"A High Transfer System:

Technical and social factors in the organisation

and their effect on

intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and discretionary effort"

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ABSTRACT

This thesis addressed the training transfer problem contributing to knowledge by introducing the concept of *high transfer*, proposing a new definition for high transfer and presenting the *High Transfer System.* It enriched existing literature and explored organisational factors and antecedents of transfer by embedding training in the technical HR system and the social system in the organisation, which, if properly enacted, can activate employee intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and employee discretionary effort for high transfer. Thus, it accounted for the 'how' and 'why' of high transfer on the job in the dynamic organisational contexts in which people work. The *High Transfer System* is aimed to build employee ability, increase their motivation and provide them with opportunities to participate at work, leading to high transfer, if it is introduced in a pre-existing favourable organisational context and is effectively enacted by the manager.

Data were generated from 21 individuals in two companies through face-to-face qualitative interviews. An interpretivist framework was used to capture the subjective experience of individuals at work and the personal meanings they attach to the factors affecting transfer and its antecedents. The recorded data were translated from Greek into English, transcribed to text using Microsoft Word, coded and thematically analysed producing six themes. The *High Transfer System* was built based on the principles of Grounded Theory.

Participants' responses stressed the value of on-the-job transfer for individual and organisational performance in service organisations. They revealed that transfer is affected by several technical and social factors which account not only for the use of newly trained skills on the job but also for the transfer of an individual's previous skills, experience and tacit knowledge. Data showed that transfer is about individual change which effectively takes place in a system of reciprocal social relationships and interrelated factors affecting not only the skills but also the personalities and emotions of employees who are trained, as well as their managers and peers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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GLOSSARY

CO	Company
DE	Discretionary effort
EMPL	Employee
GT	Grounded Theory
HRM	Human Resource Management
HPWS	High Performance Work Systems
HTTS	High Training Transfer System
HTS	High Transfer System
KSAs	Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes
LO	Learning Organisation
MNGR	Manager
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
TNA	Training Needs Analysis

The abbreviations were identified in the literature, and the site http://www.acronymfinder.com.

The two abbreviations created by the researcher were the **HTTS** standing for the *'High Training Transfer System'* and **HTS** standing for *'High Transfer System'*.

CHAPTER 1

**INTRODUCTION: EXPLORING HIGH TRAINING TRANSFER IN
SERVICE ORGANISATIONS**

1.1.   Background to the research

This study explores on-the-job training transfer and addresses the 'transfer problem'
identified in the literature (Grossman and Salas, 2011; Anguinis and Kraiger, 2009;
Baldwin et al., 2009). It is based on four main premises: first, given the importance of
employee skills for the service economy (Lloyd and Payne, 2008; Payne, 2000),
training transfer is fundamental so that training can improve individual performance
which precedes organisational outcomes and competitive advantage (Grossman and
Salas, 2011; Wright and Nishii, 2006; Bosalie et al., 2005; Paauwe and Bosalie, 2005;
Wright et al., 2003; Harley, 2002; Kozlowski et al., 2000; Barney, 1991); second, on-
the-job training transfer is a discretionary activity on employees' part and so to occur
employees must expend discretionary effort (DE); third, to expend DE, employees must
have a share in organisational gains- mutual gains; and fourth, for mutual gains, apart
from receiving extrinsic rewards, employees must experience intrinsic job satisfaction
(Sparham and Sung, 2008). In this process, employee performance improves through
high training transfer. These four premises are met on condition that training is
embedded in the organisational HR system, in line with job design, and supported by
the social system. These premises and conditions constitute the core arguments of this
research while underpinning its theoretical and methodological approach.

Following from the above, this study addresses the transfer problem in an innovative
way, arguing that it exists for two main reasons: first, transfer research does not explore
training embedded in the organisational HR system. Rather, it adopts a subfunctional
approach towards training and transfer, assuming the organisational context as neutral

and leaving the effect of other HR practices on on-the-job transfer unexplored (Kontoghiorghes, 2004). This study addresses this gap by exploring this effect. The second reason is that, although transfer research examines several factors which impact on transfer, and mainly training design, trainee personal characteristics, and the work environment or job design (Burke and Hutchins, 2007), it cannot account for how and why transfer takes place by being mostly descriptive (Hawley and Barnard, 2005). Despite the importance of these factors, transfer research does not explore variables which mediate between training and transfer. This study argues that three of these variables are intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and employee DE and explores how and why they drive high training transfer.

This chapter delineates the premises and arguments of this thesis by presenting its underlying theoretical framework; the research problem; the purpose and research questions; the justification for undertaking the research; the methodology adopted for generating and analysing data; and last, an outline of the thesis.

1.2. Theoretical framework based on the four premises

The grounding of this thesis is the major role of employee skills for organisational performance in the service economy (Payne, 2000). The performance of service organisations in a global competitive environment is driven by unpredictable economic and structural change, labour mobility across organisations, markets and countries, and sophisticated technology (Field, 2000; Lau, 2000; Payne, 2000; Horwitz, 1999). In such an uncertain and volatile context, organisations depend to a large extent on their workforce to learn and keep in pace with technological advances, prevent problems, offer quality services, and reduce error and cost (Martin, 2010; Bates and Khasawneh,

2005; Facteau et al., 1995; Kling, 1995). Quality customer service and competitive advantage are achieved and sustained if employees possess more than just technical skills (Lloyd and Payne, 2008; Lee and Bruvold, 2003; Wright and Boswell, 2002). Service work depends on individuals with higher order skills (Payne, 2000). Such skills are broad and diverse, unique and transferrable, tangible and intangible, technical and social, intellectual and emotional at the same time. Most importantly, they must all be combined for employees to make the right decisions, solve problems, communicate effectively, cooperate in teams and perform in a proactive and innovative way (Lloyd and Payne, 2008; Payne, 2000; Keep and Mayhew, 1999). The need for such skills emerges in parallel with the changes and demands in the external environment. It is one of the key drivers of organisational performance and the basis for any meaningful discussion of how an organisation can gain sustainable competitive advantage through people (Payne, 2000). For employee skills to contribute to individual and organisational performance, training and development are not enough. Trained skills must effectively transfer on the job, be generalised across tasks and novel situations and be maintained in the long run (Baldwin et al., 2009; Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Holton and Baldwin, 2003; Holton et al., 2000; Ford and Weissbein, 1997). In fact, on-the-job training transfer is the main process through which training and development contribute to organisational performance through individual performance in a complex process affected by several factors beyond training (Kozlowski et al., 2000).

Training transfer is a discretionary activity on employees' part (van Emmerik et al., 2010; Kelloway and Barling, 2000). It requires DE defined as "the voluntary effort employees spend that lies above the minimum level of effort required in order to keep the job and is directed toward organisational goals" (Lloyd, 2003:72 in Lloyd, 2008: 22). Expending DE depends on employee ability, motivation and the opportunities they

have at work to participate in decision making (Batt, 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Bailey, 1993). This makes the role of the HR system and job design fundamental for transfer.

However, the question remains as to why employees contribute DE and transfer training. This thesis argues that the answer lies in mutual gains. The concept of mutual gains implies that employees have a share in organisational gains. In turn, they contribute their DE reaching a 'win-win' situation for both themselves and the organisation (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Mutual gains are created by the technical HR system, bundles of HR practices, and job design. Also, they are affected by the social processes at work making the proper enactment of the HR system and job redesign by the manager essential so that employees experience intrinsic job satisfaction (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Guest, 2002; Purcell, 1999). The role of the manager is catalytic in this process both for the effective enactment of the espoused HR system in the organisation and for job redesign after training so that employees can use trained KSAs on the job (Keep et al., 2006). The managers' role is further highlighted by the fact that they must be the first to expend their DE and act as role models for employees so that they activate intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains, and employee DE for high training transfer (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Hutchinson et al., 2002).

1.3. Research Problem

Training is not effective unless on-the-job transfer takes place (Grossman and Salas, 2011). For this to happen, employees must put effort to apply trained KSAs, generalise them in novel tasks and situations, and maintain them in the long run (Cheng and Ho, 2001; Holton et al., 2000; Burke and Baldwin, 1999; Baldwin and Ford, 1988). Transferring KSAs enables employees to make effective decisions and behave in ways

that accomplish desired organisational outcomes (Broad, 2005). Training design, trainee characteristics, work environment elements and job design are all factors which affect transfer (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Baldwin and Ford, 1988).

Transfer research focuses on the above processes and factors and empirically explores how they affect on-the-job transfer (Burke and Hutchins, 2007). However, the transfer problem persists (Martin, 2010; Baldwin et al., 2009; Burke and Hutchins, 2008; Broad, 2005). Research shows that despite increasing expenditure on training, in most cases 40% of KSAs transfer immediately after training and only 10% are maintained in the long run. This minimises the benefits of training for employees and the organisation (Grossman and Salas, 2011; Martin, 2010; Anguinis and Kraiger, 2009; Baldwin et al., 2009). Although research in training transfer is extensive, transfer is not completely understood (Burke and Baldwin, 1999). One reason for this is the 'lack of innovative ideas of how we should proceed from our current state' (Cheng and Hampson, 2008: 328).

Adopting an innovative stance, this study proceeds from the current state of transfer research so as to gain insight into the transfer process and address the transfer problem. It identifies two reasons why the transfer problem persists: first, transfer research does not view training embedded in the organisational HR system in internal fit with bundles of other HR practices, such as rewards or promotions, and so fails to explore the factors affecting transfer at a macro level beyond training (Baldwin et al., 2009; Tharenou et al., 2007; Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Kozlowski et al., 2000). On-the-job transfer neither begins nor ends with training. It is a process that continuously develops at the organisational level and is influenced by the interaction of training with several organisational factors (Kozlowski and Klein, 2000). Transfer research acknowledges that other HR policies and practices affect transfer (Grossman and Salas, 2011; Blume

et al., 2010; Anguinis and Kraiger, 2009; Baldwin et al., 2009; Burke and Hutchins, 2007). However, the way they impact on transfer remains largely underexplored. Transfer research examines mostly training design, individual characteristics and the immediate training and work environment without considering that training provides solutions to performance problems arising only from the lack of KSAs (Goldstein, 1993 in Kozlowski et al., 2000). However, performance involves more than the application of KSAs in a complex process (Kraiger et al., 2004). Missing this important point, transfer research cannot account for the mediating variables that affect individuals to transfer training and perform effectively.

In essence, this is the second reason why the transfer problem exists. Not exploring training embedded in the organisational HR system (Tamkin, 2005) implemented in bundles with other 'mutually reinforcing practices' and proper job design (Guest, 2002: 337) overestimates the contribution of training to transfer and performance while neglecting mediating variables (Baldwin et al., 2009; Tharenou et al., 2007; Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Wright and Boswell, 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2002; Delery and Shaw, 2001; Kozlowski et al., 2000; Becker and Gerhart, 1996). In particular, it misses the role of intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and employee DE which, as this study argues, are antecedents of training transfer. Training is essential but alone it is inadequate to build employee ability, motivate employees and offer them opportunities to participate in decision making, which are required for high performance and organisational competitive advantage. These outcomes are achieved through the interaction of training with recruitment and selection, rewards and promotions, and job redesign, as well as the proper enactment of these practices by the manager (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Hutchinson, et al., 2002; Purcell, 1999). This process gives

employees a share in organisational gains and so elicits their DE for high transfer. Failing to explore the above factors and processes perpetuates the transfer problem. Thus, the research problem that forms the basis of this thesis is:

> *What factors in the technical HR system and social system in the organisation affect individual performance, and how do these factors impact on employee intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and employee DE so as to lead to high training transfer?*

1.4. Purpose of the study

Considering the causes of the transfer problem, this study argues that to understand transfer one need look beyond training, the immediate work environment and individual factors. It addresses the research problem by expanding beyond the transfer literature and examining several other research strands relating to people management, such as HPWSs, mutual gains, DE, job design, skills and performance, arguing that they can provide fresh insights for addressing the transfer problem. In a new perspective, this study examines the macro organisational context and identifies factors of the technical and social systems which can increase employee intrinsic job satisfaction, create mutual gains and elicit DE for high training transfer.

To explicitly delineate the process through which high training transfer can be achieved, the following can be highlighted. High training transfer requires that training be embedded in a properly enacted HR system and be considered in light of job redesign implying consistency between espoused, enacted and perceived practices (Wright and Nishii, 2006; Kinnie et al., 2005). Proper enactment and consistency requires the effective interaction of the technical and social systems in the organisation or, in other words, the effective interaction between organisational structures and managerial

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agency. In this way, employee ability, motivation and opportunities to participate in decision making and perform are created and intrinsic job satisfaction increases (Guest, 2002). Employee ability, motivation, and opportunity to participate and perform supported by intrinsic job satisfaction can effectively contribute to mutual gains if the organisation gives employees a share in the gains. These gains, in turn, elicit employee DE and lead to high training transfer on an ongoing process (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Levine, 1995).

This study argues that high training transfer is the outcome of this complex process which is, however, obscured by the approach of transfer research to date. Given organisational complexity and volatility, it is essential to capture how the above mentioned factors and variables interact with training to increase the likelihood of addressing the transfer problem (Tharenou et al., 2007; Lepak et al., 2006; Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Kozlowski et al., 2000).

To explore the process presented above, this study sets the following research questions which aim to:

1. Examine the antecedents of training transfer;

2. Examine the theoretical underpinnings of existing approaches to transfer and their strengths and weaknesses;

3. Identify the technical elements of an HR-based transfer system and the ways in which it can be properly enacted so as to provide mutual gains, elicit DE and lead to high training transfer;

4. Explore the role of the manager in properly enacting the technical system and job design so as to increase employee intrinsic job satisfaction, create mutual gains, elicit DE and lead to high training transfer.

To answer these questions, this study argues that the following issues must be considered: first, a paradox needs to be addressed. Although transfer is primarily about skills, transfer research does not provide a clear definition of skill and its elements. The relevant discourse mentions different kinds of skill such as cognitive, behavioural, motor or interpersonal ones (Arthur et al., 2003). However, it does not specify the elements of skill and the ways in which they affect on-the-job training transfer.

Second, the concept of employee performance must be revisited. This is essential to identify the specific factors involved in employee performance such as knowledge and skill, motivation and effort. There is need to explore how employees use knowledge and skill and the reasons why they are motivated to contribute effort, the degree of this effort and their persistence to achieve a goal (Lloyd, 2008; Campbell et al., 1993).

Next, the concepts of intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE need to be explored since they constitute the mediating variables between two distal processes- HR practices and transfer (Wright and Nishii, 2006; Bosalie et al., 2005; Wright et al., 2003; Gardner et al., 2001; Dyer and Reeves, 1995). Intrinsic job satisfaction can affect mutual gains and mutual gains, in turn, can provide a justification as to why employees decide to expend DE and transfer training.

Also, a new definition of high transfer is required including all the variables and agents that affect transfer in context.

Finally, an HR-based transfer system must be developed bundling training with other HR practices to increase intrinsic job satisfaction, create mutual gains and elicit employee DE for high training transfer. The Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework used in HPWSs research is also used as the basis of this HR-based transfer system because: first, the transfer, mutual gains, DE, job design, skills and performance strands examine the three variables of the AMO framework- employee ability,

motivation and opportunity- albeit in different perspectives (Baldwin et al., 2009; Kontoghiorghes, 2004 and 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Batt, 2002; Kochan and Osterman, 1994; Campbell et al., 1993); second, the AMO framework presents bundles of HR practices which have been found in most studies to positively affect intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE (Appelbaum et al., 2000; MacDuffie, 1995; Kochan and Osterman, 1994; Bailey, 1993); and third, the AMO framework has been used extensively in HPWSs research after 2000 as the theoretical basis of how an organisation can elicit employee DE and achieve desired organisational outcomes (Paauwe, 2009; Bosalie et al., 2005).

1.5. Justification for the research

This study identified several gaps in the transfer literature and addressed calls for an innovative approach to transfer (Anguinis and Kraiger, 2009; Baldwin et al., 2009; Cheng and Hampson, 2008; Kontoghiorghes, 2004). It is justified in meeting the need to overcome the descriptive and subfunctional approach of transfer research and explore how and why employees transfer training by expanding analysis beyond training to organisational factors (Hawley and Barnard, 2005). To this aim, it synthesises findings from transfer, HPWSs, mutual gains, DE, job design, skills and performance research to provide a more meaningful discussion of all the factors and mediating variables in the organisational context that affect the transfer process by embedding training in the organisational HR system.

Further, this research is justified in exploring how and why transfer takes place rather than simply describing the factors that affect it. Thus, it brings the concepts of mutual gains and DE into the discourse of training transfer arguing that transfer is not a linear process but rather one that is mediated by several variables. Employees transfer training

by exercising DE if they perceive that they have a share in organisational gains and this justifies the choice they make.

Identifying the inability of transfer models to address the transfer problem, it meets the need for an HR-based transfer system, which embeds training in the organisational HR system in a systemic way. Synthesising three common themes - employee ability, motivation, and opportunity to participate and perform (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Lepak et al., 2006; Batt, 2002; Delery and Shaw, 2001; Facteau et al., 1995; Huselid, 1995; MacDuffie, 1995), this study recommends the *High Transfer System* (HTS) bundling training with other HR practices and job redesign (Combs et al., 2006; Delery and Shaw, 2001; Osterman, 2000). If properly implemented, this system can lead to intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains, DE and training transfer (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Purcell, 1999; Kochan and Osterman, 1994; Hackman and Oldham, 1975). Thus, following calls in the literature, this study integrated the micro and macro perspectives of HRM by examining how factors in the macro organisational context affect individual processes at a micro level (see for example Baldwin et al., 2009; Lepak et al., 2006; Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Wright and Boswell, 2002).

Justification is also provided by the need for a different type of research. This study adopted a qualitative multilevel design generating data from managers and employees through face-to-face interviews. So, it captured people's subjective experience and the variance between espoused, enacted and perceived HR practices (Baldwin et al., 2009; Wright and Nishii, 2006; Chang, 2005). Also, it minimised the single rater bias (Wright and Nishii, 2006) and revealed how managers and employees exercise their agency to affect intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains, DE and training transfer.

Overall, this study is justified since it broadens the scope of transfer research by examining training and transfer embedded and developing in the complexity of the macro organisational context in which individuals perform in social relationships with others. It highlights factors beyond the training context that operate jointly and interactively and increase intrinsic job satisfaction, create mutual gains and elicit employee DE to achieve high transfer.

1.6. Methodology

The following methodology was used in this research: first, a review of the existing literature was conducted in training transfer, HPWSs, mutual gains, DE, job design and intrinsic job satisfaction, as well as skills and performance. This review led to the development of the premises, research problem, research questions and the arguments which further guided the research.

Second, following a qualitative multilevel design, interviews were designed and conducted in two companies with participants at different levels of analysis including 9 managers and 12 employees to explore the effectiveness of the HTTS. The process included:

- designing the questions of the qualitative interviews for managers and employees respectively based on the existing literature and the research questions of the study;
- conducting pilot interviews to test the effectiveness of the research instruments;
- revising the interview questions;
- conducting face-to-face interviews in two companies.

