

Adaptive Teaching for Transformation: Substance Delivery of a Doctoral Literature Review Course for International HRD Students in Thailand

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Abstract. *Service providers on international doctoral programs aim to transform clients' mental models through delivering new knowledge and intellectual skills in ways adapted to clients' cultural and intellectual legacy. This paper describes tensions and dilemmas experienced in delivering an 'authentic' course on the literature review in Thailand in 2007-8. It analyses the substance of teaching as a professional service, course delivery and criterion-referenced effects in a specific context. It describes challenges faced by 'embedded' international teaching staff.*

Key words: service substance, transformational learning, adaptive teaching, international doctoral programs

English language international PhD programs are represented as 'global' qualifications that develop sustainable 'modern' ways of thinking. In developing countries, however, quality assurance may be weak. Open door policies admit solvent students with diverse intellectual and cultural legacy, and often weak English. Program delivery is by 'teams' of local and international staff with perhaps different conceptions of doctoral study. Resulting tensions may find expression in mutual veiled criticisms, by students and staff, of instructional practices and standards. Western academics, 'embedded' in otherwise welcoming academic environments, face dilemmas in how to respond: 'fight', 'flight' or compromise - and write an academic paper?

Professionals in education are service providers, like lawyers and accountants. Teaching is an 'intangible service' (Shostack 1977). Service 'delivery' is unique reflecting service provider, client(s) and 'substance'. This paper describes delivering a literature review course in a human resource development (HRD) doctoral program in a Thai provincial university in 2007. 'Substance' was learning experiences provided to apprentice researchers that led to a Confucian sense of frustration. Confucius chose 'flight': 'Nor have I anything more to say to those who, after I have made clear

one corner of the subject, cannot deduce the other three' (Wang and King 2006). He refused to teach unwilling learners.

After context and methodology, the literature review summarizes knowledge on important concepts. There follows analysis of the case, commentary and conclusion.

Context

This part-time PhD in HRD comprises four 49-hour 'enabling' courses, qualifying examination, thesis and derived refereed article published in English. The first course for 2006-7 students was taught by a Thai Associate Professor with an international doctorate. Its content was 'advanced' research methods. This second course - Seminar in Human Resources Research (SHRR) - was literature review. Students had no prior formal introduction to HRD.

There were 20 participants (12 women), all Thai except for one male Cambodian, and aged from mid-20s to late-50s with professional backgrounds. Three had international Masters by minor thesis, two from US, one from Australia; others had local Masters, mostly by 'independent study'. English skills ranged from highly competent to quite basic. Around 10 students attended classes consistently between January and April 2007.

I provided a statement of aims, rationale, indicative content, assessment requirements and criteria, set reading and a detailed assignment guideline, a 3,500 word mini-literature review. Each week I summarized issues discussed in a handout. There were individual and paired 'starter' activities, mini-presentations by myself and three doctoral students, round-the-class reading, exercises on specific texts and group discussion. I identified 10 criteria for a literature review. Every student was asked to demonstrate these by power point presentation on their tentative research topic, and in assignment.

Methodology

This paper is an introspective, reflexive, analytical narrative case whose boundary extends from December 2006, when course planning began, to March 2008 when final grades were lodged. Some students attended presentation of an earlier version of this paper (Wilson 2007). Issues were revisited in early 2008 with staff and doctoral students on another Thai international program.

Source documentation includes course report, student data from 'starter' activities, assignments and evaluations. Literature search identified intellectual and cultural factors related to transformation and expertise development through teaching in higher education with relevance to Thailand. 'Services' literature (Wilson 2008, Young 2008) prompted analysis of 'substance' of teaching delivery.

Like all reflexive introspections – 'self-aware analysis of the dynamics between researcher and participants' (Gobo 2008, p. 43) - 'truth' is not represented here, simply a perspective on an inter-cultural teaching/learning context.

Literature review

This literature review discusses: 1. Teaching as service industry; 2. 'Authentic' teaching managed adaptively; 3. Cultural and intellectual legacy related to academic expertise.

