the teammate shouted that ‘there is a Starbucks’. When we thought of Mongolia, there is a stereotype that there is nothing but grassland. I think Mongolian culture is very diverse from the tradition to modern one. If we did not have a experience in the capital city, I should be back to Korea with the thought that Mongolia only has a grassland, horse, Ger and very cold weather. To understand the culture in one country, we need to experience in the diverse situation.

Thanks to G S-L, the students could get the wider perspective towards the Mongolian culture.

3) Political

Since Mongolia is a Socialist state unlike Korea, the students expected to see an exotic atmosphere. However, the itinerary for G S-L is limited, because the students always go to the daycare center and meet the same children. However, there was few case to feel the Mongolian atmosphere.

I could not feel that Mongolia is a socialist state because we always meet the children at the daycare center. But today, one of the students has broken his arm. He did not go to the hospital and come to the daycare center to meet us. I was so worried because I thought he couldn't afford to pay the medical expenses. But the teacher in Mongolia said the hospital expense is free in Mongolia, and he just wanted to see us.

Free medical expenses? I cannot imagine the basic supplies and the welfare costs are free.

I could see the children were working at the Nadamm festival. At that time, I have thought of the child labor, so I asked the teacher in Mongolia that there is any law to protect the child labor exploitation. She said actually there is, but in the busy season like a festival, they use the children labor inevitably. There was a chance to think of the law of child labor.

4) Moral

Through G S-L activity in Mongolia, the students could think of global issues. Especially the environmental issue was the keyword for every student.

“In developed countries including Korea, we cut down trees and mountains to construct buildings. Also, in developing countries like Mongolia, they are making air pollution and noise since the motor cycle is the main transportation method. I feel bad that these things are happening in the global village.”

“When we go to desert to plant and water the trees, I thought the desertification was not my business, but it happens in my neighborhood. I have to think to protect the environment in my daily life.”

Every student felt that we have destroyed the environment, so we need to do something back in Korea starting from small things like using of tumbler or recycling.

5) Personal

When the students did the activity and interacted with others, they reflect themselves from the peers. Since they are too busy to study and prepare for getting a job in Korea, they did not have time to think of themselves. However, G S-L could give them think of themselves taking a step backward.

“I rode a horse today, which makes me think of my duplicity toward animal. Because I raise a dog, I am very sensitive for the animal protection or welfare. Before I ride a horse and camel today, I thought these animals are used for the human’s pleasure and convenience. When I rode a horse, it was so much fun. I was so confused that I have such duplicity between my pleasure and the animal protection. Maybe I also apply a double standard to everything that I haven’t had an experience.”

“In the first day in Mongolia, I tried Mongolian milk which does not suit my taste. At that time, I spitted out words to friends that “this milk tasted really awful”. After the word, nobody tried the milk and said ‘yes! It tastes not good’. Some of friend could think the milk taste good, but because of my negative word, even those friends deprive of the chance to have the milk.

I thought that when I say the negative or pessimistic words, I need to be very careful because the word is powerful that impact others.”

6) Spiritual

After the activities, the students and the teacher got together, and had a reflection meeting. At that time, they could see themselves that they did not even know about themselves.

I really like the reflection meeting because my friend and the teacher can observe and say about me and the thing that I did not even know about myself. Today, the toilet bowl was clogged, so it was very dirty in the bathroom. I just poured the

water into the toilet, and cleaned the bathroom. I am just doing what I am doing, but someone said that is so helpful and meaningful. I did not even know I was doing good or meaningful. This reflection meeting was a great time to share my story and chance to reflect myself and ourselves.

In the reflective meeting today, we talked about happiness. One of the kids in the daycare center said that her happiness is to feed the pigeons. She feels happiness with very tiny things, which makes me reflect myself. I am not the person who cannot be easily satisfied, and am ambitious. The question that 'are you happy?' makes me hesitate to answer. I reflect myself that I am very thankful about what I already have, and have many things to feel happy.

Transformation

One year later, the researchers interviewed the nine students. Unlike the short-term changes, there is no transfer the learning of learning in some areas; political and moral transformation.

1) Intellectual

One year later, the students still try to have profession because of what they had experienced in Mongolia. G S-L makes them to motivate to study hard for them and the world.

“Even though my major is English linguistics and literature, I was afraid of communicating with foreigners. But thanks to G S-L, I realized that I have to study English hard not for a good test score, but for communicating with diverse people. It was also impressed that the Mongolian teacher who translates for us speaks Korean so well, which motivates me to study foreign language so hard. She looked so cool, so gave me a powerful motivation when my will is weakened.

Now, I actually overcome to communicate with people from the diverse world, and have a lot of foreign friends”.