Third, following data generation, thematic analysis and Grounded Theory (GT) was used in order to:

- transcribe and code the data;

- develop theory and data driven themes;

- analyse the data based on the themes;

- update the HTTS;

- discuss findings and contributions of the research;

- provide recommendations for further research.

1.7. Outline of the thesis

This section provides an outline of the remaining chapters of the thesis. Chapter 2 presents and critically discusses the concepts of skills, employee performance, DE, mutual gains and intrinsic job satisfaction and their importance for training transfer. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical underpinnings of the existing approaches to transfer research and their strengths and weaknesses in addressing the transfer problem by discussing the transfer literature based on the AMO framework. Chapter 3 also presents the *High Training Transfer System* by synthesising the transfer, HPWSs, mutual gains, DE and job design literatures. This discussion is also based on the AMO framework as a basis for comparison. Chapter 4 describes the methodology used in this study and how it was chosen and developed to answer the research problem and research questions through the generation of primary data. It describes and justifies the interpretive qualitative methodology of the thesis, the multilevel approach, the organisational settings, and participant samples; the design of the research instrument for data generation; the process of piloting, updating and conducting the interviews; the stages

of thematic analysis and GT; the ethical considerations of the research, my role as a researcher and research limitations. Chapter 5 provides an overview of the data generated in the study, the demographic profile of participants and the analysis of data generated through an introductory question asked to participants. Chapter 6 includes the thematic analysis of the data generated through qualitative interviews around six themes. Also, it includes an updated definition of high transfer and the updates to the HTTS which was renamed into *High Transfer System* (HTS). Chapter 7 concludes the thesis by discussing findings, contributions and further research.

1.8. Conclusions

This chapter presented the background to the research and its theoretical framework, the research problem, the purpose of the study and research questions, and set the framework for the critical discussion and analysis of the issues discussed in the literature review in Chapters 2 and 3. Further, it discussed the justification of this research and delineated the methodology used for data generation and finally presented the thesis outline.

Chapter 2 follows and includes the process of doing the literature review and then presents the existing literature on skills, employee performance, DE, mutual gains, and intrinsic job satisfaction as antecedents of high training transfer.

CHAPTER 2

ANTECEDENTS OF HIGH TRAINING TRANSFER IN SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

2.1. Introduction

This chapter first describes how the literature review was conducted and then examines the antecedents of training transfer- the objective elements of skills; the concept of performance; DE; mutual gains; and intrinsic job satisfaction- to support the critical evaluation of the theoretical underpinnings to transfer and the recommendations of transfer research for improving employee ability, increasing motivation and providing opportunities to participate in decision making.

2.2. Doing the literature review

To explore high training transfer, technical and social factors in the organisational context and mediating variables that drive transfer, it was essential to expand the review to literatures beyond transfer. Thus, apart from the transfer literature, the literature review in Chapters 2 and 3 is a synthesis of the skills, performance, HPWSs, mutual gains, DE, and job design literatures. This broad review facilitated the exploration of the issues at hand and the synthesis of existing knowledge in several areas of people management deemed essential for providing innovative contributions to the transfer literature and addressing the transfer problem.

The major volume of the transfer literature was about training design, trainee characteristics and work environment factors. For this reason it did not offer theoretical recommendations or empirical findings on the role of other factors beyond training, the individual and the work context, for transfer. The main and most recent exceptions include theoretical recommendations, but not empirical findings, by Grossman and

Salas (2011) on the interplay between other HR practices, training and transfer as well as recommendations by Anguinis and Kraiger (2009) and Baldwin et al. (2009) on the same issues. An empirically tested systemic transfer model incorporating other HR practices and considering their impact on training transfer was provided by Kontoghiorghes (2004 and 2002) who stressed (2004:218-219):

> In addition to a positive learning transfer climate and motivation to transfer, successful training transfer was found to be significantly predicted by such factors as organisational commitment, a high performance team environment, job motivation and satisfaction, awareness of how one's job contributes to the organisation's quality mission, a risk taking and innovation driven culture, as well as a quality driven culture. Collectively these factors characterize a high performance work system and demonstrate that training transfer cannot be studied in isolation. Since the desired ultimate outcome of any training intervention is to improve performance, it can be expected that organisational factors that impact individual or organisational performance will also have a moderating effect on successful training transfer. Thus, exclusion of such organisational factors from training transfer research designs may lead to limited understanding of the training transfer phenomenon.

Indeed, Kontoghiorghes (2004) called for more research into the impact of other organisational factors on training transfer. Thus, for the scope of this study, in order to identify and explore other organisational factors beyond training design, employee characteristics and work environment factors that impact on transfer, and the process through which this happens, it was deemed essential to visit and use other literatures. The skills literature set the background of this study by revealing the elements of skill and the importance employee skills have in the service economy for organisational competitive advantage (e.g. Payne, 2009; Lloyd and Payne, 2008; Keep et al., 2006; Payne, 2000). The performance literature illuminated the interaction between knowledge, skill and motivation to achieve desired goals and the element of discretion required (Campbell et al., 1993). The HPWSs literature was used to explore the effects of the HR system and HR practices on employee performance. Specifically, the AMO

framework helped explore the role of technical factors to elicit employee DE (e.g. Batt, 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2000; McDuffie, 1995; Bailey, 1993). The literature on DE revealed its importance for employee performance (e.g. Lloyd, 2008; Hutchinson et al., 2002; Bailey, 1993) and strengthened the argument that transfer is achieved if employees expend DE, a mediating variable between HR practices and transfer. The mutual gains literature provided findings supporting the argument that the second mediating variable that can affect transfer is the share employees have in organisational gains which helps elicit DE (e.g. Guest and Peccei, 2001; Osterman, 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Research on job design and job redesign helped illuminate their role for employee intrinsic job satisfaction as an antecedent for mutual gains, DE and high training transfer (e.g. Karasek, 1979; Lawler et al., 1973).

The literatures beyond transfer were selected based on whether they examined issues relating to the premises, research problem and research questions of this thesis, and specifically whether they examined: training embedded in the HR system in bundles with other HR practices, the AMO framework, and the role of the HR system in eliciting employee discretionary effort as the HPWS literature does and especially the work of Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg and Kalleberg; MacDuffie; Hutchinson, Bailey and Lloyd; Batt; the social organisational context and the importance of the individual as the centre of analysis as in the writings of David Guest; mutual gains as the result of an effectively enacted HR system as in the work of Kochan and Osterman; the elements of skill including discretionary effort and employee power as in the work of Payne, Lloyd and Bolton and Boyd; job design and intrinsic job satisfaction as an antecedent of training transfer as in the texts by Karasek, Lawler, Hackman, and Kaufman. The HRM literature was also visited and read but was not extensively used since it did not focus

on how bundles of HR practices can elicit discretionary effort and produce mutual gains, premises on which this thesis was based.

This research was conducted in Greece. However, empirical research about organisations in Greece was scarce and in relation to on-the-job transfer, mutual gains and DE, it was almost non-existent. For this reason, literature published in the US and the UK was used. The difference between the literatures from these two countries was that training transfer research was mostly of US origin including the work of major transfer researchers such as Holton (2000), Holton and Baldwin (2003); Baldwin et al. (2009); Baldwin and Ford (1988); Burke and Hutchins (2008 and 2007) and others. The literature on skills came primarily from the UK as for example through the work of Felstead et al. (2007); Lloyd and Payne (2008); Payne (2000); Keep et al. (2006). Research on HPWSs and DE was also mostly of US origin with the research of Appelbaum et al. (2001 and 2000) and MacDuffie (1995) being cited in most subsequent literature. Also, work on HPWSs was mostly carried out in manufacture and only limited research in service organisations (for example Batt, 2002). Qualitative research in the issues under examination was also scarce since most research was based on large scale surveys or public statistical data. The literature and research from the UK relating to DE and mutual gains considered in this study came mostly from Sparham and Sung (2008); Purcell and Hutchinson (2007); Kinnie et al. (2005); Guest (2002 and 1999); Hutchinson et al. (2002); Purcell (1999). What was noticed in this strand of research in relation to the US literature was a trend to consider the social factors that affect people at work and calls to bring the individual in the centre of analysis (Guest, 2002 and 1999; Guest and Peccei, 2001).

As a distant learner, I did not have access to a physical library except when I visited the university. So, I made extensive use of the University of Leicester digital library which

granted me access to electronic sources and the interlibrary loan department whose employees assisted me by providing me with printed versions of material I could not access online. Also, I made extensive use of *googlescholar* which, in many cases, provided me with free access to electronic articles.

The academic journals I used mostly included *Human Resource Management Journal, Personnel Psychology, Human Resource Development Review, Performance Improvement Quarterly, Human Resource Development Quarterly, Annual Review of Psychology, International Journal of Training and Development,* and *Academy of Management Journal.*

2.3. Antecedents of high training transfer: concepts and meanings

2.3.1. Skills in service organisations

To identify and address the deeper causes of the transfer problem, it is important to revisit the concept of skill in a broader perspective encompassing more than just technical mastery (Payne, 2009). According to the skills, service work and emotional labour literatures, the three main elements of skill employees combine to perform effectively are complexity, power and discretion/control (Payne, 2009; Lloyd and Payne, 2008). Complexity refers to whether a job is simple or complex (Korczynski, 2005) and to the multiple skills employees combine simultaneously to do this job effectively (Lloyd and Payne, 2008). Power relates to employees' agency and their ability to choose their behaviour and performance at work (Lloyd and Payne, 2008). Employees do not act in ways requested by the manager but 'own the means of production' (Bolton and Boyd, 2003: 293). So, they have the power to choose how much effort they devote to work (Lloyd and Payne, 2008). Although mostly related to emotional work, Bolton and Boyd's (2003) argument holds true for training transfer.

Namely, although an organisation sets rules and expectations for efficient performance, employees have the power to decide whether or not to transfer trained skills on the job, creating the transfer problem. Discretion and control refer to the extent to which employees can make several decisions about their job and performance (Korczynski, 2005). They include task and intellectual discretion which determine the degree of influence employees have on how hard they work; the freedom to decide on what tasks they do; how they do them and the quality standards to which they work (Felstead et al., 2007). Discretion and control are demonstrated in multi-tasking, critical thinking, emotional intelligence, stress management, or innovation (Lloyd and Payne, 2008). Indeed, there are no jobs which do not require from employees to use some form of discretion (Fox, 1974 in Hutchinson et al., 2002; Bailey, 1993). Arguing that all the elements of skill are relevant to effectively addressing the transfer problem, this study further stresses that one should examine them all in interaction to discern how and why individuals make transfer decisions. Further, it argues that these elements, complexity, power and discretion /control, are related to the antecedents of high transfer- intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE.

2.3.2. Employee performance

Transfer of training is performance and so it is important to revisit this concept. Performance has been defined in transfer research by (Broad, 2005:26) as:

> a combination of behaviors by individuals, groups and teams and the accomplishments (products and services) that they produce. Thus, performance is a combination of the behaviors (decisions and actions) of those who do the work and the products and services that result from those decisions and actions.

A performer is the individual, who works alone, or in a group or team, for the completion of tasks and whose performance is influenced by several stakeholders, including managers, supervisors, peers and customers (Broad, 2005).

Although the above definition includes the concepts of behaviour, teamwork, performance outcomes, decisions, actions, and the stakeholders involved, more elaboration is needed to reveal the underlying processes and mechanisms that interact and drive training transfer. Campbell et al. (1993) provide a more complete definition than Broad (2005) emphasising specific interacting factors which result in performance-declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge and skill, and motivation. Declarative knowledge refers to the knowledge of facts and general principles encompassing employee knowledge of task and job requirements. Procedural knowledge and skill point to employee ability to use declarative knowledge to perform a task effectively. Finally, motivation results from three types of choices employees make: the choice to contribute effort, the degree of effort they choose to contribute and the choice to persist and contribute the same level of effort until they achieve a goal. Indeed one of the eight factors in Campbell et al.,'s (1993) model of performance is demonstrated effort referring to the consistent and extra effort employees willingly contribute to achieve a goal even in difficult situations 'in which individuals commit themselves to all job tasks, work at high levels of intensity, and keep working when it is cold, wet or late' (p.47). Demonstrated effort is a component of performance of all jobs (Lloyd, 2008; Campbell et al., 1993). The issues discussed above are important for transfer which is employee performance. The discussion by Campbell et al. (1993) clearly highlights that to perform employees must simultaneously synthesise knowledge, motivation, skills and effort. This stresses the fact that training alone cannot activate this process since more factors mediate training and performance. This also strengthens the arguments of this

study that to activate performance, the organisation needs to have an HR system and job design properly enacted by the manager to increase intrinsic job satisfaction, create mutual gains, elicit employee DE and facilitate high training transfer.

2.3.3. Discretionary Effort (DE) as an antecedent of high training transfer

This section discusses the premise that high training transfer is a discretionary activity by employees. To activate and synthesise various skills and perform effectively, employees must expend DE and so it is necessary to examine its meaning. An organisation's workforce is not utilised to the maximum and employees have the potential to contribute more (Bailey, 1993). There always remains a degree of effort that employees provide at their discretion and its value is higher than the value of organisational resources devoted to elicit it (Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Bailey, 1993). Lloyd (2003:72) defines DE as "the voluntary effort employees spend that lies above the minimum level of effort required in order to keep the job and is directed toward organisational goals" (in Lloyd, 2008: 22). When contributing DE, employees perform beyond the duties defined in their job description or the employment contract. DE is voluntary on-the-job behaviour maintained over time such as working more intensely and persistently to achieve an outcome. Indeed, it is the voluntary aspect of Campbell et al.,'s (1993) demonstrated effort essential in every job (Lloyd, 2008; Gellatly et al., 2006). DE mediates HR practices and organisational performance through individual performance and activates positive employees' attitudes towards their job and the organisation, such as job satisfaction and commitment (Lloyd, 2008; Hutchinson et al., 2002; Bailey, 1993). This constitutes the linkage with organisational performance outcomes and the organisational HR system should positively affect

employee attitudes to elicit DE (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Gellatly et al., 2006; Hutchinson et al., 2002). This justifies the need to embed training in the organisational HR system and in line with job redesign since training alone cannot sufficiently affect employees' attitudes in a positive way (Kontoghiorghes, 2004).

Expending DE is a qualitative, rather than a quantitative, process. Employees do not have to work harder but better, using more creativity and imagination, and applying their tacit knowledge, experience and initiative on the job (Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Ramsay et al., 2000; Bailey, 1993). Doing an intrinsically satisfying and challenging job, employees are more likely to contribute DE. Further, DE is extra role behaviour resulting in performance and can be expressed in any role employees adopt being exhibited because employees perform beyond formal responsibilities (Lloyd, 2008; Hutchinson et al., 2002). Because DE is behaviour it can be used as a performance measure and although it might be unnoticed by managers, it contributes to organisational competitive advantage (Dubinsky and Skinner, 2002).

The important question is how the organisation can elicit employee DE. The answer is partly found in factors included in the organisational HR system. They are bundles of HR practices and job design which impact on employee ability, motivation and opportunity to participate and correspond to a High Performance Work System (HPWS) (Batt, 2002; Dubinsky and Skinner, 2002; Hutchinson et al., 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; MacDuffie, 1995; Bailey, 1993). Employees contribute DE if they possess the skills to do their job whereas in the opposite case DE may be considered a replacement for the lack of skills (Lloyd, 2008; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Bailey, 1993). However, even if employees possess skills, they also need extrinsic and intrinsic incentives to motivate them. Finally, they also need opportunities to participate in decision making and problem solving, authority and autonomy to act as well as job

security in the organisation (Lloyd, 2008; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994).

An HR system which builds ability, motivates and provides employees with opportunities to participate can elicit DE and bring benefits to the organisation. However, HPWSs aim to boost individual performance in a competitive environment rather than positively affect employee attitudes and feelings per se (Kraiger et al., 2004). In case this happens, it is an indirect effect (Appelbaum et al., 2001). As critics argue, HPWSs have a negative impact on employees due to workload and high stress (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Bosalie et al., 2005; White et al., 2003; Godard, 2001; Ramsay et al., 2000; MacDuffie, 1995). Employees can have a negative experience due to the implementation of a HPWS in relation to management relationships, job discretion, salary satisfaction, job security and commitment, all of which reduce DE (Ramsay et al., 2000). This is probably due to the emphasis of HPWSs on the technical rather than the social system in the organisation (Guest, 2002). However, as Dubinsky and Skinner (2002) argue, the antecedents of DE span a broad spectrum of factors ranging from the organisational culture and structure, the manager's attitude and style, the relationship with peers, employees' personality and expectations, customer expectations, as well as economic and industry conditions in the external environment. Namely, they are active both in the technical and the social organisational systems. Thus, the other part of the answer is found in the social system and the way it interacts with the technical one to activate variables leading to high training transfer.

All the points discussed above have important implications for training transfer. They show that it is simplistic to assume that training alone can account for all the factors that elicit DE or even that the technical HR system alone can lead to individual performance or affect the way people do their jobs (Harley, 2002). Thus, the arguments of this thesis

are strengthened. For high training transfer to take place, employees need to contribute DE. To achieve this, the technical system, the HR system and job design, must be supported by the social one, namely it must be properly enacted by managers. This provides employees with more task and intellectual discretion, moderates job demands and increases intrinsic job satisfaction (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Truss, 2001; Karasek, 1979). Such interaction can lead to mutual gains for both employees and the organisation, prerequisites for DE and high transfer.

2.3.4. Mutual gains as a prerequisite of DE and high training transfer

The third premise in the thesis was that mutual gains are a prerequisite for employee DE and high transfer. Mutual gains are created in an organisation in which there exists a 'win-win' situation for both employer and employees (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). In such an organisation, the technical and social systems are mutually supportive and contribute to productivity and gains that are shared with employees. This increases employee commitment, essential for DE, and their individual performance contributes to organisational performance and mutual gains (Osterman, 2000).

The technical system, the HR system and job design, includes extrinsic and intrinsic elements which impact on employee attitudes. Since single practices cannot achieve positive performance outcomes, an HR system for mutual gains includes bundles of HR practices that positively affect individual performance, such as high recruitment and selection, high training, high involvement and high compensation (Combs et al., 2006; Delery and Shaw, 2001; Osterman, 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). The number and type of HR practices depends on whether the organisation values employee well-

being (Osterman, 1994). Through its technical system, the organisation builds employee ability, increases motivation and provides opportunities for participation in decision making and problem solving. So, it elicits DE by positively affecting employee attitudes such as intrinsic job satisfaction (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Appelbaum et al., 2000; MacDuffie, 1995; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Employee ability is built through investment in training and development, motivation increases through extrinsic rewards such as financial incentives and job security, or intrinsic ones, such as an intrinsically satisfying job which provides more task and intellectual discretion and moderates job demands (Peccei, 2004; Osterman, 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994; Karasek, 1979). Further, a mutual gains organisation provides stable employment and job security which build employee trust (Osterman, 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994; Osterman, 1994). Trust is fundamental for mutual gains and DE (Kochan and Osterman, 1994) and leads to enhanced performance through more job satisfaction and less stress (Appelbaum et al., 2000). Financial incentives for employees can minimise the differences with management and create trust. They are more effective if they are supplemented with other HR practices increasing employee trust (Hutchinson et al., 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000). Training, for example, is a way to foster trust since employees perceive that the organisation invests in them and provides them with more career development opportunities (Appelbaum et al., 2000).