1. Teaching as service industry

The services sector, including professional services, expanded from 30% of the US workforce in 1900 to 81% in 2001 (Hoffman and Bateson 2006). Much professional work, including

teaching, involves service relationships. Services are 'products' with 'core', 'generic', 'expected', 'augmented' and 'potential' components (Evans et al. 2003). Their general characteristics are intangibility, inseparability, variability, and perishability. 'Intangibility' means experience through consumption; 'inseparability' consumption on delivery; 'variability' provider variation in manner and quality; and 'perishability' immediate consumption. (Kotler et al. 2002) Key concepts are 'positioning' and 'customization'. Positioning is 'the art of developing and communicating meaningful differences between one's services and those of competitors serving the same market' (Kotler et al., 2002, p. 152). Customization 'develops services that meet each customer's individual needs'. (Hoffman and Bateson 2006) Teachers should customize: 'It is the task of the people development professional to deliver the knowledge and skills agenda in a way that takes full account of the context – the broader legacy that the learner brings with him' (Sloman 2007, pp. 253-4). Inter-cultural teaching should 'indigenize' ideas, theories, thinking processes etc to make them accessible to learners from a different culture (McLean 2006, p. 428). The 'substance' of a service is its essential nature – that which separates one service from another. Six 'dimensions' of professional services are: scope, invasiveness, frequency, duration, effects and outcomes (Wilson 2008).

2. Authentic teaching, doctoral literature review, instructional systems, adaptation and transformation

A teacher becomes 'authentic' through personal and professional transformation that results in 'empowerment' and teaching consistent with beliefs and values (Cranton 2001). Authentic assessment is 'a form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills' (Mueller 2006). Teaching for 'authentic' learning involves showing students 'models of good (and not so good) performance'. Wiggins (1993) maintained that tasks set are 'either replicas of or analogous to the kinds of problems faced by ... professionals in the field'.

An international standard doctoral literature review challenges any student, but especially those with limited English and 'thin' content knowledge.

Miles and Huberman (1994) describe it as: 'An investigative and critical process during which researchers gradually make sense of a social phenomenon by contrasting, comparing, cataloguing and classifying the data reported in accounts of the object of study'. It provides 'a framework for establishing the importance of the study, as well as a benchmark for comparing the results of the study with other findings'. Examiners at Reading University (UK) expect social science literature reviews to demonstrate thorough knowledge of a field, especially its primary sources, and a 'succinct, penetrating, challenging, critical, analytical approach' (Denicolo 2004, pp. 114-116).

Teaching is a form of 'instruction' - a goal directed process which is more or less pre-planned. An instructional system is a 'three-phase process of establishing precise and useful objectives, planning viable routes, and testing them out' (Romiszowski 1981, p. 4). Such systems incorporate 'control' systems. Controllers are teachers, learners or managers. Managers set time limits; learners persist or give up; teachers decide options on objectives, methods, sequence of topics and learning materials, mode and basis of assessment, and how 'pass' or 'fail' performance is defined. Control style may be prescriptive, democratic or adaptive. In adaptive systems - 'cybernetic' - 'decisions of when to get out and when and how to recycle, are taken on the basis of data generated by the instructional system as it operates' (ibid, p. 363).

Western teaching principles appear compatible with needs of Asian students. Evidence from Australia and Hong Kong shows staff/student concurrence on importance of pedagogical principles of use of local real-life examples, active student involvement in undertaking and discussing learning tasks, establishing empathetic relationships, setting high expectations, providing feedback, teaching flexibly and assessing 'authentically' (my highlight) (Kember 2007). Akaraborwom (2006), a Thai, shows how Tao philosophy is compatible with Western practice.

Transformative or reflective learning (Mezirow 1991) explains how adults acquire new ways of thinking. 'Reflection' is 'the process of critically assessing the content, process or premises of our efforts to interpret, and give meaning to an experience' (ibid, p. 104). 'Content' is problem description, 'process' problem solving strategies,

'premise' examining assumptions on which current understanding is based. Unlike instruction for knowledge and skill acquisition, transformation instruction aims to create new meaning schemes that provide different perspectives on experience. The outcome is 'a new and different way of looking at the environment' (Johnson 2008). Transformation theory is supported by limited empirical research in US: the effects of pedagogy, social context, age, conditioning to service roles, deprived social status and gender, on potential for transformation are unknown. Besides this, Wang and King (2006) argue that Confucian humanism, with its emphasis on 'silent reflection' for integrated development of body and mind, and self-actualization, is complementary to Mezirow who believes that stimulating inner mental processes by a 'disorientating dilemma' develop new habits of thought.