“For the kids I met in Mongolia, most of their dream is to go to college. It was very impressive and I still remember. What we take it for granted is something special for them. I was so ashamed that I always complained about my situation and deeply thought of my future dreams, so I decided to be a math teacher.”

2) Cultural

Thanks to G S-L, the students who are afraid of facing new culture could overcome the fear to do something new. Because of the good memory to try a new thing in Mongolia, it makes them to do something new in the different culture.

I was not the person who is willing to try new things. But G S-L in Mongolia makes me try in the new situation. I remember I went to Ger to eat Mongolian traditional food, Heoreheok. I did not want to try this new food, but my teammates tried and enjoyed the new food. So I tried, and it was so delicious. From that moment, I try a variety of food from various countries. G S-L makes me open the diverse culture to break the stereotype (that I haven't had an experience).

3) Personal

The students changed their behaviors because of G S-L activity in Mongolia. Because there are many students who had a good habit, the other students could see and learned the habit. Even one year later, some students continue and change their behaviors.

“Our big sister ‘Rim’ always shows a good example for me. I remember her doing well even though nobody saw or recognized her. In Mongolia, she always cleaned the dirty things and the bathroom after taking shower.

I usually do the good thing to receive compliments. But after interacting with her, she became my role model, so I still try to do good thing even if no one recognizes me. That makes me so proud of myself.”

“Now I always give something to drink to the person who comes to my house to fix home appliances. I haven’t thought of giving something to helper, but GS-L experience makes me considerable person.

In Mongolia, because the toilet bowl was clogged in our B&B, we went through hard time. Finally the savior came to the house to fix. We were very thankful, but we could not express our gratitude because we cannot speak Mongolian. But Sebin gave him an orange juice and express her gratitude. After realizing I can express my gratitude in many ways, I am doing with small things because of this small incident.”

4) Spiritual

‘Reflection’ is a keyword in G S-L that had students to write daily journals every day in Mongolia. At that time, the students complained to write the daily journals because it is annoying. However, the students still have a habit to think and reflect them and write a diary every day because they knew the reflection is very meaningful for them to develop themselves.

Still, I have a habit of writing a journal every night in the diary thanks to the habit of GS-L activity. If I am so busy and don’t have time to write the diary, I just stop doing and thinking of myself. It is great to have this kind of habit in my life, which make my life enrich.

In the parts of political and moral one, there is no transformation. There would be many reasons that those areas of learning are not continued.

“I think the main goal of Korean undergraduate students is to get the job in a big company. Therefore, we are so busy to satisfy the company’s needs, such as TOEL score, computer skills, grade and the like. I have actually thought of these social issues and kept in mind that we have to do something, but Korean society makes me busy”

As she said, unless the company needs the students to participate the social issues, it is hard to continue to do something for solving the social problems. Therefore, the universities need to do something for this issue.

Requirement to maintain their transformative learning

The students could not continue their learning about the areas of social participation; political and moral, because of their situations as a university student.

For this matter, there are some reasons that the students mentioned in the interview.

First, the financial and administrative supports from universities are also necessary to maintain their changes in transformative learning. The reason for the negative transfer in the political and moral transformation was that the students are too busy to get a job. Therefore, the university needs to give them an incentive for the follow-up activities. They consistently meet and naturally talk about the activities in Mongolia, and then there would be very good chance to recall what they did in Mongolia.

“We had a follow-up activity with the members in Mongolia. Because we felt that the communication is very important, we met once in a week and studied English. But we stopped to meet because there is no place to meet to study. It would be great that the school provide us a space to meet”

Second, the university should provide a mentoring service for the subsequent members of G S-L. The students are willing to serve subsequent global service learners with their experience and supports from universities. This systematic support is helpful for them to reflect on what they have already learned and changed in past and to be encouraged to keep transformative learning.

Third, the itinerary for G S-L is limited, because the students always go to the daycare center and meet the same children. There is no chance to face Mongolian political issue or local issues. Therefore the university needs to extend the activities with the real local people in G S-L sites.

5. Conclusions and contributions to theory and practice

This study draws on the transformative learning in Global Service-Learning. If this is an important methodological turn in the history of the service-learning movement, it is important to reflect on where we are and where we'd like to go (Kiely, 2005)

G S-L is very effective learning method that this current learning turns out to be a lifelong learning in students' whole life. However the further study is necessary since the number of respondents is small and they are all female. As more universities in Korea are adopting S-L as an effective educational method to achieve their educational purposes, research on S-L with more various participants including male students will be possible. The follow-up study on S-L students who continue to put S-L into practice in their lives is needed to call forth greater interests among overall educational institutes.

Keywords: Global Service-Learning, Transformative Learning, Continuous Learning

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