The social system, the way managers enact the HR system and job design, contributes to mutual gains by providing mostly intrinsic gains for employee intrinsic job satisfaction. This is essential to counter the critique that HR systems increase performance but simultaneously increase job demands and job related stress (Guest, 2002; Godard, 2001; Ramsay et al., 2000). This thesis argues that if managers adopt a 'high road' to management, they enact the HR system and job design effectively

creating a positive informal organisation which results in mutual gains and employee intrinsic job satisfaction through task and intellectual discretion (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Guest, 2002; Truss, 2001; Karasek, 1979). This implies that employees are not 'merely a necessary means to achieving performance' (Sparham and Sung, 2008:6) but are in the centre of analysis (Guest, 2002) since it is they who perform, not the organisation (Kozlowski and Klein, 2000). Management style can decrease job demands and job related stress by giving employees more control and facilitating the way they work (Macky and Boxall, 2008; Felstead et al., 2007; Harley, 2002; Hackman and Oldham, 1975; Lawler et al., 1973). Intrinsically satisfied employees experience feelings of accomplishment, self-esteem and growth and so expend DE and transfer training. So, they achieve goals desired by them and the organisation leading to a 'win-win' situation (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Guest, 2002; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). The social system also increases employee trust for the organisation through organisational values, culture, leadership, management style and peer support (Kochan and Osterman, 1994). The managers' support, the way they enact HR practices and the opportunities they offer to employees to express their views or experiment with new work methods is vital for trust which must pre-exist in the organisation. The implementation of an HR system will not lead to mutual gains and employee DE unless it is introduced in a context characterised by trust (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Hutchinson et al., 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). These points stress the fact that training must be embedded in the organisational HR system so as to lead to high transfer through the mediating drivers of intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and employee DE as this study argues.

2.3.5. Intrinsic job satisfaction as a driver of mutual gains, discretionary effort and high training transfer

The fourth premise of the thesis was that to achieve mutual gains and elicit employee DE for transfer, more than financial or other material rewards are necessary (Godard, 2001). Indeed, employees must experience intrinsic job satisfaction which enhances their experience at work (Sparham and Sung, 2008).

Job satisfaction is influenced by extrinsic and intrinsic factors, or otherwise is dependent on the extrinsic-intrinsic dichotomy (Friedlander, 1963). Extrinsic factors include variables of the technical HR system, such as HR policies and practices for rewards and promotions, job design, working conditions, or technical resources (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994; Wernimont, 1972). However, these extrinsic factors are insufficient in creating mutual gains and eliciting employee DE for high transfer since they do not consider the personal experience of individuals at work (Harley, 2002). Thus, intrinsic factors inherent in the job itself must be considered since they affect the experience employees have in their job (Friedlander, 1963). Also, they stress the need for job redesign after training so that employees are given the opportunity to use trained KSAs (Keep et al., 2006) and enhance training transfer.

Intrinsic factors are found at the job level and the relationship employees have with their job (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). They are activated through flexible job design combining several technical and social aspects which create intrinsic satisfaction with the job in general or with its specific elements. Specific elements include job security, acknowledgement, support and opportunities for personal and professional advancement and development, challenge and creativity, task and intellectual discretion to apply KSAs, undertake a variety of tasks across functions and perform to one's potential, responsibility for one's job and constructive performance-related feedback (Felstead et

al., 2007; Green, 2004; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994; Hackman and Oldham, 1975; Friedlander, 1963). This is particularly important for high training transfer and job redesign after training can provide employees with opportunities to apply new KSAs on the job in a flexible manner overcoming rigidly defined tasks (Baldwin et al., 2009; Osterman, 1994; Ford et al., 1992).

Employees experience intrinsic job satisfaction through "three critical psychological states" created by respective job dimensions (Hackman and Oldham, 1975:160). The first state is employee experience with a job that is personally meaningful and valuable. This creates the feeling that also the outcomes of their efforts are valuable. However, individuals differ and so they value different job characteristics (Hackman and Oldham, 1975; Hackman and Lawler, 1971). For employees with high expectations and high need satisfaction, the job is valuable and meaningful if it involves: a variety of tasks and skills and gives them the opportunity to use the KSAs and talents they value; task identity or the whole process of performance through which employees do the job, complete it and see its outcome which is personally valued; and task significance related to the importance of the job for the organisation and its stakeholders. The second critical state is the feeling of personal responsibility employees have for the outcomes of their job and the fact that these outcomes, whether positive or negative, are the result of their own efforts. Responsibility is created by the autonomy employees have to plan their work, decide how to perform tasks and which resources to use. The third psychological state is knowledge of the job's outcomes gained through feedback. Feedback can come either from the job itself when the employee successfully completes a given task or from the manager, supervisor or peers. The second type of feedback is not an element of the job itself but relates to the social support at work (Hackman and Oldham, 1975; Lawler et al., 1973; Hackman and Lawler, 1971).

Intrinsic job satisfaction is related to commitment (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Lau, 2000). Commitment is essential for mutual gains, DE and high transfer since committed employees identify with the organisation, enjoy being its members and contribute with high performance (Godard, 2001; Osterman, 2000; Allen and Meyer, 1990). For this reason, they can contribute DE and transfer training. However, employees need to be compensated for this commitment by the organisation with extrinsic and intrinsic gains especially if they sacrifice better employment opportunities in other organisations (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Osterman, 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). All the dimensions discussed above must be present for intrinsic job satisfaction (Hackman and Lawler, 1971) whose contribution to high training transfer is explored in this study.

2.4. Conclusions

This chapter presented how the literature review was conducted. It discussed the antecedents of high training transfer and specifically skills in service organisations, employee performance, DE, mutual gains and intrinsic job satisfaction. Such a discussion was essential to set the background for the critical analysis of the theoretical underpinnings to transfer and their strengths and weaknesses in Chapter 3 based on the AMO framework. It was also essential for the discussion of the High Training Transfer System as an innovative HR-based transfer system which can be implemented to address the transfer problem and lead to high transfer.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS TO ON-THE-JOB TRAINING TRANSFER AND THE HIGH TRAINING TRANSFER SYSTEM

3.1. Introduction

This chapter critically discusses the theoretical underpinnings to transfer research and their strengths and weaknesses in relation to resolving the transfer problem. This discussion is structured around the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework used in HPWSs research. Also, this chapter presents the High Training Transfer System (HTTS) based on the AMO framework too and so creates a meaningful basis for comparison between the existing literature and the arguments of this study and a way to provide recommendations to address the transfer problem.

The chapter first focuses on on-the-job training transfer and critically discusses definitions, factors and dimensions of transfer as well as the recommendations made by transfer research to build employee ability, increase motivation and provide opportunities to perform. This discussion also includes inconsistent findings in transfer research and the need for further research. Next, the chapter presents the HTTS and recommends how to build employee ability, increase motivation and provide opportunities to perform through the interaction between the technical and social systems in the organisation as the process to activate intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE and lead to high training transfer.

3.2. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS TO ON-THE-JOB TRAINING TRANSFER

3.2.1. Definitions of training transfer in the transfer literature

According to transfer research, transfer occurs when employees have the necessary KSAs and the motivation to transfer them on the job and maintain them in the long run (Kontoghiorghes, 2004 and 2002; Seyler et al., 1998). Transfer researchers have provided a number of definitions, emphasising different aspects of transfer. For example, Wexley and Latham (1981) define transfer as "the extent to which what is learned in training is applied to the job and enhances job-related performance" (in Laker, 1990: 209). Baldwin and Ford (1988: 63) emphasise effectiveness in saying that transfer is "the degree to which trainees effectively apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained in a training context to the job." Broad and Newstrom (1992:6) focus on continuity in addition to effectiveness and define transfer as "the effective and continuing application, by trainees to their jobs, of the knowledge and skills gained in training- both on and off the job". Furthermore, Ford and Weissbein (1997:34) are concerned with generalisation and continuity in claiming that transfer is the "extent to which knowledge and skills acquired in a training setting are generalised and maintained over a period of time in the job setting".

All the above definitions provided by transfer researchers are important. However, they mostly describe the outcomes rather than the process of training transfer. This is a weakness since they fail to explain 'how' and 'why' training transfers on the job. Indeed, this weakness is addressed in this thesis and a new definition is provided below.

3.2.2. A definition of high training transfer

Carefully considering the definitions of training transfer above and accepting the importance of effectiveness, continuity and generalisation that they stress, this study argues that they are inadequate since they focus on the outcomes rather than the process and mediators of training transfer. To address their weaknesses, a new definition is proposed which includes several factors that affect the transfer process beyond training:

> *Training transfer is a discretionary activity referring to changes in employee performance which result from the effective and long term application and generalisation of new KSAs on the job. These changes are driven by the organisational HR system and job design and by their proper enactment by the manager which increase employee intrinsic job satisfaction, create mutual gains and elicit DE as antecedents to high training transfer.*

This definition of high training transfer is recommended as a more complete representation of the outcomes of training transfer but more importantly of the factors influencing the transfer process beyond training justifying the how and the why employees transfer training on the job.

3.2.3. Factors affecting training transfer

The transfer literature considers several factors affecting on-the-job training transfer. The factors most widely cited comprise training design including learning goals and objectives, instructional methods, post-training techniques for relapse prevention or error management (Grossman and Salas, 2011; Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Russ-Eft, 2002; Baldwin and Ford, 1988); trainee characteristics such as cognitive ability, self-efficacy, motivation, personality, perceived relevance and utility of training, openness to experience, or conscientiousness (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Ford and Weissbein, 1997; Facteau et al., 1995; Tannenbaum, et al., 1991; Bandura,

1982); and the work environment which encompasses a transfer climate, social support, feedback and follow up, as well as opportunities and autonomy to perform (Grossman and Salas, 2011; Alvarez et al., 2004; Salas et al., 1999; Ford and Weissbein, 1997; Baldwin and Ford, 1988). Although the importance of other HR practices and their influence on transfer is acknowledged by transfer research (Grossman and Salas, 2011; Anguinis and Kraiger, 2009; Baldwin et al., 2009), in essence it does not explore them. Rather, it focuses mostly on training and on the micro level of employee performance. The only experiential testing of the impact of other HR practices on training transfer was provided by Kontoghiorghes (2004 and 2002) through the systemic model of training transfer he recommended. This is a gap that this research bridges by exploring in what ways training and other factors at the micro level are embedded in, and affected by, technical and social factors at the macro level which impact on employee intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE for high training transfer.

3.2.4. Dimensions of training transfer

Training transfer comprises several dimensions (Klink et al., 2001; Salas and Cannon-Bowers, 2001). The first is the direction of transfer which can be either positive leading to desired performance or negative not affecting performance as expected (Klink et al., 2001). Complexity includes lateral transfer when trainees perform tasks of equal complexity as the ones trained and vertical transfer when they perform tasks similar but more complex than those trained (Klink et al., 2001; Salas and Cannon-Bowers, 2001). A temporal or generalisability dimension includes transfer initiation referring to trainee effort to use new KSAs and transfer maintenance relating to continuous trainee effort to use new KSAs in new settings (Chiaburu and Tekleab, 2005; Laker, 1990). Adaptability, or the distance dimension, takes place when trainees realise that existing

work methods are not appropriate and so they learn new KSAs and develop new strategies to face more complex situations and adapt to changing contexts (Ford and Weissbein, 1997). Adaptability includes near transfer which is the application of new KSAs in situations similar to those of training and far transfer involving application of KSAs in different situations (Klink et al., 2001; Broad and Newstrom, 1992; Laker, 1990). A taxonomy of near and far transfer includes the content and context dimensions which influence what, when and where KSAs are transferred. The content dimension defines the generalisability or specificity of new KSAs, desired performance changes and the memory demanded for transfer. The transfer context refers to the physical context, the time, functional and social context in which trainees transfer new KSAs. This taxonomy further includes open and closed skills depending on whether the transfer situation is routine or novel, the work and training contexts are similar, new KSAs are learnt individually or in a team and whether they are transferred in the short or long run (Barnett and Ceci, 2002). Given the complexity of jobs and the necessity to solve problems and make effective decisions (Klink et al., 2001), these dimensions have important implications for transfer and may differ both among trainees and for one trainee at different times (Laker, 1990). These dimensions match to a large extent the definitions of transfer presented above. They acknowledge genaralisability and continuity as important for transfer and further stress task complexity and adaptability. The dimension that is relevant to the scope of this research is the context dimension which encompasses the functional, or technical context, and the social one influencing transfer. Transfer research discusses the social context extensively and identifies how it affects employees for effective on-the-job transfer. This is a point to be elaborated below. However, the technical HR system which operates at a macro level is not investigated in the transfer literature. Rather, transfer research is subfunctional

examining only the effects of training on transfer (Baldwin et al., 2009; Kontoghiorghes, 2004). This is the gap that this research seeks to bridge since it is a reason for the transfer problem.

3.3. Transfer of training through the lens of the AMO framework

Using the AMO framework, this section presents how transfer research proposes to build employee ability, increase motivation and provide opportunities to perform to enhance training transfer.

This thesis argues that the way transfer research views these three processes leads to an impasse. It examines training in isolation from other HR practices and focuses mostly on instructional design, trainee characteristics, and the training and work environment assuming the broader organisational context as neutral and so proves inadequate to address the transfer problem by being subfunctional.

3.3.1. Building employee ability through training design

According to transfer research, the primary means through which an organisation can build employee ability is training based on training design for the acquisition of new KSAs and their transfer on the job. Training design is defined as "the degree to which (1) training has been designed and delivered to give employees the ability to transfer learning to the job, and (2) training instructions match job requirements" (Holton et al., 2000:345). Effective design emerges from employee performance needs and goals, principles of learning and instructional methods, relevant content reflecting job requirements, and self-management techniques (Velada et al., 2007; Lim and Morris, 2006; Taylor, et al., 1998; Baldwin and Ford, 1988).

3.3.1.1. Training Needs Analysis

Training Needs Analysis (TNA) identifies employee performance goals and defines learning goals (Broad, 2005; Broad and Newstrom, 1992). Clear short and long-term performance goals raise employee awareness of performance expectations and behavioral objectives elicit desired behaviours (Brown, 2005; Richman-Hirsch, 2001; Taylor et al., 1998; Mager, 1997 and 1962; Gagne, 1965) by focusing employee attention during training, supporting learning, and increasing transfer motivation (Brown, 2005; Locke and Latham, 2002). To increase transfer, employees must perceive these goals and objectives as important and receive the manager's support to achieve them (Broad, 2005; Guadine and Saks, 2004; Kontoghiorghes, 2001; Kraiger et al., 1995).

3.3.1.2. Instructional design

Training design also comprises instructional design. It includes first identical elements theory and supports near transfer of KSAs between similar training and transfer contexts (Yamnill and McLean, 2001; Laker, 1990; Thorndike and Woodworth, 1901). Training goals and content reflecting jobs requirements positively influence employee perceptions for transfer (Lim and Morris, 2006; Rodriguez and Gregory, 2005; Holton et al., 2000; Yamnill and McLean, 2001; Baldwin and Ford, 1988). Second, instructional design includes principles theory for far transfer through general principles which employees can apply on the job in novel situations (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Alvarez et al., 2004; Lim, 2000; Laker, 1990). Principles are open skills which enable employees to respond to any job situation freely (Yelon and Ford in Baldwin et al., 2009). Third, it includes distributed practice of new KSAs in realistic tasks and timely and specific feedback which facilitate transfer (Velada et al., 2007; Holladay and

Quinones, 2003; Russ-Eft, 2002). Behavioral modeling is a transfer variable related to self-efficacy which provides employees with behavioural rules to follow in different circumstances (Bandura, 1997; Decker and Nathan, 1985). Employees transfer training by generalising the model's positive behaviours in new tasks or by rejecting negative ones (Baldwin et al., 2009; Taylor et al., 1998).

Instructional techniques for far transfer foresee that employees are aware of the types of KSAs they learn and practise them in different contexts, exposed to different stimuli and situations. Feedback, autonomy and initiative contribute to far transfer (Laker, 1990).[1] Post-training self-management strategies which employees develop through performance plans and goals regulate their behaviour and increase transfer (Burke and Hutchins, 2007). Relapse prevention is an important post training strategy helping employees sustain behaviour changes after training and transfer new KSAs (Baldwin et al., 2009; Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Guadine and Saks, 2004; Burke and Baldwin, 1999).[2] Goal setting and follow up sessions combined with self-management techniques increase skill generalisation (Baldwin et al., 2009). Transfer is also affected by the perceived relevance and value of training for the employee's job covering immediate performance needs (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Lim and Morris, 2006; Yelon et al., 2004; Ruona et al., 2003; Baldwin and Ford, 1988).

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[1] Other instructional techniques include part versus whole-task training, lectures, role plays, group exercises, or games, simulations or analogies, coaching for employee support after the training, advance organisers, active learning, over-learning, error-based learning, guided discovery, action planning upon completion of the training intervention (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Lim and Morris, 2006; Alvarez et al., 2004; Russ-Eft, 2002; Lim, 2000; Baldwin and Ford, 1988). They are not discussed in detail since they are more technical and they fall beyond the scope of this thesis.

[2] RP has certain stages to be effective: set goals of how skills will be maintained, define what a slip could be and the consequent relapse, consider the benefits or problems if skills are applied, define cognitive and behavioural techniques for transfer, anticipate what a first slip could be, develop skills to cope with the slip, and finally monitor performance at work (Marx, 1986 in Hutchins and Burke, 2006).

3.3.1.3. Inconsistent findings and further research

Training design factors influence on-the-job training transfer through their effect on employee ability (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Yelon et al., 2004; Ruona et al., 2002; Alliger et al., 1997). Due to inconsistent findings, however, further research is needed for more solid findings on the link between these factors and transfer. More research must prove the link between learning and performance goals and transfer as well as between self-management strategies and relapse prevention techniques and transfer (Burke and Hutchins, 2007). Although training design contributes to employee ability, it is only part of the training process and there is no concrete evidence of how it leads to training transfer and performance (Swanson, 2003; Rossett, 1999). Often performance problems emerge not from the lack of KSAs but from poor management and unclear job specifications, irrelevant feedback, insufficient resources, a negative work climate or lack of social support (Rummler and Brache, 1995). The focus of transfer research on training and training design, and its arguments that design can increase transfer, partly account for the transfer problem. Transfer research assumes that training design can lead to transfer by providing relevant content which is perceived by employees as important and thus increases motivation to transfer. This, however, is an arbitrary assumption since motivation is a process developing as a result of the individual's interaction with their work environment and so to elicit it requires more than training design (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Chiaburu and Tekleab, 2005). This reveals the subfunctional approach of transfer research towards training and transfer which assumes the organisational context as neutral (Baldwin et al., 2009; Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Baldwin and Magjuka, 1997).

This thesis argues that the elements of training design examined above are important but not adequate to support training transfer. Although effective training design is essential

to build employee ability, more is required to sustain it and enhance training transfer. Training must be embedded in an organisational HR system bundled with other HR practices, such as appropriate recruitment and selection, rewards and promotions, as well as effective job design. Through this process mutual gains can be created and employee DE can be elicited for high training transfer (Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). These are all issues to be explored in this research.