Action learning (McGill and Beaty 1995) may promote adult transformation. A facilitator creates a 'climate of collaboration' through dialogue, negotiating 'needs' and identifying learning objectives and a related program of activities, including 'learning how to learn'. 'Dialogue' 'allows people, usually in small groups, to share their perspectives and experiences with one another about difficult issues... Dialogue is not about winning an argument or coming to an agreement, but about understanding and learning' (NCDD 2008). Facilitators acknowledge task difficulties, adopt 'theories-in-use' consistent with 'espoused' theories (Argyris and Schon 1978), and demonstrate 'genuine, real and congruent' attitudes, including 'accepting, caring or prizing', demonstrating 'unconditional positive regard' and 'empathetic understanding'. They 'reflect-in-action' on expressed views; evaluation of learners' achievements is one form of 'reflection-on-action'.

Transformation may occur within a 'culture of thinking' (Ritchhart and Perkins 2005). Project Zero aims to promote 'visible thinking' in school classrooms: 'any kind of observable representation that documents and supports the development of an individual's or group's ongoing thoughts, questions, reasons and reflections. Mind maps, charts and lists, diagrams, worksheets all count as visible thinking if... they reveal learners' unfolding ideas as they think through an issue, problem or topic' (Tishman and Palmer 2005, p.1). Eight factors are: expectations, time, modeling, routines, opportuni-

ties, relationships, physical environment and language. 'Routines' establish context - 'our way of doing things' (Ritchhart et al., 2006).

3. Cultural and intellectual legacy related to academic expertise.

Cultural 'legacy' is values absorbed from local culture; intellectual 'legacy' is thinking systems and practices for learning acquired within formal education. Mental models or 'meaning schemes' are acquired from these sources, as well as work and life experience.

Regarding cultural legacy, Komin (1991) found the dominant Thai values to be 'ego', 'grateful relationships' and 'smooth interpersonal relations' in a strongly hierarchical society. 'Ego' shows in pride in status and accomplishments. 'Education and competence' was valued sixth; 'task achievement' was lowest. Education has extrinsic value, as means to social status. Except for Chinese-Thai business men, too, hard work was ranked low. Maintaining good social relations is very important for Thai, a factor to bear in mind in evaluating feedback. Thai value 'form' over 'content': being addressed as 'Doctor' conveys social status.

Greenfield (2005) contrasts Thai collectivist culture with Western individualism. Collectivism privileges thinking about relations based on role and status, such as respect for age, seniority and obedience of women to men. Gay (2006) describes Asian students' weak sense of 'self' and legitimacy in expressing personal opinions. She cites Fox (1994) who showed their consequent positioning in academic discourse and assignments emphasized collectivism, saving face, maintaining harmony, filial piety, interdependence, modesty of self-presentation and restraint in taking oppositional points of view. 'Students socialized in this way are less likely to express individual thoughts, broadcast their individual accomplishments, and challenge or disagree with people in positions of authority, especially in public arenas' (Gay 2006, p. 337).

Goodnow (1990) noted that school teachers from non-native cultures often impact on native student learning through 'modeled' messages implicit in teaching routines, or through arranging space, time and activities, rather than through texts. Illeris (2007) saw 'mis-learning' - 'a situation where the impulse or message does not come

through correctly, resulting in erroneous learning or non-learning' - as evidence of resistance to learning.

Formal education influences intellectual legacy. Public education in Thailand is of poor quality. Zeufack (2006) reports PISA scores for 2003 in reading, mathematics and science below OECD country average; degree quality is a concern (Barnes 2005). Sookpreedee (2005, p. 56) describes student and staff experience:

'In Thailand people get their education by "Rean Nang Seu", which literally means "studying the book". Rote memorization is ...the standard method of learning from kindergarten to.. university. In college students....are fed up with information overload and see no application of the subject to their real lives. Old handouts from the course are passed on to their juniors without any regret....Life in Thailand generally rewards rote memory. Popular game shows on television promote memorization....'

Ask university students what is their favourite book they will answer "translated Japanese comics". They call that reading. University students normally do not own textbooks. They said "just memorize the lecture note and you will pass". Some purchase the textbook in Thai written by the faculty member who teaches the subject. That is usually the only book the student needs for the subject. The promotion policies encourages faculty to write or translate a textbook into the Thai language.... Often the authors require their students to purchase their textbooks. Very few universities make students read peer-review journals as a part of instruction....With high cost ... only very few prestigious university libraries have a good collection'. (sic)

Such process may induce 'mindlessness' - 'a state of reduced cognitive activity in which the individual processes cues from the environment in a relatively automatic manner without reference to potentially novel (or simply other) aspects of these cues' (Langer 2004). Mindlessness results from rote learning that focuses on 'the one right way' to do things, seeing issues from a single perspective. It creates cognitive structures where people fail to hear what is said or to read what is written. 'Mindfulness' is 'a state in which environmental cues are consciously manipulated and the individual is engaged in actively constructing his or her

environment'. Though mindlessness is pervasive, 'shock' may induce mindfulness, recognition that assumptions do not hold.