3.3.2. Increasing employee transfer motivation

Motivation has an important effect on individual performance (Campbell et al., 1993). The transfer literature considers employee motivation critical for transfer (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Vermeulen and Admiraal, 2008; Alvarez et al., 2004; Kontoghiorghes, 2004 and 2002). Motivation emerges from the interaction of individuals with their work environment and mediates training, learning and transfer (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Chiaburu and Tekleab, 2005). Even if individuals acquire new KSAs, they do not transfer them on the job unless they are motivated (Bailey, 1993; Baldwin and Magjuka, 1991). Motivation to transfer is defined as 'the intended effort towards utilising the skills and knowledge learned in a training atmosphere to the real work situation' (Seyler et al., 1998: 4). It is influenced by employee perceptions of the utility of new KSAs for their job and by situational characteristics (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Chiaburu and Marinova, 2005; Colquitt et al., 2000; Ford and Weissbein, 1997).

Transfer motivation is time bound affected before, during and after training. It is affected by work environment factors, such as culture, climate, social support and training design factors (Broad and Newstrom, 1992). Effective training design is essential for learning and transfer, since without learning no new KSAs are transferred (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Broad, 2005; Broad and Newstrom, 1992). Employees need

to perceive training content as relevant and useful for their job to learn and apply it on the job (Chiaburu and Marinova, 2005; Bates and Holton, 2004). However, even if learning is assessed with tests, self or supervisory reports, caution is needed before safely assuming that learning leads to transfer (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009).

Other important factors that affect transfer motivation and contribute to far transfer of KSAs across different situations are related to employees' job satisfaction and commitment; expectations of the contribution of their effort to performance and the resulting rewards; and the perception of themselves and others at work (Chiaburu and Marinova, 2005; Bates and Holton, 2004; Holladay and Quinones, 2003; Ruona et al., 2002; Bandura, 2001; Bates, 2001; Seyler et al., 1998; Tannenbaum et al., 1991).

3.3.2.1. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction affects transfer motivation (Gilley and Hoekstra, 2003; Holton et al., 1997). It includes affective employee reactions to the job resulting from the comparison between their expectations and desired and actual outcomes. When expectations are not met, employees are not satisfied and performance drops (Cheng and Hampson, 2008; Lim and Morris, 2006). Intrinsic and extrinsic elements affect job satisfaction. The former include job design characteristics such as autonomy, an interesting and challenging job, and quality of work life. The latter include financial rewards, and recognition or promotion opportunities. Further, employees' career goals motivate them to acquire and transfer new KSAs to achieve these goals (Egan et al., 2004; Kontoghiorghes, 2002; Colquitt et al., 2000; Ford and Weissbein, 1997).

3.3.2.2. Commitment

Job satisfaction moderates employee commitment, also necessary for transfer (Bartlett, 2001). Commitment is defined as "a function of career commitment, organisational commitment (affective and continuance), job involvement and work ethic" (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009: 408). It pre-exists training and affects employees' reactions to it and their transfer motivation (Seyler et al., 1998). Employee commitment is not directly affected by training but influences learning and transfer indirectly through pre-training motivation (Kontoghiorghes, 2004 and 2002; Seyler et al., 1998). Committed employees learn and transfer KSAs and perform better by being motivated and engaged in their job, caring about the organisation and having positive relationships with managers, supervisors and peers (Kontoghiorghes, 2004 and 2002; Naquin and Holton, 2002; Mathieu et al., 1992). They believe in the organisational mission and values, wish to stay in the organisation and put more effort on their job (Colquitt et al., 2000; Tannenbaum et al., 1991). Commitment positively influences employee perception of training especially if it meets their expectations because it is perceived as an investment by the organisation (Facteau et al., 1995; Tannenbaum et al., 1991).

3.3.2.3. Perceptions of self and others

Employee perceptions of themselves, their job and the organisation influence transfer through motivation (Baldwin and Ford, 1988). Perceptions create a subjective reality for employees and influence the way they receive and understand training (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). Trainee perceptions should be taken into consideration during the design, implementation and evaluation of training and expected training transfer because of three issues emerging from trainee subjective reality: first, employees do not perceive the implementation of training and the impact on their performance in the same

way. Training is filtered through their perception of its value and relevance for their job, as well as the reasons for its implementation (Nishii et al., 2008; Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). Second, trainee perceptions about training differ from those of managers and supervisors. Thus, managers and supervisors need to know trainee perceptions so as to maximise training effectiveness and transfer (Kehoe and Wright, 2010; Liao et al., 2009; Takeuchi et al., 2009). Third, learning and transfer are not given outcomes of training nor do they occur to the same extent for all trainees. Perception, as well as ability, personality and motivation, mediate between training, learning and transfer (Tharenou et al., 2007; Kozlowski et al., 2000; Rousseau, 2000).

3.3.2.4. Employee feelings, self-efficacy and cognitive ability

Employee feelings about the training programme and their perceived ability, or self-efficacy, are also important (Facteau et al., 1995; Rossett, 1987). Anxiety or negative feelings affect training transfer by their impact on motivation (Machin and Fogarty, 2004; Naquin and Holton, 2002; Colquitt et al., 2000). Trainees are more motivated if they believe that they are able to learn and transfer new KSAs; that learning will improve their performance; and that better performance will lead to desired outcomes (Facteau et al., 1995). Self efficacy determines whether trainees perceive themselves as competent to perform tasks effectively (Ford and Weissbein, 1997; Bandura, 1982). High self-efficacy before training increases transfer since trainees are more confident about their ability to perform and more engaged in training (Cheng, 2000; Holton et al., 2000; Mathieu et al., 1992). Cognitive ability helps trainees retain complex skills and improve performance. During training it determines the degree of receiving KSAs effectively and after training it defines the degree of transferring KSAs on the job (Burke and Hutchins, 2007).

3.3.2.5. Inconsistent findings and further research

Motivation affects transfer first through learning and to be motivated to transfer, employees must first be motivated to learn (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Naquin and Holton, 2002; Seyler et al., 1998; Ford and Weissbein, 1997). However, even if employees learn, it has not been evidenced that they also transfer new KSAs and further research is needed to highlight the connection between motivation, learning and transfer as well as the mediating variables in the process (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Noe and Colquitt, 2002; Cheng, 2000). Transfer research does not account for other factors in the organisational context which create or maintain transfer motivation over time. These factors are external to the training programme and supersede training design and learning (Baldwin et al., 2009; Kontoghiorghes, 2004 and 2002; Baldwin and Magjuka, 1997). Research findings are inconsistent in linking job satisfaction and organisational commitment to transfer motivation. Some support a positive correlation between organisational commitment and pre-training motivation (Facteau et al., 1995), whereas others point towards a negative effect (Cheng and Hampson, 2008; Cheng, 2000). Employees decide what to transfer, or not to transfer, according to their perceptions of what is necessary on the job, the practical use of new KSAs and their expectations from transferring new KSAs, such as rewards or career opportunities (Baldwin et al., 2009; Cheng and Hampson, 2008; Yelon et al., 2004).

An issue worth mentioning at this point is that motivation is different from DE. Motivation is the extent to which employees are willing to contribute effort on the job (Dubinsky and Hartley, 1986) or the employee's "intention to act" (Meyer et al., 2004: 995). DE, by contrast, is the energy required so that motivation results in action. Employees may be motivated but not expend DE (Lloyd, 2008). This stresses the fact that motivation is not enough for training transfer and that employees need to contribute

DE which is elicited if training is embedded in the organisational HR system and in line with an effective job design in a supportive social environment.

Further, transfer research considers the training context and the immediate work environment to be primarily important for transfer motivation. Although it recognises the contribution of financial benefits, promotions, or career development, it makes only minimal and descriptive reference to how these factors, active in the broader organisational context, increase transfer motivation. Further, it does not account for the ways in which they foster job satisfaction and commitment, essential for transfer motivation. Thus, it does not explain how and why employees are motivated to transfer training on the job. Indeed, these are issues that this study explores arguing that motivation can lead to action if employees expend DE and to do so their job must be intrinsically satisfying and involve mutual gains (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Kochan and Osterman, 1994).

3.3.3. Providing opportunities to perform trained KSAs on the job

The opportunities employees have for on-the-job transfer is another factor explored by transfer research (Martin, 2010; Lim and Morris, 2006; Lim and Johnson, 2002). It is defined as "the extent to which an employee is provided with, or actively obtains, work experiences relevant to the tasks for which he or she was trained" (Ford et al., 1992: 512). Opportunity to apply trained KSAs after training involves breadth, or the number of performed tasks; activity level or the repetition of trained tasks on the job; and simple or complex tasks performed (Arthur et al., 2003; Tracey et al., 1995; Ford et al., 1992). This process is affected by several factors including a continuous learning culture, a transfer climate and job design (Thayer and Teachout, 1995).

3.3.3.1. A continuous learning culture

A continuous learning culture fosters the belief that the acquisition and transfer of new KSAs is a shared responsibility among organisational members (Gilley and Hoekstra, 2003). It frees the environment from fear and punishment, tolerating error and allowing employees to experiment with new ways of working (Baldwin et al., 2009; Gilley and Hoekstra, 2003; Kontoghiorghes, 2002; Baldwin and Magjuka, 1991). Its salient elements include artifacts- physical and financial resources and management support devoted to training; behavioural patterns- organisational policies and systems for career development, rewards and praise for training (Ruona et al., 2003; Santos and Stuart, 2003; Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993); behavioural norms- the value of training and its benefits for employees (Bunch, 2007; Tracey et al., 1995); work values- ambition, teamwork, respect, obedience and quality over quantity (Bunch, 2007; Bennett et al., 1999); and fundamental assumptions- unconscious values which affect employees' attitudes, behavior and performance and solidify through employee organisational experience (Schein, 1984). Employees might perform better because of new KSAs but attribute this to other factors (Bates and Khasawneh, 2005; Tracey et al., 1995; Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993).

A continuous learning culture fosters cooperation among organisational members who exchange information and learn together on the job. Social support by the manager, supervisor and peers mediates training and transfer by positively affecting employee perception and transfer motivation (Martin, 2010; Baldwin et al., 2009; Velada et al., 2007; Bates and Khasawneh, 2005; Broad, 2005; Chiaburu and Marinova, 2005; Facteau et al., 1995).

Managers and supervisors affect development opportunities through co-operation and the resources they allocate to enhance training transfer and improve employee

prospects. In this way, they build a relationship of trust, and foster sincere communication and mutual respect (Bates and Khasawneh, 2005; McLagan, 2003; Tracey et al., 1995; Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993). They affect job design by setting agreed goals and delegating responsibilities to peers so as to reduce workload and facilitate employees to practise and integrate new KSAs in their job (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Broad, 2005; Clarke, 2002; Richman-Hirsch, 2001; Broad and Newstrom, 1992). Flexible job procedures and challenging projects also facilitate far transfer of new KSAs (Martin, 2010; Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Taylor et al., 2005; Holton et al., 2000; Seyler, et al., 1998; Facteau et al., 1995). They frame training and communicate its importance to employees, define how new KSAs should be used and how fast performance changes are expected (Cromwell and Kolb, 2004; Ford et al., 1992). However, both managers and supervisors must have the KSAs to coach and give feedback to employees and be role models by transferring their own KSAs (Martin, 2010; Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Clarke, 2002; Klink et al., 2001). Managers and supervisors motivate employees by communicating the strategic link of training with performance, encouraging participation, providing feedback, and giving rewards (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Broad, 2005; Chiaburu and Marinova, 2005; Lim and Johnson, 2002). These opportunities sustain KSAs enhancing thus the importance of managerial and supervisory support for transfer (Lim and Morris, 2006; Kontoghiorghes, 2002; Ruona et al., 2002; Russ-Eft, 2002; Colquitt et al., 2000). Managerial and supervisory support inhibits transfer if employees feel it constrains their autonomy. This might happen because employees choose a social group as their referent in the workplace and, if managers and supervisors do not belong to it, transfer becomes problematic (Cheng and Hampson, 2008; Nijman et al., 2006).

Peer support is another social aspect affecting transfer (Chiaburu and Marinova, 2005; Hawley and Barnard, 2005; Cromwell and Kolb, 2004; Klink et al., 2001; Holton et al., 1997). Peers can cooperate with the employee in defining learning goals, encourage participation and provide assistance with problem-solving as well as discuss the use of new KSAs (Hawley and Barnard, 2005; Facteau et al., 1995). Peers minimise resistance to transfer emerging from employee perceptions that transferring new KSAs requires them to put more effort to change the way they work (Bates et al., 2000; Holton et al., 1997). Peer support also encourages transfer by changing the negative climate caused by compulsory training (Cromwell and Kolb, 2004). Peer support further may replace weak manager and supervisor support (Bates et al., 2000).

Third, a continuous learning culture rewards achievements and development through transfer. It enables employees to change through critical reflection and self-understanding and interact with their environment in new ways. It fosters individual growth and development and helps employees be competitive by building on their talents (Bates and Khasawneh, 2005; Gilley and Maycunich, 2000). Such a culture also fosters competition in the market and expects employees to expend effort and be high performers (Gilley and Hoekstra, 2003; Tracey et al., 1995). It supports and rewards individual and group learning and opens the organisation to the external environment so it can learn from customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders (Bates and Khasawneh, 2005; McLagan, 2003; Tracey et al., 1995; Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993).

3.3.3.2. The organisational transfer climate

The organisational transfer climate affects opportunity to perform trained KSAs on the job (Thayer and Teachout, 1995; Tracey et al., 1995). It comprises "those situations and consequences that either inhibit or help to facilitate the transfer of what has been

learned in training into the job situation" (Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993:379). This climate is shaped by the individual reference frame about formal training and perceptions of the work environment (Gilley and Hoekstra, 2003; Tracey et al., 1995). It mediates the work environment and employee attitudes and behavior which support near and far transfer (Martin, 2010; Holton et al., 2000; Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993). Even if learning takes place during training, a supportive transfer climate is required so as to enhance transfer (Holton et al., 1997; Mathieu et al., 1992). The transfer climate is affected by cultural salient features which shape individual perceptions of the value and benefits of transfer for performance and career development (Velada et al., 2007; Bates and Khasawneh, 2005; Gilley and Hoekstra, 2003; Tracey et al., 1995). Rouiller and Goldstein (1993) distinguish the transfer climate elements in two categories: first, situational cues including goals set by managers requiring the use of new KSAs; social cues including supervisor and peer behaviours supporting employees to use new KSAs; task cues involving the design of tasks so that KSAs are used; and, finally, self control cues enabling employees to consciously decide which KSAs to apply. Second, consequences include positive, negative or no feedback, positive or negative reinforcement and punishment. The type of manager feedback employees receive, workplace sanctions and the acceptance of transfer by experienced peers affect training transfer (Colquitt et al., 2000; Thayer and Teachout, 1995; Tracey et al., 1995). The transfer climate mediates employee differences and transfer since employees perceive it differently in relation to their manager, peers and themselves and if their perceptions are positive, then transfer is enhanced (Martin, 2010; Pervaiz et al., 2009; Lim and Morris, 2006; Kontoghiorghes, 2001; Holton et al., 1997).

3.3.3.3 Time required to transfer training and job design

Opportunity to perform trained KSAs on the job has temporal and job design dimensions (Martin, 2010; Baldwin et al., 2009; Burke and Hutchins, 2008). Transfer usually takes place more in the long (one year) than in the short run (one or three months) (Cromwell and Kolb, 2004). Employees have more opportunities to apply new KSAs in the long run than immediately after training (Russ-Eft, 2002). This happens due to workload, promotion opportunities or financial rewards (Cromwell and Kolb, 2004; Guadine and Saks, 2004).

Job design elements, such as job autonomy, challenging tasks, participative goal setting, the pace of team work, and the importance of a job for the organisation affect opportunity to transfer (Baldwin et al., 2009; Kontoghiorghes, 2002 and 2004; Ford et al., 1992). Job autonomy and challenging tasks based on organisational and department goals and the balance between goals and training, encourage employees to use new KSAs and experiment with new ways of working (Kontoghiorghes, 2001). The pace of teamwork defines the number of tasks to be performed at a certain time. A fast pace does not give employees time to apply new KSAs or managers and supervisors to provide feedback and so employees use existing KSAs. However, high work demands might create a more challenging work context for transfer (Hawley and Barnard, 2005; Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993; Ford et al., 1992). The importance of a job for the organisation is reflected in employee development, favourable task components including tools and equipment, or financial and material resources which increase transfer motivation (Colquitt et al., 2000; Seyler et al., 1998; Facteau et al., 1995).

3.3.3.4. Inconsistent findings and further research

Opportunity to perform trained KSAs on the job is important for transfer to take place. However, its elements remain underexplored in transfer research. Despite findings on the value of a continuous learning culture, a transfer climate, social support and job design for transfer, it is not clear how they are created and sustained leading to inconsistent or inadequate findings and requiring further research. Although organisational rewards and development opportunities are mentioned, the way these variables contribute to transfer is not fully examined (Noe and Colquitt, 2002; Cheng, 2000; Colquitt et al., 2000; Holton et al., 2000; Facteau et al., 1995). Inadequate findings exist for the impact of the transfer climate on transfer (Burke and Hutchins, 2007) such as attempts to measure its effect with the Learning Transfer System Inventory (LTSI) developed by Holton et al. (2000).[3] Despite studies evidencing the effect of social support on transfer (Holton et al., 2000; Seyler et al., 1998), others report no relationship (van der Klink et al., 2001; Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993). The organisational context, as for example organisational culture, can minimise or enhance the effect of social support (Bates and Holton, 2004; Holton et al., 2003). Social support enhances training transfer (Holton et al., 2000; Seyler et al., 1998) but insignificant or negative correlations have been reported (Cheng and Hampson, 2008; van der Klink et al., 2001; Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993). For peer support to be effective, managers and supervisors must also contribute their own support and create a positive climate (Martin,

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[3] The LTSI is a diagnostic tool used before training to evaluate the transfer system in the organisation and after training to evaluate training results. The transfer system in an organisation includes all the influences on transfer emerging from the individual, the training itself and the organisational environment and so includes is effective. It incorporates ability (perceived content utility, transfer design, opportunities to use KSAs on the job, and capacity to transfer); motivation (motivation to transfer KSAs, effort expended for transfer, and expectations of the outcomes of improved performance); and the work environment (supervisor and peer support, feedback and coaching, openness to change, and expected positive or negative outcomes from transferring KSAs). Employee perceptions and expectations for the outcomes of training and social support in the organisation are influenced by the transfer climate (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Holton et al., 2000 and 2003). All these are variables that have an impact on transfer. It is important to identify these factors since organisations differ in their unique culture and work environment and so the effects on the transfer system cannot be generalised (Holton et al., 2003). There is scant evidence which links the application of the LTSI with increased transfer and studies which applied it consider that the model does not capture organisational complexity (Cheng and Hampson, 2008; Burke and Hutchins, 2007).

2010; Klink et al., 2001). Peer support may affect transfer more than supervisory support (Ruona et al., 2002) but despite the important role of peers for transfer, they are not the only ones who affect the process (Martin, 2010; Colquitt et al., 2000). Other studies show that supervisory support correlates with transfer more than peer support (Blume et al., 2010).