Chi's (2006) relativistic view of expertise assumes that everyone has mental equipment to become expert within a domain of knowledge through 'deliberate practice'. Expertise reflects amount and structuring of knowledge, and capacity to represent it.

Pre-eminent is 'Master' - 'one of an elite group of experts whose judgments set the regulations, standards or ideals'. Second is 'Expert': 'one who has special skills or knowledge derived from extensive experience with sub-domains'. Third is 'Journeyman': 'an experienced and reliable worker, or one who has achieved a level of competence'. Below the journeyman is apprentice - 'one who is learning' (p. 22). Hatano and Osura (2003) distinguish 'routine' expertise - efficient management of familiar tasks in stable contexts, and 'adaptive' expertise - tolerance of ambiguity and 'having to rethink one's perspective' in rapidly changing contexts. Adaptive experts balance both dimensions: the 'gold standard' for teachers. (Hammerness et al. 2005, p. 360)

Experts' strengths are their capacity to represent problems and self-monitor; however, inflexibility, and tendency to make inaccurate predictions and judgments are weaknesses, as is misreading the perspectives of novices when providing advice and feedback on written tasks.

Conclusion

Teaching is a distinctive service. Authentic teachers are true to their own conception of effective teaching, and teach adaptively to promote skill acquisition for transfer to 'real world' tasks. Developing doctoral students' writing ability involves mental 'transformation'. Means include dialogue, negotiation and creating a 'culture' that makes thinking 'visible'. Cultural and intellectual legacy may influence transformation. Expertise is acquired through 'deliberate practice'. Teaching involves adaptive expertise, but experts have limitations in understanding and responding to needs of novices.

Analysis

This section focuses first on relationships between management, service provider, and clients. Second, teaching as service provision is examined. Third, dimensions of service 'substance' are explored.

Teaching is a service provided for clients who voluntarily enter into a relationship with program management, not service provider. Management undertakes to provide suitable clients with a service viz. a program to equip them to achieve a PhD. Clients pay relevant fees to access required program components, including an 'outsourced' course. The relationship between management and service provider is based on trust: that management allocates clients able to benefit from service at its contracted delivery level; that contracted service provider makes available certified knowledge and skills, and provides service at required level for rate contracted.

Teaching differs in many ways from other professional service situations. An obvious example is group provision, though an element of individualization is often provided. Its extended nature means that, especially with a large group, not all clients may be able to participate in every service provision, creating problems for both parties. Furthermore, first meeting with clients is at the point of commencing service delivery, rather than before, when needs, service goals and procedures might be discussed. As a result clients may not have considered their own needs, or know little about what the service is designed to achieve. Equally, service provider may know little or nothing about clients, though s/he may consult documented selection data, or talk informally with academics who have taught the group beforehand. However, case-note sharing is not a feature of academia. Moreover, the 'enabling' character of teaching - as opposed to training - is different from, for example, doctor-patient consultations where service effects are direct and immediate: enabling courses, like academic qualifications in general, aim to develop 'generic' skills in a 'sustainable' manner - requiring 'far' transfer in a new context viz. writing the thesis proposal. In this regard, since clarity of what is to be learned is important, criterion referenced systems are more explicit than norm-referenced. Finally, as clients make no direct payment or sign a contract, they are unlikely to do more than express muted praise or criticism of quality of service

provision; rarely do they ask service-providers for their money back or threaten court action. Clients are more likely to accept personal responsibility for non-success.

The service provider in this case has 'expert' status derived from being a full professor in a Western university, with 40 years of publications, and extensive experience of teaching at doctoral level.