This study explores how opportunities to apply new KSAs and perform are offered by the broad organisational HR system and job redesign, not only training, so as to increase intrinsic job satisfaction and provide mutual gains for employees to expend DE and lead to high training transfer. Transfer research does not examine these issues and despite recommendations by Rouiller and Goldstein (1993) for task and self control cues which call for a redesign of tasks to incorporate new KSAs and employee discretion on how to use them, no empirical findings exist. Concerning the social system, one point is important: transfer is enhanced if training is embedded in the organisational HR system in line with job design and properly enacted by managers (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Purcell, 1999). Transfer research acknowledges the value of managerial support but it mostly describes, rather than recommends or tests, how it can be effectively enacted. This thesis explores the role of the manager in enabling employees to use their discretion as to how they will do their job and use trained KSAs through the enactment of HR practices and job design. Also, it explores how mutual gains, DE and transfer are affected by job redesign which provides employees with opportunities to perform tasks for which they were trained and increase intrinsic job satisfaction (Felstead et al., 2007; Keep et al., 2006; Harley, 2002; Ford et al., 1992; Karasek, 1979).

Overall, despite the value of transfer research findings, they do not account for how and why transfer takes place and so the transfer problem persists. To address this, it is important that research identifies and accounts for the variables that mediate between

training design, motivation, opportunities to use trained KSAs and training transfer. This chapter continues and addresses this gap by presenting the HTTS and examining how intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE can increase through the interaction of the organisational technical and social systems.

Before discussing the HTTS, Figure 1 is presented including the factors which affect employee ability, motivation and opportunity to transfer trained KSAs according to transfer research.
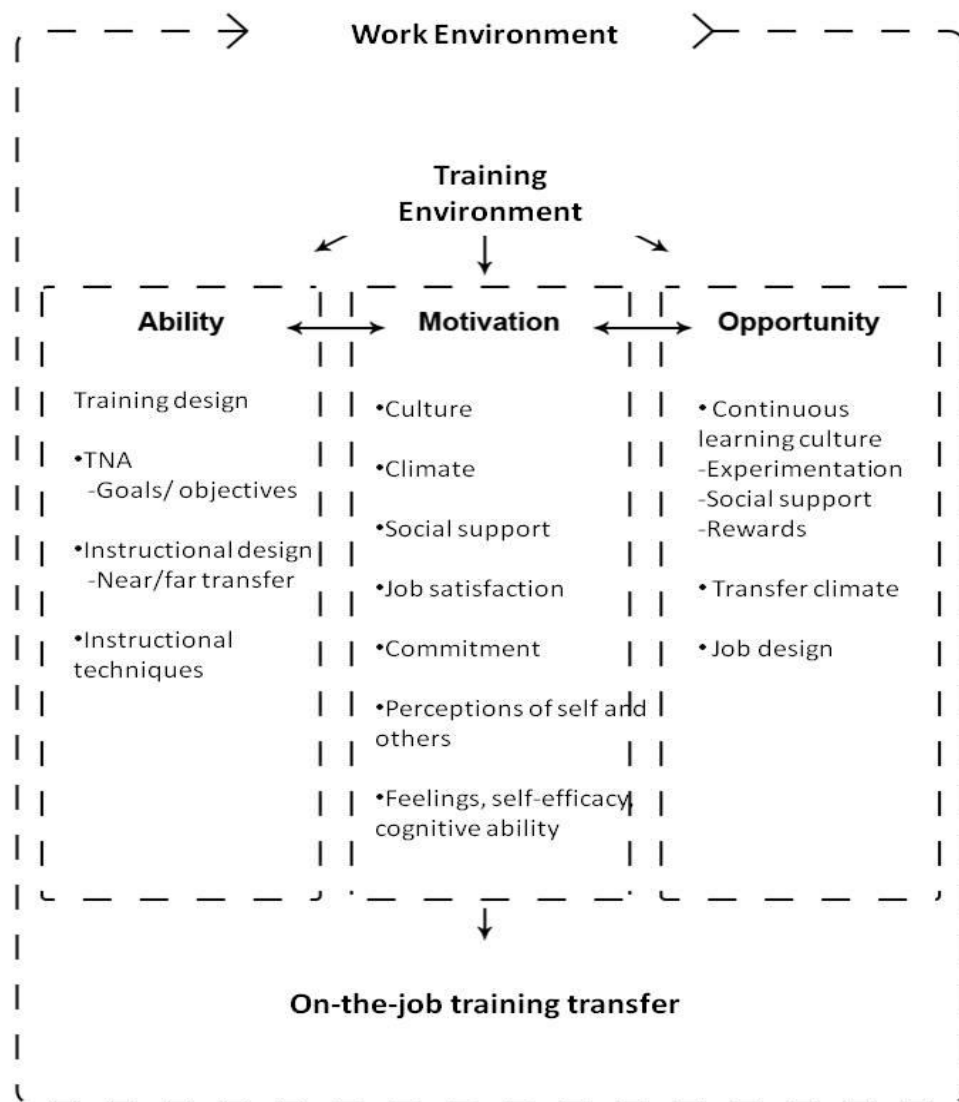
Figure 1. Factors affecting on-the-job training transfer

3.4. ADDRESSING THE TRANSFER PROBLEM THROUGH THE HIGH TRAINING TRANSFER SYSTEM

3.4.1. Introduction

An HR-based transfer system based on the AMO framework, the *High Training Transfer System* (HTTS), is presented here providing a systemic and systematic approach to high training transfer. It discusses how the organisation can build employee ability, motivation and opportunity to participate and perform as a way to positively affect intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains, and DE- the antecedents and drivers of high training transfer.

Synthesising the transfer, HPWSs, mutual gains, DE, job design, skills and performance research, the HTTS first embeds training in the organisational HR system in bundles with mutually reinforcing HR practices appearing in most studies on HPWSs, mutual gains and DE: high recruitment and selection, high training, high rewards, and high involvement (Boxall et al., 2007; Combs et al., 2006; Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Delery and Shaw, 2001). Also, it foresees that job redesign can increase task and intellectual discretion, employee power and intrinsic job satisfaction for high transfer (Lloyd and Payne, 2008; Keep et al., 2006; Karasek, 1979).

Second, the HTTS stresses the role of the social system in the organisation foreseeing that transfer can be achieved if the technical system is properly enacted by managers who contribute their own DE in a favourable social environment (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Hutchinson et al., 2002). This approach brings individuals in the centre of analysis (Guest, 2002) since it is they, and not organisations, who perform (Kozlowski and Klein, 2000) and individual performance precedes organisational outcomes (Wright and Nishii, 2006; Harley, 2002; Dyer and Reeves, 1995).

3.4.2. The technical aspects of the High Training Transfer System

3.4.2.1. Building employee ability through high training, high recruitment and high selection

To transfer training on the job, employees must have the ability to do so. They must possess KSAs required for their job and the organisation, transferrable beyond their narrow job domain, and KSAs that the manager does not possess (Appelbaum et al., 2000; MacDuffie, 1995). Apart from basic and technical skills, employees need problem solving, leadership and social skills- skills that are broad and diverse, unique and transferrable, tangible and intangible, technical and social, intellectual and emotional at the same time. Moreover, they must be able to combine these skills to make the right decisions, solve problems, communicate effectively, cooperate in teams and perform proactively and innovatively so as to support organisational processes and activities (Lloyd and Payne, 2008; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Payne, 2000; Keep and Mayhew, 1999).

Quality training design contributes to building and maintaining employee ability, through near and far transfer. Focused and systematic TNA and effective instructional design principles and techniques are used to develop and deliver training programmes relevant to employees' jobs, their development needs and organisational goals. These include, for example, post training techniques for self-management and relapse prevention, error management and follow up (Grossman and Salas, 2011; Baldwin et al., 2009; Velada et al., 2007; Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Guadine and Saks, 2004; Holladay and Quinones, 2003; Russ-Eft, 2002; Burke and Baldwin, 1999). This is an essential contribution by transfer research and bridges a gap in the HPWSs literature which stresses the need for high training but does not discuss how such training can be designed.

Although essential to build employee ability, training and training design are insufficient: first, ability does not only refer to the short but also to the long term and, second, ability is a characteristic of both individuals and the organisation. Transfer research into how training builds employee ability does not account for how to sustain it in the long term nor does it provide insights into how to build organisational ability. So, it does not facilitate transfer. Arguing that training is not enough, the HTTS foresees that to lead to high training transfer, training must be bundled with high recruitment and high selection practices which can build and sustain individual and organisational ability (Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Through high recruitment and selection the organisation can hire educated and experienced individuals and so attract essential KSAs from the market. Proper selection can replace training if the organisation affords to attract and reward external candidates with necessary KSAs. High recruitment and selection practices can attract individuals not only based on their existing qualifications and KSAs but also on their potential and eagerness to continue learning at work in cooperation with others (MacDuffie, 1995; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Individual attitudes towards learning and team working are as important as qualifications and previous experience for mutual gains, DE and high training transfer. To attract such individuals, the organisation must have the appropriate systems to identify them in the labour market (Kochan and Osterman, 1994).

Training for organisational specific KSAs is also essential to enhance employee and organisational ability. Such KSAs give employees a better insight into organisational processes and goals, and prepare them to meet customer demands, make decisions and solve problems more effectively. Such KSAs are a source of sustainable competitive advantage since they are highly idiosyncratic and cannot be easily imitated by

competitors or transferred to other organisations (Wood, 1999; Barney, 1995 and 1991). However, employees must expend DE to acquire organisation specific KSAs which are of little value in other organisations, and so they must have a share in organisational gains (Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Osterman, 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). The organisation must also equip employees with KSAs for undertaking on-the-job responsibility and autonomy, as well as supervisory skills to manage teams and delegate tasks and responsibilities (Batt, 2002; Hutchinson et al., 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Bailey, 1993). Such skills are useful in the immediate job context and the organisation as a whole contributing to organisational ability. Members of self-directed teams also need higher KSAs to undertake responsibility, coordinate several tasks and safeguard quality (Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000).

Bundling high training with high recruitment and high selection to build individual and organisational ability creates mutual gains and so employees contribute DE and transfer training. Employees gain through high training which facilitates personal and professional development and prepares them for sustainable performance through near and far transfer (Baldwin et al., 2009; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). High training is not defined only in terms of the number of hours it lasts or the number of participants who attend it but, rather, in terms of principles of quality training design and relevance to employees' jobs which enables them to transfer it fast and improve performance (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Lim and Morris, 2006; Rodriguez and Gregory, 2005; Truss, 2001; Thorndike and Woodworth, 1901). Employees also gain because improved performance increases their self-esteem and because high training is an investment from the organisation which builds a relationship of trust while supporting job security (Russ-Eft, 2002; Bates, 2001; Yamnill and McLean, 2001; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Lim, 2000; Bandura, 1997; Kochan and Osterman, 1994; Laker, 1990). The organisation also gains

since, through high recruitment and high selection, it attracts individuals with the necessary KSAs and the potential and willingness to learn and develop (Kochan and Osterman, 1994). It also gains through individuals who, by possessing organisational specific KSAs, perform more effectively and contribute to sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). All these are requirements for DE and high transfer (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Osterman, 1994) and issues explored in this study.

3.4.2.2. Creating and sustaining employee motivation through extrinsic and intrinsic rewards

Even if employees have required KSAs, it is necessary that they be motivated to transfer them on the job (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Vermeulen and Admiraal, 2008; Alvarez et al., 2004; Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Appelbaum et al., 2000; MacDuffie, 1995; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Thus, the HTTS incorporates extrinsic and intrinsic rewards which motivate employees to expend DE and transfer training.

Employee motivation is influenced by perceptions of utility of new KSAs for their job, and the opportunities they have for career development and the achievement of personal goals through transfer (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Chiaburu and Marinova, 2005; Ford and Weissbein, 1997; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Motivation is time bound influenced before, during and after training. Work environment factors- culture, climate and social support; training design factors- useful content, practice opportunities and feedback; and personal factors- self esteem, self-efficacy, performance and rewards expectations- motivate employees to transfer KSAs (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Broad, 2005; Broad and Newstrom, 1992).

For motivation to lead to high training transfer, employees must expend DE and this can happen if they have a share in organisational gains. Thus, the organisation should

provide extrinsic and intrinsic rewards to elicit DE (Egan et al., 2004; Kontoghiorghes, 2004 and 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Extrinsic or financial rewards relate to individual or team performance (Anguinis and Kraiger, 2009; Baldwin et al., 2009; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000). A fair base salary, gain-sharing, profit sharing or merit pay, for example, give employees a share in organisational success and motivate them to expend DE and contribute to organisational performance through high transfer (Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000). Pay for skills is also important as well as a wage premium or efficiency wage to build motivation and elicit DE (Osterman, 1994). Profit sharing plans and stock ownership schemes are effective for managerial employees. Team rewards are also needed since in most cases the work of individuals depends on the work of others. However, for such incentive schemes to be effective, individual employee contribution, not only team performance, should be compensated (Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Further, motivation is affected by factors such as available technological resources which must be considered when designing financial rewards. Rewards should align with organisational quality standards, not simply quantity outputs so as to motivate employees, provide mutual gains and elicit DE for high training transfer (Wright and Kehoe, 2008; Gerhart, 2007; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000).

Financial rewards must be supported by intrinsic rewards for high transfer. Jobs must be challenging and creative and together with quality of work life they must enhance self-esteem, intrinsic job satisfaction and commitment (Egan et al., 2004; Gilley and Hoekstra, 2003; Holton et al., 1997). Intrinsic job satisfaction enhances employee performance and is essential for mutual gains (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000). Overall, job satisfaction is important for the efficiency of the HTTS although it is contested whether it benefits the organisation. As Bailey, 1993:7, rightly

claims "Why should satisfied employees work harder? Perhaps they are satisfied because their jobs are not that difficult". Thus, employees must be intrinsically satisfied by their job to expend DE (Lepak et al., 2006; Batt, 2002; Hutchinson et al., 2002; Delery and Shaw, 2001; Ostroff and Bowen, 2000; Huselid, 1995; MacDuffie, 1995). The HTTS can be effectively enacted in an existing "reinforcing" environment which provides employees with self-esteem, intrinsic job satisfaction and commitment, required for mutual gains, DE and high transfer; it does not create such an environment (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Gilley and Hoekstra, 2003).

The organisation can motivate employees by providing job security, promotion opportunities, and information sharing (Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). To acquire general or organisation specific KSAs, employees need to contribute time and effort. The same applies to collecting and sharing information, participating in decision making and cooperating with others. However, there is little likelihood that they will engage in such behaviours unless they see employment security and a long-term relationship with the organisation (Batt, 2002; Hutchinson et al., 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Bailey, 1993). Namely, they will expend DE and transfer training if they consider that they have gains and a stake in successful organisational performance in the long-run (Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Job security does not imply employment for life. However, the organisation should protect its workforce and in harsh economic times it should first consider other options before laying off employees-avoid hiring new employees, reduce overtime and organise shared work, invite voluntary, unpaid leave or retirement (Dyer et al., 1985 in Kochan and Osterman, 1994).

3.4.2.3. Providing employees with opportunities to participate and perform

Work design must give employees opportunities and discretion to participate in decision making and problem solving (Felstead et al., 2007; Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Hutchinson et al., 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000). The organisation should implement the proper job design for employee participation and also redesign jobs after training to allow employees to use trained KSAs while fostering task and intellectual discretion (Baldwin et al., 2009; Lim and Morris, 2006; Hutchinson et al., 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994; Karasek, 1979).

The HTTS incorporates work environment elements evidenced to provide opportunity to transfer KSAs including a continuous learning culture open and free from fear, fostering learning among employees and rewarding innovation at work; a transfer climate which positively affects employee perceptions to value training and transfer; and support, encouragement and constructive feedback from managers giving them time and opportunity to use new KSAs (Baldwin et al., 2009; Lim and Morris, 2006; Holton et al., 1997; Tracey et al., 1995; Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993; Ford et al., 1992).

Also, the HTTS foresees job redesign after training which increases employee intrinsic job satisfaction required for mutual gains, DE and high training transfer, by giving job autonomy and participative goal setting, information sharing and team working opportunities, and challenging tasks important for the organisation (Baldwin et al., 2009; Kontoghiorghes, 2002 and 2004; Ford et al., 1992). These elements enable employees to use new KSAs and experiment with new ways of working (Kontoghiorghes, 2001). The importance of a job for the organisation is reflected in employee development, favourable task components including tools and equipment, or financial and material resources (Colquitt et al., 2000; Seyler et al., 1998; Facteau et al., 1995). Decentralised organisational structures allow employees to participate in

decision making, solve problems by sharing power, access information, and the authority to implement changes in their job (Hutchinson et al., 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000). Further, job rotation and enlargement creates flexible and challenging tasks (Martin, 2010; Baldwin et al., 2009; Burke and Hutchins, 2007). Job design, however, is effective if it is embedded in the organisational HR system supported by other HR practices (Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Most importantly, it must be flexible to incorporate new KSAs after training, namely, job redesign (Keep et al., 2006) and so provide employees with more task and intellectual discretion to use trained KSAs (Karasek, 1979).

Access to organisational resources and cooperation with stakeholders also provides employees with opportunities to participate and perform. Work organisation and design which facilitates involvement in decision making and problem solving, open communication for information sharing and co-ordination in autonomous teams for quality improvement can increase intrinsic job satisfaction and so provide mutual gains and elicit DE (Hutchinson et al., 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2001 and 2000; MacDuffie, 1995; Bailey, 1993). Front-line employees have an important role in organisational performance if they are given the opportunity to solve problems and make suggestions for changes and improvements in their job. Access to information and employee autonomy may be exercised individually or in groups (Delery and Doty, 1997 in Appelbaum et al., 2001). The above elements empower employees and this creates mutual gains. To support empowerment, however, the organisation should provide employees with the necessary knowledge for problem solving and decision making. Employee participation and empowerment are essential and so they must be applied in a structured and informed way (Kochan and Osterman, 1994).

Figure 2 below presents the elements of the technical system for high training transfer.
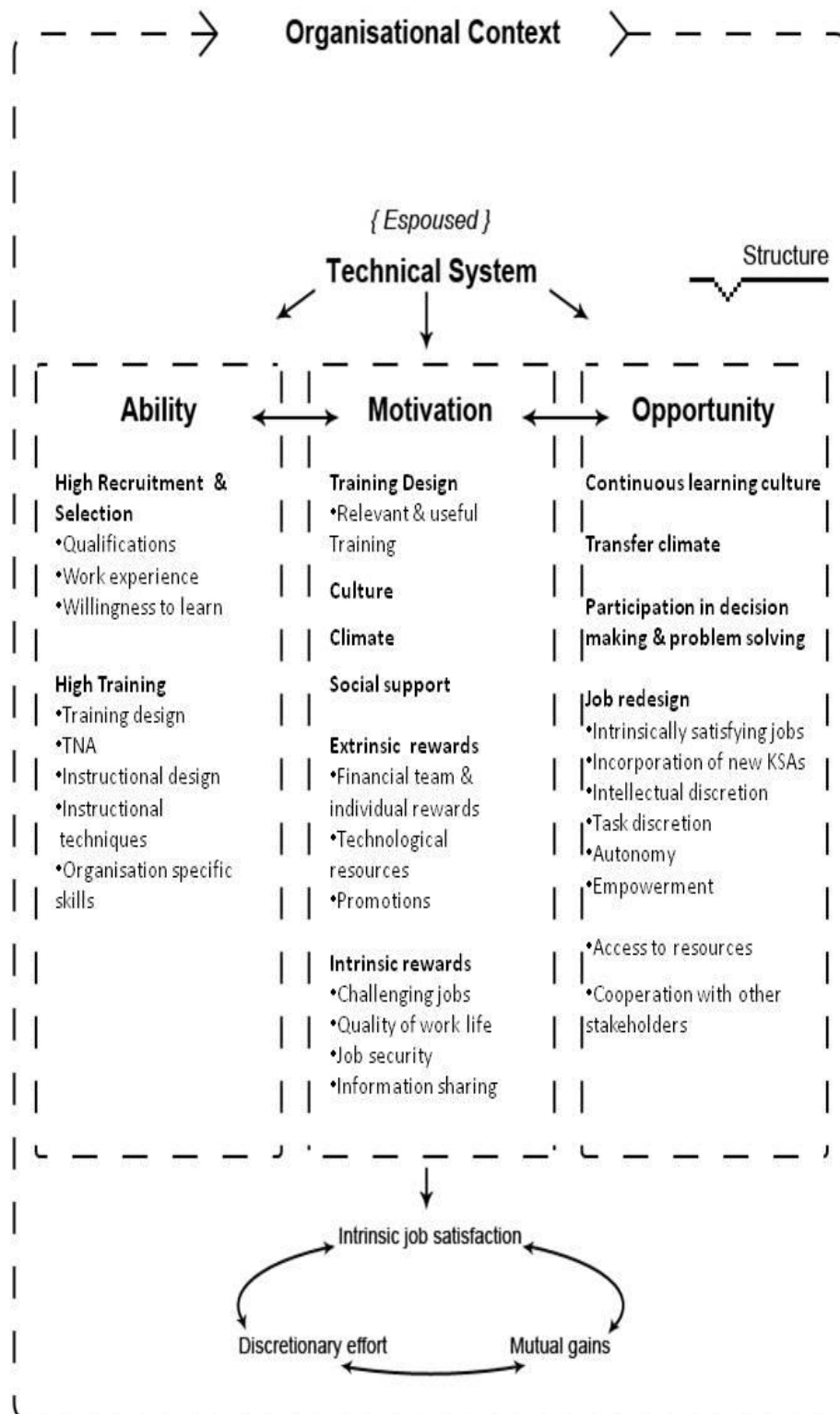
Figure 2. The technical system for high training transfer

3.4.3. The social aspects of the High Training Transfer System

The HTTS can lead to high transfer on condition that its technical elements are supported by the social system in the organisation, and specifically proper enactment by managers. This addresses the critique that HPWSs do not produce desired employee outcomes because they focus mostly on the technical aspects of the HR system while neglecting the individual (Guest, 2002).

This study focuses on the manager's role as the key driver of the social system at work (Harney and Jordan, 2008; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Hutchinson et al., 2002).

3.4.3.1. The manager's role in enacting the High Training Transfer System

Mutual gains which elicit employee DE and high transfer do not accrue directly from the implementation of the technical HR system (Truss, 2001; Mueller, 1996). They arise in a pre-existing favourable social system (Sparham and Sung, 2008) influenced to a large extent by the managers' behaviour and the way they enact the technical system. It is not the number or the mix of HR practices or the objective characteristics of job design that have an effect on employee performance. Rather, it is the way these technical variables are enacted by the manager which affects how employees perceive them (Harney and Jordan, 2008; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007).

Managers, as transfer research rightly points out, are instrumental in creating an open culture free from fear of error and a positive transfer climate providing employees with resources and opportunities to perform, affecting job design by assigning tasks to peers to reduce employee workload, or allowing more job discretion (Martin, 2010; Bates and Khasawneh, 2005; Holton et al., 2000; Hackman and Oldham, 1975). Although transfer research does not explicitly state the value of job redesign, it implies it and considers that managers are instrumental in facilitating employees to use trained KSAs (Ford et

al., 1992). After training and in consultation with employees, managers can increase the influence employees have over aspects of their job- how hard they work, what tasks they do, how they do these tasks and what quality standards they use (Felstead et al., 2007). Thus, employees can have more discretion and control over their jobs, an element of skill and performance (Payne, 2009; Lloyd, 2008; Lloyd and Payne, 2008; Korczynski, 2005; Campbell et al., 1993) and more control over which KSAs they use to complete tasks effectively (Karasek, 1979).

As Purcell and Hutchinson (2007:4) argue on the role of the front line manager (FLM), 'Poorly designed or inadequate policies can be 'rescued' by good management behaviour in much the same way as 'good' HR practices can be negated by poor FLM behaviour or weak leadership'. This supports that proper enactment of the technical system by managers explains why organisations with similar HR practices do not yield similar outcomes (Wood, 1999). The managers' role is also important for eliciting employee DE requiring they are skilled, motivated and active on the job. It also implies that they exert their own DE at work and so become role models for employees (Hutchinson et al., 2002) by their persistence to properly enact HR practices (Mueller, 1996).

3.4.3.2. The manager's role in positively affecting employee intrinsic job satisfaction

The manager's enactment of job design influences employees' attitudes and feelings towards their job (Macky and Boxall, 2008; Truss, 2001; Lau, 2000). Managers moderate intrinsic aspects of work and can positively affect employee intrinsic job satisfaction, fundamental for mutual gains, DE and high training transfer contributing to a 'win-win' situation (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Wernimont, 1972). Managers affect

job design and redesign through the degree of autonomy they allow to employees, the demands they place on them and the feeling of achievement employees get from the job (Macky and Boxall, 2008; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007). Managers are catalytic if they follow the "low road" to high performance and implement HR practices and job design without considering employee intrinsic job satisfaction. Adopting practices which seem good or fashionable but not are supported by a general climate of trust in the organisation does not guarantee positive outcomes through employee performance (Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Managers who, on the contrary, adopt a "high road" to performance enable employees to perform effectively, have a share in organisational gains and contribute to mutual gains (Ramsay et al., 2000). The effectiveness of the HTTS is based on this premise.

The manager also has a role in the consistency between espoused, enacted and perceived job design which increases employees' intrinsic job satisfaction (Wright and Nishii, 2006; Kinnie et al., 2005; Mueller, 1996). The effectiveness of job design does not lie only in the objective characteristics of a job. Rather, it lies in the employees' perceptions of them. Individual perceptions play a major role since employees do not respond to espoused or enacted but to perceived job design by redefining tasks, evaluating and performing them (Rousseau, 2011; Harney, 2009; Wright and Nishii, 2006; Gerhart et al., 2000; Appelbaum et al., 2000). Employees evaluate job elements and develop positive or negative perceptions about them with positive perceptions contributing to intrinsic job satisfaction (Wernimont, 1966). Considering individual differences, if job elements satisfy the employees' personal interests and expectations, they result in feelings of self-esteem, growth and accomplishment, recognition, achievement, advancement, and responsibility, a sense of belongingness, involvement and empowerment, all antecedents of intrinsic job satisfaction (Macky and Boxall,

2008; Godard, 2001; Lawler et al., 1973; Hackman and Lawler, 1971; Wernimont, 1966; Friedlander, 1963).

Examples of employee-centred practices, including both extrinsic and intrinsic factors, which can positively influence employee perceptions and lead to intrinsic job satisfaction include: 'leadership', including the organisational leader and management; 'wellbeing', referring to the stress and pressure they experience at work, and work life balance; manager, or line manager; 'team' or peers; 'fair deal' or rewards; giving something back', or the organisation's corporate social responsibility; 'company', or organisation rather than manager and colleagues; 'personal growth' or opportunities to learn and have a challenging job (Sparham and Sung, 1998:8). These factors account for how job design is effectively enacted from theory into practice (Mueller, 1996) and are considered very important according to existing research. They are also considered essential for the effectiveness of the HTTS and certain from among them form part of this research and are explored through interviews with managers and employees.

Figure 3 below presents the social aspects of the HTTS depicting that the social system is embedded in, and supports, the technical one in the organisation.

Figure 4 presents the HTTS for building employee ability, increasing motivation and providing opportunities to perform while by synthesising technical and social factors it can contribute to increasing employee intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE in an environment of consistent espoused, enacted and perceived practices.
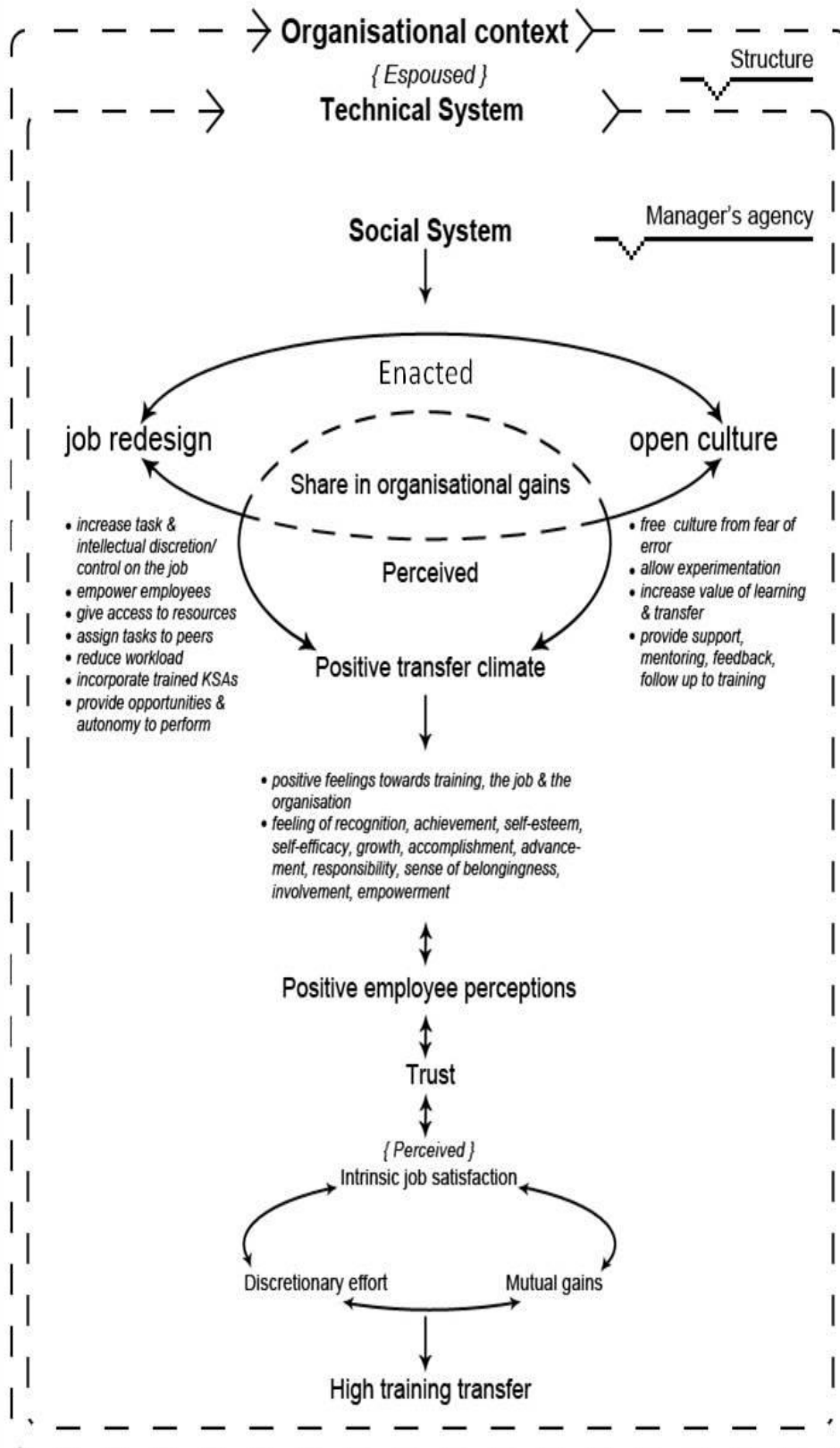
Figure 3. The social system for high training transfer
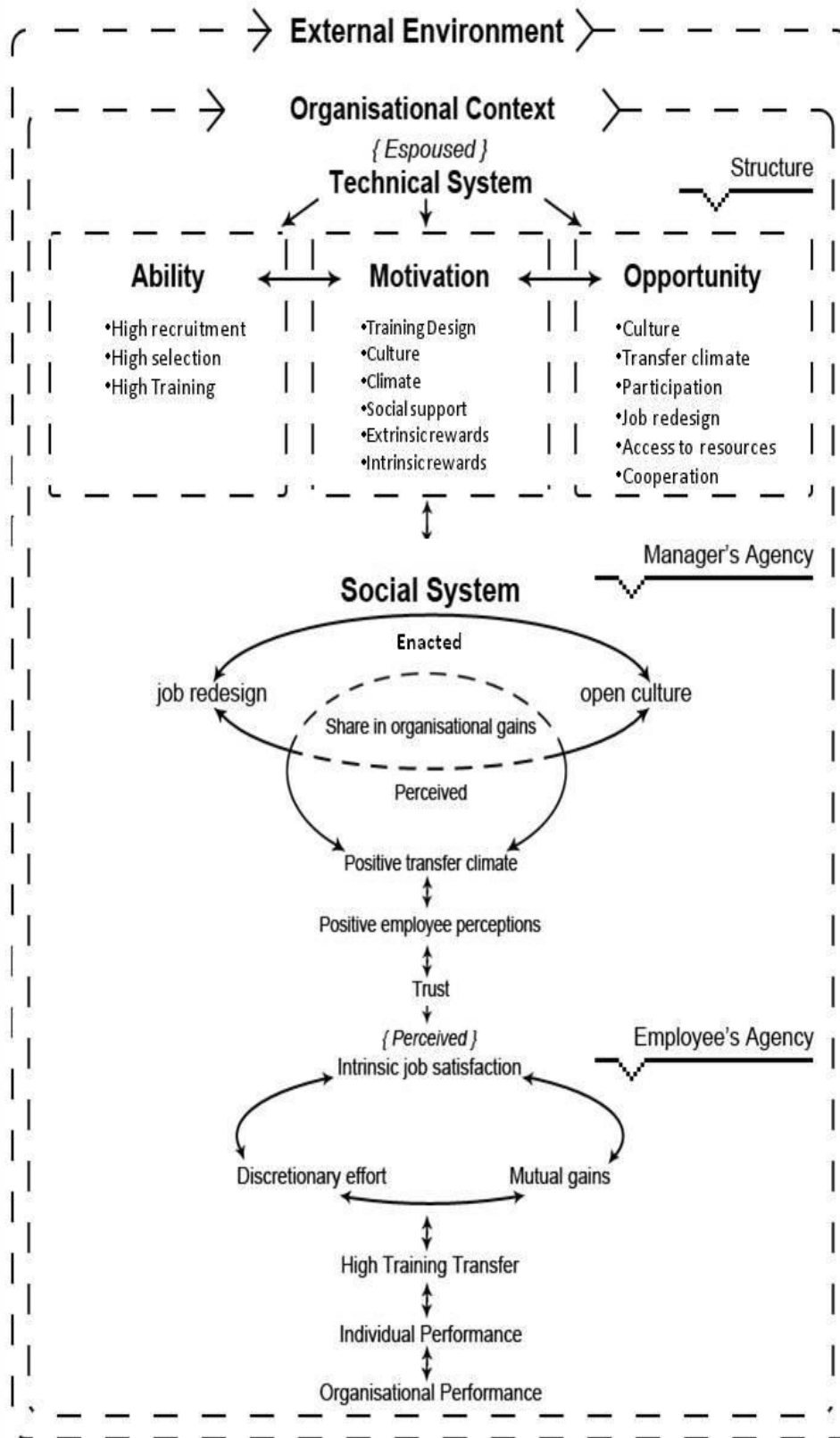
Figure 4. The High Training Transfer System

3.5. Conclusions

This chapter discussed transfer research recommendations for building employee ability, motivation and opportunity to perform trained KSAs based on the AMO framework. It identified strengths and weaknesses in relation to mutual gains and DE and presented inconsistencies and inadequacies in empirical findings requiring further research. The chapter also presented the *High Training Transfer System* as a way to achieve high training transfer integrating findings from transfer, HPWSs, mutual gains, DE and job design research for developing employee ability, increasing motivation and providing opportunities for participation and performance and activating employee intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains, and DE (Baldwin et al., 2009; Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Wright and Boswell, 2002).

The HTTS enriches transfer research by embedding training in the organisational HR system implemented in bundles with other HR practices overcoming the subfunctional notion that single practices, such as training, can yield transfer (Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Delery and Shaw, 2001; Mueller, 1996; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). The HTTS also stressed the need for interaction between the technical HR system and job design with social aspects of work (Guest, 2002) highlighting that unless the HTTS is properly enacted by managers, employees cannot experience intrinsic job satisfaction and so mutual gains, DE and high transfer are not achieved (Sparham and Sung, 2008). Namely, structure and agency must interact and contribute to consistency between espoused, enacted and perceived HR practices and job design for desired outcomes with the individual in the centre of analysis (Wright and Nishii, 2006; Kinnie et al., 2005). The HTTS does not introduce more and new HR practices in the organisation but the right practices properly enacted, reinforcing rather than creating an organisational environment conducive to high transfer (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Purcell, 1999).

CHAPTER 4

**METHODOLOGY: EXPLORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE
HIGH TRAINING TRANSFER SYSTEM
FOR ACHIEVING HIGH TRAINING TRANSFER**

4.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodological approach of the thesis towards exploring the effectiveness of the HTTS. The research problem is: *What factors in the technical HR system and social system in the organisation affect individual performance, and how do these factors impact on employee intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and employee DE so as to lead to high training transfer?* The research questions to be answered through primary data aim to:

1. Examine the antecedents of training transfer;

2. Examine the theoretical underpinnings of existing approaches to transfer and their strengths and weaknesses;

3. Identify the technical elements of an HR-based transfer system and the ways in which it can be properly enacted so as to provide mutual gains, elicit DE and lead to high training transfer;

4. Explore the role of the manager in properly enacting the technical system and job design so as to increase employee intrinsic job satisfaction, create mutual gains, elicit DE and lead to high training transfer.

To answer these questions, I designed a qualitative study with a small but diverse sample including managers and employees from one SME and the subsidiary of a large multinational company in Greece. The criteria for inclusion in the sample were that the companies implemented an HR system, that employees worked there for at least one year and they had attended training in the last six to twelve months.

In this chapter I describe and justify the methodology I used to explore the participants' subjective experience about how employees worked differently after training because of training transfer, and how this experience related to technical and social factors in the organisation. This is the way to explore the effectiveness of the HTTS.