1. Scope: Service scope refers to such aspects as boundaries, range and depth of treatment of different aspects of the service domain, and manner of delivery of intrinsic service features. The course description is one 'boundary': *'Investigation of broad fields of research in Human Resources. Discussion of utilization in relation to social and national problems. Tentative research proposal of student also recommended'* (sic). A first example of 'adaptive control' was defining, and securing program managers' agreement to, the interpretation 'literature review'. A tentative statement of rationale, aims, objectives, sequenced topics, resources and assessment was provided to clients at class meeting 1. Interactions identified unarticulated client 'needs' that led to adaptation, with teaching addressing ten broad 'themes': 'HRD fields of study', literature review exemplars, 'worthwhile' research, 'critical' reading of research (e.g. Girden 2001), including basis for knowledge claims and arguing a case, referencing (e.g. Hart 2001), effective study methods, English skills, student role, and international as compared to Thai PhD requirements. Dialogue suggested that 10 criteria would represent essential, feasible course learning about literature review: study title, objectives, an HRD field of study, definitions, underpinning theory(ies), summary of two related post-2000 research studies, critical comment on some aspect of these studies, authors' suggestions for further research, and references appropriately formatted. These were assessed first in a short, informally assessed, individual class presentation, and subsequently in the main assignment – a mini-literature review of 3,500 words. For the latter, they were incorporated within larger defined criteria of 'knowledge and understanding', 'critical reflection' and 'professional reporting'. Assessment was consequently criterion-referenced.

The scope of delivery comprised 'core' process requirements of lectures and class exercises on selected readings, augmented by a weekly handout

comprising the day's program, and my summary and reflective commentary on previous class activities. Literature reviews reflecting course criteria were presented, three outsourced to competent Thai doctoral candidates.

2. Service frequency: Classes met weekly for 13 weeks from January to April 2007. No detailed attendance was taken, but few clients, if any, attended all classes. Feedback, sometimes online, was provided on draft assignments. In July 2007, graded assignments were discussed and returned in 30-minute individual interviews, with each client completing a course evaluation subsequently. 'Bottomless cup' assistance was also offered to clients resubmitting.

3. Service duration: Each class (Sunday) met for three hours from 09.00 am, but some ran for an hour or more into the afternoon. Clients often arrived late; TPS – Think-Pair-Share – routines (Reinhart et al., 2006) on homework-related, or other 'starter' tasks engaged 'on-time' and arriving clients. Besides setting a studious 'tone', writing provided insights into language skills and understanding.

4. Service invasiveness: Service provision may involve close personal relationships, including physical contact. Teaching and learning experiences may 'invade' the mind or heart of both parties – as Confucius indicates (Salzberger-Wittenberg, Henry and Osborne 1983). Assessment is reflected in pride in success and shame at failure. One lady tearfully expressed pain a C grade and written feedback occasioned. Subsequently she took a different view. In an unsolicited email she wrote (sic):

'I would like to thank you very much for all of your encouragement and support which make me get stronger; it is really help and works on me. Please know that you are the most important professor in my life of being Ph.D student to carry out all the task & duty to develop myself and have responsibility to my research proposal until achieve my goal'. (sic)

Giving low grades - when merited – may be a means for academics to create the 'disorientating dilemma' that triggers student transformation. 'Soft' marking may explain Johnson's (2008) finding that 'effective' leaders in business in US

rated courses, conferences and workshops as less important sources of learning than experience of 'hardship', and challenges in their working lives.

5. Service effects: Service 'effects' are evidence of achievement of advertised service goals. Effects may be short- or long-term, partial or complete, anticipated or unanticipated. The desired effect was for clients to demonstrate 10 criteria believed to be intrinsic to an 'authentic' doctoral literature review. My rationale was this: if clients could meet these criteria in the mini-presentation, they would be more than half-way to achieving the goal. If they could then convert this into the assignment the service goal would be achieved.

The first client presented one week ahead and ignored most criteria. I reminded clients of their importance. I also listed criteria on a sheet and asked clients to mark the criteria each presenter met. Results: title was the sole criterion achieved by all, though some omitted presenter's name! Around half met the 'link to HRD' criterion, provided relevant theory or cited post-2000 research studies. Only 4 included critical comment, admittedly the most difficult criterion.

Failure to achieve short-term service effects reduced prospects of longer term success. When 16 written assignments eventually materialized in mid-July, those that addressed all or most criteria, irrespective of English expression, were passed (A/B grades). Results were: A=4, B+=1, B=3, C+=1, C=2, I (Incomplete in some respect or non-submission)=5.

Three 'A's had Masters from overseas; the fourth was an academic specializing in research. Stylistic features reflected Fox (1994); plagiarizing was common. Most research studies were pre-2000. One client reproduced two complete articles. Class materials, including HRD conference papers supplied on CD-ROM, were little used. In short, there was much evidence of 'mis-learning'. C clients had an opportunity to 're-submit'. Several took it. By March 2008 further 'adaptation' involved moving from one criterion-referenced model to another: passing all students who submitted.