4.2. Theoretical and methodological framework

Ontological considerations about the reality people experience as social actors underpinned this research which adopted an interpretivist framework. Interpretivism adopts a life-world ontology seeking to explain the social world through the self-understanding of people. It does not support the existence of an objective truth but rather favours interpretation, which carries individual values, as a means of understanding the world. Interpretivist research seeks to understand people's behaviour by ''capturing the actual meanings and interpretations that actors subjectively ascribe to phenomena in order to describe and explain their behaviour'' (Johnson et al., 2006, p. 132). It seeks to investigate the complex reality that people experience in a social context, interpret their perceptions and understand the meanings they attach to events (Leitch et al., 2009). Adopting an interpretivist framework supported the aims of this thesis to understand the impact of social processes on employees' intrinsic job satisfaction and DE as antecedents of high transfer.

From an epistemological perspective, access to social reality and knowledge about it should come from the individuals who performed in the organisation and were affected by the complex interaction of the technical and social systems. Employees' subjective experience is at the core of this research which aimed to gain insight into the 'lived experience from the point of view of those who live it' (Schwandt, 1994). Access to

organisational reality had to come also from managers who affected employee performance through their behaviour, style, support and the way they enacted the HR practices and job design, having power to moderate employees' intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE. To identify employees' subjective experience and their reactions to the technical and social systems in the organisation, the premise adopted was that reality does not exist independently of the actors under investigation, and research should capture human experience (Sale et al., 2002).

The interpretivist framework of this research sought to gain insight into the 'nature and meaning of everyday experience' (Gibson and Hanes, 2003: 182) and the 'meaning of social phenomena' (Schwandt, 1994: 119). Interpretive research aids understanding of complexity in organisations and the subjective meanings and actions of employees resulting from their work experience (Gibson and Hanes, 2003; Williams, 2000). Interpretive research captures the way social actors define a situation and this was important stressing that subjective experience and human inquiry are unique (Schwandt, 1994).

Further, this study aimed to capture the variance in the companies examined, the individual perceptions of enacted practices and management style. Thus, subjective data had to be collected from employees about their experience in the organisation and their interpretation of reality. Simultaneously, data from managers were also generated to depict variance of interpretation (Wright and Nishii, 2006; Kinnie et al., 2005; Hackman and Lawler, 1971). This research was concerned with the complexities and interaction of the technical and social systems in the organisation and their effect on individual experience. The technical system is an objective reality operating at a macro level. It is, however, mediated by the social system and processes which affect the way employees perceive their job and the organisation, their intrinsic job satisfaction and the way they

perform at a micro level in a subjective way (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Wright and Nishii, 2006; Harley, 2002).

The nature of inquiry and calls in the literature defined the qualitative nature of this research (see for example Sparham and Sung, 2008; Fleetwood and Hesketh, 2006; Bosalie et al., 2005; Hutchinson et al., 2002; Truss, 2001; Ramsay et al., 2000; Purcell, 1999; Guest, 1987; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). HRM research is criticised for relying extensively on large-scale survey data which provide inadequate explanations of the factors that affect the way individuals behave and act (Harney, 2009). Survey data miss the subtle meanings employees attach to their work experience and their job and or their perceptions and attitudes towards them. They cannot capture the process through which the technical HR system and job design affect employee intrinsic job satisfaction and so they fail to unlock the 'black box' (Harley, 2002; Gardner et al., 2001; Truss, 2001) or provide a robust explanation for organisational complexity which answers 'how' and 'why' individuals transfer training (Fleetwood and Hesketh, 2006). They risk producing 'illusory commonalities' which conceal the different outcomes of similar HR practices on employees' perceptions and experiences (Harney, 2009). Survey data mostly collected from single raters, managers or employees, further obscure the impact of HR practices, job design or the manager's role for intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains, DE and high training transfer (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Kinnie et al., 2005; Wall and Wood, 2005). Also, they often miss the difference between espoused, enacted and perceived practices and the variance at different organisational levels (Hesketh and Fleetwood, 2006; Bosalie et al., 2005; Truss, 2001; Ramsay et al., 2000; Purcell, 1999; Guest, 1987). Surveys cannot explain whether, how and why employees' powers are elicited by HR practices and job design because they do not unravel the underlying powers employees possess. Further, it is not adequate to measure the number of HR

practices that are introduced but rather explain the ways in which HR practices are enacted within a complex organisational system that drives employee behaviours (Dipboye, 2007; Hesketh and Fleetwood, 2006).

Examining high training transfer and its antecedents requires another type of research. Qualitative research is needed to reveal employees' experience and its intrinsic aspects by unlocking the 'black box' and providing an explanation of the transfer process (Nishii and Wright, 2008; Sparham and Sung, 2008; Hutchinson et al., 2002). To explore the subjective experience of employees one needs to ask them and give them the opportunity to speak about it (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003). Qualitative research can reveal peoples' hermeneutics- their perceptions and interpretations of factors which affect their behaviour (Fleetwood and Hesketh, 2006). Indeed, perceptions constitute the 'first link between HR practices and any outcomes' (Wright and Boswell, 2002: 269). They can explain employees' reactions to HR practices and job design and the 'how' and 'why' of transfer (Harney, 2009; Hesketh and Fleetwood, 2006). Qualitative research does not aim to depict large scale phenomena in numerical representations and draw generalisations which span time, place, contexts and individuals as quantitative research does. Rather, it seeks to explain individual behavior in specific situations and contexts. Such explanation enhances understanding and reveals individual meanings, actions and decisions under certain circumstances (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Goodwin and Horowitz, 2002). It facilitates understanding of a complex process, such as training transfer, deeply embedded in, and affected by, complex interactions in the organisational context (Audet and d'Amboise, 2001). Qualitative research is required to capture the complexity encompassing the whole of the organisation (Kochan and Osterman, 1994) and, contrary to quantitative research, to focus on diversity and

people's subjective experience at different levels of analysis, since the existence of one universal truth cannot be supported (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003).

The interpretive design of this research led to moderatum generalisations, or theoretical inferences, based on conclusions about interrelationships between the phenomena under study (Williams, 2000). According to Payne and Williams (2005), these are generalisations which qualitative findings not only can make but probably cannot avoid making, albeit moderated based on the following principles: first, researchers can state the extent to which their findings can be generalised and define the specific context and its similarity with other contexts. The findings of this study could be explored and generalised in other service organisations or in other countries sharing similarities with Greece. Also, the realisation that changes can take place between now and the future, make qualitative generalisations more moderate and so more trusted. The findings of this study generated by cross sectional research at a specific point in time may not hold true at a future time given changes in the external environment or inside the organisation. Generalisations can also be moderated by the degree of accuracy researchers claim for their study and findings and, in my case, being a new researcher, I was careful with making generalisations. Another way to moderate generalisations is by accepting that findings from interpretive studies are relevant to the situation and context under examination and that studies in other situations or contexts could yield similar but not identical findings. Namely, interpretive inquiry yields findings relevant to the context and respondents which produce them as was the case in the two companies of this study. Last, the degree and certainty of generalisation varies with the characteristics of the object or situation under examination. Concrete objects and social structures can produce safer generalisations than cultural processes, relationships, personal and

psychological patterns and attitudes, or perceptions as in this study which explored employees' attitudes and subjective experiences at work (ibid).

4.3. Multilevel research design

This study generated data at multiple levels of analysis, deemed essential since transfer of training is a multilevel process with employees acquiring new KSAs individually but transferring them at the organisational level (Tharenou et al., 2007; Kraiger et al., 2004; Kozlowski et al., 2000). Crossing levels facilitates understanding of how bundles of HR practices and job design at the macro level are implemented by the manager and affect individuals at the micro level (Wright and Boswell, 2002). The HRM literature stresses the need to conduct research across different levels of analysis and identify how they affect each other (Dipboye, 2007; Kozlowski and Klein, 2000). Crossing levels in this study revealed how HR practices are espoused, enacted and perceived at different levels in the organisation and the linkages or discrepancies between these levels (Rousseau, 2011; Wright and Nishii, 2006; Kinnie et al., 2005; Wright and Boswell, 2002; Truss, 2001; Kozlowski and Klein, 2000). It also revealed that a strong HR system is required for consistency between these three levels (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). Multilevel research also moderated the single-rater bias by capturing the perceptions and reactions of multiple respondents. It provided more reliable data about espoused, enacted and perceived HR practices and job design and their effect on transfer (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Wright and Nishii, 2006). Single-rater responses cannot depict the variance among individuals at different levels and may lead to theoretical and methodological error (Wright and Nishii, 2006; Gerhart et al., 2000). Calls in the literature highlight the need to avoid such bias (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Kinnie et al., 2005; Wright and Boswell, 2002; Truss, 2001) using several sources of data (Baldwin et al., 2009).

4.4. The research setting

4.4.1. The sampling process

I used a purposive sample to generate data to ensure that the sample consisted of individuals who were knowledgeable and could answer the interview questions (Bryman, 2001). I used theoretical sampling and recruited respondents until the point of theoretical saturation. Namely, I read the data, identified codes and themes and stopped the interviews at the point when no new knowledge was generated by the data (Guest et al., 2006; Pope et al., 2000).

The procedure for recruiting respondents was the following: first, I contacted several companies through email and informed them about the purpose of my research while requesting permission to conduct interviews. I also sent the official letter of my registration as a postgraduate student provided by the University (see Appendices 1 and 2). Most companies were reluctant to provide me access and one of them openly refused. Two of the six companies I contacted finally granted me access to do the interviews. A meeting was arranged with the HR or general manager of these companies to schedule the days, time and respondents of the interviews. During this meeting, I explained the purpose of my research and the fact that I needed to interview both managers and employees to generate data at different levels in the company. The issues that were clarified and agreed during the first meeting were the following, according to Miles and Huberman (1994):

- Time required for the interview

- The process to be followed (recording and transcription)

- Voluntary participation of respondents

- My independence as a researcher

- Confidentiality of the data

- Anonymity of the company and respondents

- The right of the participants to review the text before I submitted it

- The benefit of my research to participants which would be an awareness of the effects of the HR system and job design on their employees and how they could become more effective.

4.4.2. The companies participating in the research

Company 1

The first company I visited and did five face-to-face interviews, with one manager and four employees, was a Greek SME, a consulting company, specialising in european and national co-funded projects, conferences and public relations events. The company operated for 11 years and had 10 full-time employees as well as 5 external partners. It was an established company in its field, and well-known in the Greek market, based in Athens. The HR system it implemented included recruitment, selection, performance appraisal, rewards and training. I interviewed 4 core employees who had been working there for at least one year and had all been trained in the previous six to twelve months. All employees were project managers responsible in European or national projects. Each interview lasted approximately 15-20 minutes but only 3 employees gave me permission to record the interview. I also interviewed one of the two managers. Most of the training offered in the company took place internally by this manager experienced in the field. It was specific and relevant to the job to enable employees use relevant KSAs and undertake projects immediately. The company size and the fact that each employee was responsible for several projects made it essential that employee performance was effectively managed and that training was regularly provided. These data were provided

by this manager in our first meeting when I visited the company to arrange the interviews. The other information the manager gave me was that recruitment and selection was conducted based on advertisements of job vacancies and it was rather traditional based on the candidate's CV and an interview. When I asked the manager whether she hired candidates based on their willingness to learn on the job, she responded that she did not ask this question and did not use any means to identify this. She also told me that the company had a reward and promotion system based on performance appraisal.

Company 2

The second company was the Greek subsidiary of a large multinational in the cosmetics industry. The HR manager provided me with information about the company's HR system explaining that, as an organised company, they used all up-to-date HR practices. They implemented recruitment through job advertisements, recruitment sites or specialised vocational schools for beauticians. When I asked him whether the company hired candidates based on their willingness to learn on the job, he responded that it was too early to identify this during selection. Employees had to work for some time so that the company could see whether they wanted to continue learning and developing. Depending on the level of the position that had to be filled, selection was done by the HR manager or the store manager. Performance appraisal was done by supervisors on an ongoing basis and once a year it was done formally by high level management. The reward system included monthly and annual incentive schemes for employees in the stores for all levels depending on the sales volume. Training was extensively and regularly implemented and was very important for the company. The company had an

internal trainer who managed all training events depending on the needs of the company and employees, and the new products that were launched.

4.4.3. The participants of the study

Selecting Managers

It was important to identify the degree and quality of involvement of the managers in the enactment of training, HR practices and job design (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Hutchinson et al., 2002). The managers were selected based on whether, and to what extent, they:

- were involved in the implementation of HR practices;

- influenced job design;

- were involved in the design and supervision of training.

Selecting Employees

Data were generated from core employees who were 'directly involved in the goods or services sold by the enterprise' (Osterman, 2000) and were knowledgeable about how work is done (Osterman, 1994). Employees from both companies were directly responsible for customer service. This justifies the purposive sample of this study.

The criteria for selecting employees were that they:

- had been in the company for at least one or two years so they had experience of the HR system and job design ans also of the social system and the manager's role;

- were core employees directly involved in service delivery with some degree of responsibility and autonomy to make decisions about how to do their job;

- were affected by the implementation of the HR practices, namely, they attended training, or their performance was appraised and rewarded through incentive schemes or promotions;

- had attended a training programme within the past six to twelve months prior to the interviews so they could both remember their experience and also have time to apply trained KSAs on the job.

4.5. Designing the research instrument for the generation of data

4.5.1. The standardised open-ended interview

The instrument for data generation was the standardised open-ended interview in two versions, one for managers and one for employees (Patton, 1980). Sale et al., (2002: 46) argue that 'methods are shaped by and represent paradigms that reflect a particular belief about reality'. Since this research adopted an interpretivist and multilevel design, which accepts multiple layers of reality experienced by social actors, and seeks to gain understanding of human experience, qualitative interviews could capture the respondents' perspective and reveal aspects of their different realities that could not be readily observed (Patton, 1980). Qualitative open-ended interviews reveal people's 'feelings, thoughts and intentions' and also reveal the unobservable meaning they attach to their experience' (Patton, 1980: 196). Standardised open-ended interviews are effective when research is conducted for a limited time only and the aim is to collect similar data from respondents (Patton, 1980). The reason for designing two interviews was that participants came from different levels, managers and employees, and so although the interviews covered similar aspects of the issues under examination they

had a different focus (See also section 4.5.2.). Also, the two interview versions aimed to capture the variance between espoused, enacted and perceived HR practices and job design and their effect on transfer and its antecedents. Data about the espoused and enacted practices were generated by the managers and perceived practices by the employees.

4.5.2. The interview questions

The questions were designed to capture the factors of the technical and social systems in the companies which influenced high training transfer and its antecedents as foreseen in the HTTS. The questions in the managers' interviews sought to generate data on the espoused and enacted HR system and job design in the company as well as the managers' perceptions of their own role in affecting transfer and its antecedents. The questions in employees' interviews generated data on employees' perceptions of the HR system, job design and the manager's role. The questions in both interviews were similar since they explored the same factors affecting transfer but from a different perspective (see Appendix 6 for the managers' interview questions and Appendix 8 for the employees' interview questions). However, the managers' interview included five questions not asked to employees so as to capture data about a higher level of analysis that could only be generated by managers (see questions 1, 3, 6, 12, and 19 in the managers' interview in Appendix 6). In some cases, I asked participants extra questions driven by their responses and in several cases I prompted them so that they would elaborate more on interesting issues (see sample interviews with one manager and one employee in Appendices 7 and 9).

 At the end of each interview, I asked managers and employees about demographic data which provided more information about their work experience and involvement in

training programmes (see Table 1: Demographic questions for managers and Table 4: Demographic data of managers; Table 2: Demographic questions for employees and Table 5: Demographic data of employees). According to Patton, 1980, it is better to collect demographic data at the end of the interview since if asked at the beginning they might sound boring or embarrass participants. The demographic questions were the following[4]:

Table 1: Demographic questions for managers

1. Years of employment in the current company
2. Years of managerial tenure in the current department
3. Years of organising training programmes
4. Number of employees they were responsible to train every year
5. Involvement in TNA and the goals of training programmes
6. Training attended so as to develop coaching and feedback skills

Table 2: Demographic questions for employees

1. Area of work
2. Years of experience in such a position
3. Years of employment in the current company
4. Frequency of attending training programmes
5. Importance of training in their job
6. Involvement in TNA and the goals of training programmes

4.6. Conducting the interviews

4.6.1. Pilot interviews

Before administering the interviews, I conducted pilot interviews with a manager and two employees in a company who were my personal acquaintances. The following issues came out of the pilots and helped me rephrase, clarify and re-order the questions so as to generate data which would enable me to draw meaningful conclusions about the effectiveness of the HTTS and the issues under examination:

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[4] Participant numbers and position for each company are presented in Table 3 in Chapter 5- Preamble to Data Analysis.

- some questions needed clarifications;

- the questions did not always follow a logical order and had to be reordered;

- some questions asked for double information and this puzzled the respondents so I rephrased them to ask for single types of information (e.g. Overall, which do you think is the most important reason for which employees do their job differently after training? Selection, training, rewards, promotions...?);

- in the same question above respondents told me that I presupposed transfer of training, something that might not be true about employees;

- the respondents' answers revealed some new information about factors that affected on-the-job transfer or DE (eg. the trainer's skills, the manager's skills to guide employees and give feedback, support during training).

4.6.2. Administering the interviews in Companies 1 and 2

Following the pilot interviews and updates, I conducted the interviews in the two companies. I began each face-to-face interview by introducing myself and explaining the purpose of my research and the interview so that respondents knew why they were asked to participate (see Appendices 5 and 6). Two employees wondered whether I had been asked by the company to do the interviews and I reassured them that this was not the case and that I was doing the interviews for my doctoral research. I asked their permission to use a tape recorder, reassured them about confidentiality and anonymity and asked for their written consent (see Appendices 3 and 4). I provided instructions and informed them that they could ask me questions or refuse to answer a question. During the interviews, I spoke only when participants asked me to clarify questions or when I needed them to elaborate further on a topic. I did not make any comments about

the information they provided to remain as objective as possible and not lead their responses.

I included 21 questions in the managers' interviews planning to last for about 40 minutes and 16 questions in the employees' interviews to last for 25 minutes. Eventually, the managers' interviews lasted 20 minutes on average and the employees' 15 minutes on average. This duration is attributed to the fact that interviews took place during working hours and more specifically during the respondents' break time. Thus, it was not possible to keep them away from work longer respecting the fact that they spent their break to give me the interview. Especially during the interviews with the managers, there were several interruptions since we did the interviews in their offices and they often had to resolve work issues. Also, respondents were not always very talkative especially when the questions were about company policies and financial rewards. For all the interviews in Company 2, I had to go to the location where participants were since they worked in different retail stores and I had to visit them on different days and hours. For interviewing two participants, I had to drive for three hours because the shop was located outside Athens. Also, because the interviews were conducted during the summer months, a lot of scheduling was needed and changes were made due to summer leaves.

I asked the same questions, to managers and employees respectively, to increase the trustworthiness of the interviews while reducing variance in answers, although as explained above I also asked managers extra questions. I used probing when the respondent needed more clarifications to answer a question or when I needed the respondent to elaborate further on a topic. Also, in some cases I asked extra questions, not included in the original list, based on participants' responses because I needed to elaborate more on issues important for my research aims (see sample interviews in

Appendices 7 and 9). I recorded all the interviews, except one for which I did not get the respondent's permission, to capture data exactly as provided by participants and eliminate error and transcribed the interviews verbatim. Completing and leaving the interview was also standardised and I did not give any more information about the research other than the information initially provided similarly to all respondents (Bryman, 2001; Patton, 1980).