'Partial effects' included recognition that clients were expected to think in new ways. In a covert evaluation - 'Letter to a friend' - one I described the course as 'an opportunity to have an interactive conversation - it is like a two-way

communication between the instructor and the student'. An 'A' reported an 'unanticipated' effect: 'I have applied my critical skills I have developed in this class to my everyday life and I have taught my students how to think in other different points of view'.

6. Service outcomes: Service effects may result in undesirable outcomes. Some may be remediable. An outsourced service provider is not usually responsible; clients generally take them up with management.

Failing clients who demonstrate self-efficacy may remediate by re-taking the course (at an additional fee). However, others may need counseling; some may decide to withdraw. PhD programs have high drop-out rates. Course work assists clients to learn the challenge of doctoral study: it may discourage as well as encourage.

Lowered self-esteem may result in 'irremediable' outcomes with potentially serious personal consequences turned in on self, and/or out on others, culminating possibly in hostile acts. Fortunately none has occurred in this program.

Commentary

This section addresses the source of tensions described earlier in relation to authentic teaching, student development needs and performance standards.

Authenticity may be viewed from the standpoint of local students, local staff and the international academic. Students in Thai international doctoral programs have weak study skills relative to most Western students. Their culture teaches them to respect and 'spoil' their teachers, creating a sense of mutual obligation, but their Western teachers send messages, particularly in relation to performance standards, that are inconsistent with those of Thai colleagues, and may create affront and mental confusion.

Most local academics, even those with international degrees, often acquired many years before, are at best 'journeymen'. In a teaching dominated system most have heavy, but lucrative teaching and administrative loads. Consequently few have time or motivation to read the international literature, to research, or to 'deliberately practice' writing in English to secure publication at international level. This may limit their understanding of the meaning

of 'international standard'. If their scholarship is weak, their teaching of doctoral students may be 'low-level', uninformed and lack currency. If they do not examine at international level, their messages to students on thesis requirements and standards may be out of date. Further research could illuminate these issues.

International academics, especially those of senior years, may be 'Masters' or 'experts' as a result of academic careers devoted to 'deliberate' practice to maintain currency in teaching, examining, research and publications. Some serve on editorial boards of international and Thai journals, know current publication standards, and have CVs with evidence of when they last met them. Mistakenly, they may come to see themselves as 'lone standard-bearers' of international standards. One outcome may be over-compensation – 'fight' – through insisting on high standards which may reflect expert 'blindness' to student needs. Students may react by characterizing them as 'tough' and 'inflexible', a view shared privately perhaps by some local staff. In a 'collectivist' culture these things are rarely spoken. Conscious of these perceptions, and sensing the complexity of this ambiguous inter-cultural situation, the Western academic may adopt a Confucian stance – cease teaching, or flee the scene. Alternatively s/he may compromise on authenticity – 'indigenize?' – passing everyone who 'makes an effort', rationalizing that, 'It's only the course work stage of this program, let's see how they do when writing a proposal!'

Conclusion

This paper has argued that international doctoral programs aim to promote transformation to sustainable 'modern' thinking strategies. Yet it has

shown the difficulties facing an international staff in a course, consequent tensions and dilemmas, their attempted resolution through adaptive instruction at a variety of levels and the mixed academic results obtained.

An 'enabling' course does not aim to teach students, who are not yet candidates for the PhD, how to write their literature review proposal. Kamlar and Thomson (2006) illustrate that challenge. Only one student (A) in this course experienced something of it: 'I have been spending all my time over 60 days (Feb 11 – present), some day on my days off from work I spend my time over 18 hours till the next day. Over 20 times that my writing need to adjust and edit again and again. I feel burnout like my review this topic. However, I believe that the more I study hard the more I gain skills and knowledge, learning by doing "Trial and Error". This is always in my mind'.

A course for students new to the domain of theoretical HRD, to doctoral studies and the concept of 'literature', can be useful. It can introduce concepts of 'scholarly' study, develop awareness of, and give practice in using, sustainable 'modern' intellectual skills such as reading, summarizing evidence in published research papers, creating consciousness of 'claims' and one's right to question them, and analyzing how arguments can be structured as a prelude to putting forward one's own. Presenters can also model how to interweave definitions, theories and prior findings to support future research 'positioning', reflected in research questions or hypotheses. The difficulties the course nevertheless presented indicate the challenge of achieving transformation, and of delivering sustainable modern thinking through international doctoral programs.

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