4.6.3. Quality and credibility of the interview data

To safeguard the quality and credibility of the data, I recorded the interviews and transcribed them verbatim. In this way, the exact words of participants were used during thematic analysis and I provided large extracts of data for the same purpose. To safeguard the credibility of the themes I produced from the data, my supervisor read them and gave me feedback and so I updated them (Golafshani, 2003). Also, I was aware of my subjective experience through reflexivity and I tried to be as objective as possible so that my experience did not influence my interpretations (Cutcliffe and McKenna, 1999).

4.7. Data analysis

4.7.1. Thematic analysis of qualitative data

The data generated in this research were analysed through thematic analysis. Thematic analysis can help identify, analyse, interpret and report recurring patterns, or themes, inherent in the data (Boyatzis, 1998). It is an inquiry which involves identifying a pattern and subsequently understanding its meaning or encoding it and linking the new pattern with existing ones (ibid). Thematic analysis helps researchers analyse their data,

reveal the principles that informed this analysis, and evaluate research more effectively (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Themes do not passively emerge during analysis. Rather they are actively identified, selected and reported by the researcher (Taylor and Ussher, 2001). Thematic analysis can be used in a research which adopts an interpretivist approach to identify the meaning people develop of their subjective experience and the ways in which this meaning is affected by the social context people live in. Thematic analysis can depict and meaningfully investigate reality (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Also, I used thematic analysis in my research because it is flexible and can be used for different types of research questions to produce meaningful data analysis; is appropriate for inexperienced researchers; can provide a rich description of data and summarise main points; enables the researcher to identify in what ways the data are similar or different; and can provide innovative perspectives on the topic under investigation (ibid).

I used a mixed, deductive and inductive, approach to thematic analysis which produced theory and data driven themes (Boyatzis, 1998). The deductive approach, used before data collection, accounted for the theoretical and methodological issues of this study, included themes already identified by previous research and also focused on data to answer the research questions of this study. The inductive approach, used at later stages, considers that themes are found in the data as they are produced by respondents rather than in the theoretical and methodological approaches of the research (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Pope et al., 2000; Ryan and Bernard, 2000). This approach helped me identify themes which were not explicitly discussed in the literature review but were important since they were mentioned by several participants and captured their meaning and everyday experience at work (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Patton, 1980). This mixed approach facilitated flexibility in thematic analysis, captured employees' experience

through the data and maintained data collection in a pre-defined track so as to answer the research questions (Boyatzis, 1998).

4.7.2. Stages of thematic analysis

According to Braun and Clarke (2006) and Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) I did the following stages of thematic analysis.

Stage 1: Transcribing and reading the data

I transcribed the recorded interviews and produced written texts for reading, coding and analyzing the data. Transcription, although time-consuming for 21 interviews, helped me familiarise myself with the data, contributed to data interpretation and helped me develop meaning (Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999; Riessman, 1993). I conducted verbatim transcription to avoid losing information about the interview context (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The final analysis and discussion includes selected extracts from the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

I read the whole data to familiarise myself with them and begin to identify which I would select for analysis and also initial patterns and meanings which proved useful at later stages of analysis when I had a more concrete idea of the data. I avoided selective reading since this could obscure important information (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

I had my research questions in front of me to guide me about what I wanted to learn from the data and for which reason. Then, I selected the relevant data for analysis based on whether they captured ideas which related to the scope of my research and specifically whether they:

- related to my research questions;

- enabled me to understand my respondents better;

- clarified my ideas and thinking;

- provided new perspectives in relation to my research;

- seemed important and contributed with new knowledge.

Stage 2: Creating initial codes

Codes refer to "the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon" (Boyatzis, 1998: 63). I conceptualised codes as "repeating ideas"- "A repeating idea is an idea expressed in relevant text by two or more research participants" (Auerbach and Silverstein (2003: 54). Coding helped me organise my data in meaningful categories and proceed with analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994) (See Appendix 5 for initial codes).

My two concerns with the data were first that I felt everything was important and had to be included in my discussion without losing any words or meanings from participants' responses and second how the data related to my research questions and objectives. This is justifiable since respondents described their experience not mine. This was the experience I had to present and my initial ideas changed during analysis. To address this, I made sure to always support my interpretation with data that answered the research questions.

I created codes from the literature review prior to fieldwork. They were theory-driven based on themes previously identified and relevant to my research questions such as the impact of relationships with peers at work on employee motivation or the role of the manager in providing support for transfer (Thomas, 2003). Reading each transcript again to concretely identify codes in it, I created a list of codes and reviewed it based on the data to make the necessary updates. Then, taking each code separately I supported it with data extracts. Each time I identified data which supported a code I added it to the

list. I followed this process for all the codes in the transcripts until all relevant data were placed under a code from all interviews in both companies (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003).

Based on Grounded Theory (GT) which foresees that the processes of data collection and analysis are interrelated, I started analysing the interviews I completed before proceeding with the next ones (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). As soon as I had completed the pilot interviews, I analysed them. This helped me update the interview questions before conducting them in the two companies and include more or different questions both for managers and employees as needed. Then, I analysed the interviews I completed in the first company and so the interviews in the second company included more and updated questions which explored new issues that emerged including the continuous and informal nature of learning and transfer, or the transfer of KSAs back to peers and the organisation. This also enabled me to explore and discover more issues relevant to transfer in real contexts in which people perform and understand their value by identifying them in the data in several interviews.

This staged analysis also helped me identify concepts such as the continuity and informal nature of learning, personal and professional change and development, social relationships and their effect on learning and transfer. These concepts were systematically related and analysed since they affected the employee in transferring training and constituted both the cause and consequence of transfer demonstrating that transfer is continuous and takes place naturally as people work.

Open coding, according to GT, helped me interpret the data. Conceptually similar codes were grouped together as they developed from the data. Respondents spoke about their relationship with peers and their manager who were important for learning and feeling they belonged to a team. This coding helped me identify the properties of learning as an

informal, social and continuous process taking place while people work and the properties of transfer as a holistic process affected by employee perceptions. As one employee said, transferring new KSAs was important because it helped her keep her job in the crisis.

Axial coding helped me identify under which conditions transfer took place providing the grounds for the HTS showing that, for transfer to change employee performance, there must be favourable technical and social conditions in the organisation which positively affect their perceptions. Similarly, transfer is not achieved unless training is embedded in the organisational context and existing systems. Furthermore, it is important to view transfer under different working conditions inside the organisation, such as working in central or remote stores, or economic conditions in the external environment such as the economic crisis in Greece at the time.

Stage 3: Identifying themes

A theme is a topic broader that a code that develops from, and encompasses, similar codes. Themes can be identified in respondents' sentences, behavioural patterns or events (Pope et al., 2000). They reveal important information from the data in the form of meaningful patterns about the research question and aims of a study (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003).

After enriching the initial theory-driven codes with data-driven codes from each interview, such as training as an ongoing process or acquiring tacit knowledge and skills from peers, I produced a list of codes to identify meaningful and relevant content in the data, naming the codes by using participants' words or phrases to describe them.

Then, I developed broader themes, compared to categories in GT, encompassing several codes and initiating interpretation about phenomena captured by the data and the

arguments made about them (Boyatzis, 1998; Corbin and Strauss, 1990). I considered themes to be those patterned answers which contributed to the discussion of the arguments and research questions of my study. Some themes appeared repeatedly in the data whereas others less. Sometimes I included the same codes under different themes (for example, I included the code "learning from others at work" both in Theme 1: Learning, training and transfer as ongoing, informal, tacit and collective processes, and in Theme 5: Social factors in the work environment affecting high training transfer (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Bryman, 2001).

Then I created initial themes by grouping relevant codes from my list. I followed this procedure for all the codes in the list and developed 6 themes. This process was aided by selective coding according to GT (Glasser, 2002) which helped me identify the core category of my research, namely the nature and conditions of transfer. Other categories included the nature of learning, the social influences on learning and transfer, the technical elements at work that impact on employee performance.

Stage 4: Updating the themes

According to Braun and Clarke (2006) the criteria for revising the themes were that they:

- were supported by adequate data;

- did not overlap with other themes in which case they had to be combined;

- did not include data which could support another theme in which case they had to be separated;

- were coherent;

- were distinct.

I reviewed the codes under each theme to ensure they were meaningful and coherent and that all selected data had been coded and included in the themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Stage 5: Finalising and naming the themes

I finalised and named each theme to reveal the story behind the data and did data analysis discussing the themes and identifying how they contributed with new knowledge. I used data extracts to discuss and justify the importance of each theme individually and in relation to other themes and the overall scope of the study.

Six themes were identified from the theory and the data: Theme 1: Learning, training and transfer as ongoing, informal, tacit and collective processes; Theme 2: Exploring change in employee performance as a result of training and transfer; Theme 3: Technical factors in the HR system and job design affecting high training transfer; Theme 4: Training design and its effects on high training transfer; Theme 5: Social factors in the work environment affecting high training transfer; and Theme 6: An overall evaluation of the factors affecting high transfer.

Stage 6: Writing the preamble to data analysis and the data analysis chapter

I wrote Chapter 5-Preamble to Data Analysis- to present an overview of the data, the demographic profile of participants and the data to an introductory question asked.

Then, I wrote Chapter 6, the analysis chapter, which included the six themes. I supported the themes with important data extracts discussing the ways in which the data aided research aims or produced new knowledge and informing the reader of the respondents' experience.

I kept in mind the following questions suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) for each theme separately and for all themes together in relation to the research questions:

- What is the meaning of this theme?

- What assumptions are relevant to it?

- What implications does this theme carry?

- Which factors gave rise to it?

- What do the themes reveal about my research topic?

I presented each theme and then analysed the relevant data extracts from each company. I discussed managers' and employees' responses in each company to explore the variance between espoused, enacted and perceived HR practices and their effect on intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains, DE and high training transfer. After presenting data extracts and interpreting participants' responses for each company, I concluded each theme with cross-level and cross-company comments. Although the focus of this research was on the different levels of analysis within the same company rather than across companies, a cross-company comparison was also informative. This structure prevented repetition of common issues and was more efficient in highlighting the importance of research findings in relation to my research questions, aims and objectives and to their contribution to knowledge about training transfer.

I also used the principles of GT while developing the High Transfer System, which helped me explore the complex interaction of environmental, organisational and individual factors affecting transfer (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). The HTS depicts variation in the organisation since it specifies the conditions under which it can be effectively applied. It identifies technical and social conditions, the actions and interactions between agents- managers, peers, trainers, employees, implying that unless these conditions, actions and interactions are considered, transfer does not take place for

performance improvement. These conditions are that training must be embedded in the organisational HR system, it must be properly enacted by the manager in a favourable social system and so it must have a positive impact on employee perceptions to elicit their DE for high transfer. Also, the HTS represents broader conditions in the external environment that affect the organisation and individuals. Under the present economic conditions in Greece, transfer could be enhanced due to employees' fear of losing their job. It remains, however, to apply the HTS in other economies and conditions to identify the extent of its effectiveness. Also, the HTS develops in the wider organisational context, which in the case of CO2, was that of a multinational subsidiary. This implies that the systems and culture of the multinational also affect the way transfer is achieved through the implementation of other HR practices which can elicit employee DE or provide mutual gains.

Overall, the HTS describes the process of transfer, a process of employee personal and professional change which impacts on performance. This develops under the conditions, actions and interactions described above in a dynamic way requiring coordination through all stages.

4.8. Research ethics

The data for this research were generated from two types of participants: managers and employees in two companies. Ethical issues were carefully considered and ethical behaviour was required by me as a researcher and by participants alike. Indeed, the 'conduct of ethically informed social research should be a goal of all social researchers' (Blaxter et al., 2002:158) and a feeling of trust should be established from the beginning between them and the participants. This was important in this qualitative research in which as a researcher I was involved with respondents in face-to-face interviews.

Research ethics required being honest and clear with participants, explaining to them the purpose of the research, the data use, and the publication of findings and gain their informed consent (ibid). Considering ethical issues was an ongoing process to sustain trust, cooperation and support until the completion of the research especially since some of the participants, employees, were the subordinates of managers. Ethical problems have various causes and sources. As Cohen et al. (2000:49) explain, they emerge from the nature and context of the research, the methodology and design for data collection, the participants' personality, and the nature and use of collected data (CLMS M1, U1:43).

Getting permission

Permission was required since individuals inside the companies would give me personal data and so they had to be informed accordingly and grant their consent (CLMS M1, U1:44). I sent an introductory email (see Appendix 1) requesting permission and the official letter by the University (see Appendix 2) to several companies. The email included the title and a general description of my research, its purpose and objectives, as well as the types of individuals I needed to recruit as participants. The University letter certified that I was a postgraduate student and encouraged companies to give me access to data.

Gaining access

I informed respondents about the purpose of my research, about being an independent researcher who needed to generate data only for my research, and about procedures and methodology used. Some respondents, mainly employees, wanted to know whether my research had been assigned by the company but I reassured them that it had not. These

were all prerequisites for granting me access. At the beginning of each interview I gave each respondent a signed 'Thank you and Data Protection Letter' (Appendix 3).

Gaining trust

I explained from the beginning what was needed of them in terms of time. Trust had to be maintained throughout the research and so the participants were informed about the stages of the research, the use of their personal data and the research findings. Being honest and open from the start, I gained participants' trust in me and reassured them that I would not misuse their personal and professional data.

Safeguarding confidentiality and anonymity

Confidentiality ensures that respondents' data, although known to the researcher, are not revealed; anonymity means either that respondents' data are unknown to the researcher or that they are known but are anonymised so that they do not become known to anyone else (CLMS M1, U1:54). I did not reveal the companies' or participants' names. Also, I did not reveal to the managers the data that employees gave me. In all cases, data and findings were reported anonymously. For managers I use the abbreviation *MNGR*. In Company 2 where eight managers were interviewed I named them *MNGR1* to *MNGR8*. The same applies to employees for whom I used the abbreviation *EMPL* with corresponding numbers (*EMPL1* to *EMPL4* in Company 1 and *EMPL1* to *EMPL8* in Company 2).

Receiving informed consent

At the beginning of each interview I asked the participant to sign an Informed Consent form (See Appendix 4) which granted me their formal written permission to administer the interview and use the data in my research. To record the interviews, I obtained oral consent from each participant.

4.9. My role as a researcher

During data generation, analysis, interpretation and presentation of findings, I had to ensure that I was objective making sure to distinguish between data and their interpretation. The aim was to produce an objective exploration of the factors influencing training transfer and gain a deeper insight into how these factors can be best managed in a company to address the transfer problem. To be objective, maintain the context of participants' responses and control interpretation, I presented extensive data extracts together with my comments (Mays and Pope, 1995). It was important during data analysis to identify the link between the data and the theoretical issues that underpinned of this research. So, I revisited the deductive codes and themes developed to see how the data matched with them and also how they matched with the inductive codes emerging from the data (Pope et al., 2000). Also, during the interviews I did not interfere or comment upon what respondents said. I only spoke when they asked me for clarifications and this enabled them to provide their own accounts of their experience with training and transfer. Indeed, they were the experts in this case, not me, and I could only learn about their experience if they were free to speak about it.

Qualitative research is relevant to the values and subjectivity of the researcher. Contrary to quantitative research, it accepts that these values and subjectivity are one aspect of

the communication between the researcher and participants. In my case, I am a trainer and I had been both a manager and an employee in the past. So, to keep my values, subjectivity and personal experience from interfering with data generation and interpretation, I consciously thought of my experience in relation to that of the respondents. Reflexivity was very important during data generation, analysis and interpretation in this qualitative study (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003).

4.10. Limitations

The sample of this research, two companies in Athens, Greece, 9 managers and 12 employees, presented limitations to this study. This research was conducted in partial fulfilment of my Doctorate degree and as such it could not be large scale research. It was cross sectional lasting for 4 months. It was qualitative and the interviews were conducted during participants' working hours and more specifically during their break time justifying their short duration. However, I was able to generate adequate data and make moderatum generalisations (Williams, 2000). The sample was purposive, selected for the aims of this research and was determined by the access provided. I contacted six companies but only two of them gave me access mainly due to my personal acquaintance with the managers. The Greek culture is not very open to researchers and they are reluctant to give data about company policies and procedures. Also, the respondents themselves could have been selective in their responses. They may have answered in more positive ways about the company, themselves or their behaviour at work either consciously or unconsciously. However, these aspects of selectivity are an integral part of data collection (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Participants' responses could also have been selective due to the fact that people use and transfer skills

unconsciously and take large parts of their performance for granted (Attewell, 1990). Last, my inexperience as a researcher could have limited the opportunities to produce more relevant or richer data to support the aims of my study and the issues under examination.

4.11. Conclusions

This chapter discussed the methodological approach of this study. I presented how I gained access to the two companies and how I recruited participants. Also, I discussed the design, pilot testing, and revisions to the research instrument, how I conducted pilot interviews and administered face-to-face ones. Thematic analysis and GT, the ethical considerations underpinning this research, my role as a researcher and the limitations of this research were also presented.

Chapter 5 is a preamble to data analysis including an overview of the data, the demographic data of participants and the analysis of the introductory question asked to participants.

CHAPTER 5

PREAMBLE TO THEMATIC DATA ANALYSIS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a data overview and the demographic profile of participants. Also, it includes the data analysis to the introductory question asked to participants about a training programme employees had attended in the last six to twelve months prior to the interviews aiming to explore their experience with training and the importance of employee skills for company performance while setting the framework for the interviews.

5.2. The data of this study

Data were generated through 21 face-to-face qualitative interviews with 9 managers and 12 employees, in two companies between June and September 2011. Participants provided information on the formal HR system espoused by the companies; training implementation; enactment of other HR practices- rewards, promotions, performance appraisal, job design and employee perceptions of these issues. Three pilot interviews were also conducted but the data are not included in thematic analysis. The actual numbers of participants are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Participant numbers and position in the company

Companies	Managers	Employees	Total
Company 1	1	4	5
Company 2	8	8	16

The data may not lead to generalisations as in quantitative research but to moderatum generalisations about training transfer accepting that findings do not apply over time or contexts (Williams, 2000). They took social and organisational reality and change into consideration and provided findings which can only be treated tentatively to describe the study's research settings, an SME and a subsidiary of a multinational company in Greece, at a given point in time. Generalisations are vulnerable to change and can be rejected by new findings in other social or organisational contexts (Payne and Williams, 2005).

The sample size and participants' number was determined by the scope of this study, access, and data saturation after approximately 12 interviews in Company 2 (Guest et al., 2006; Pope et al., 2000). I stopped sampling when participants repeated the same information and did not provide new data illuminating the research problem and questions, when theoretical saturation took place and no new knowledge was produced (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003).

I recorded each interview with the participants' permission and when each interview was completed, I transcribed the data verbatim to safeguard credibility. I translated eighteen interviews into English since participants felt more comfortable to speak Greek. After conducting all the interviews in Company 1, I analysed the data and so could manage and familiarise myself with them by re-reading them several times. Further, I could make necessary updates to the questions and capture important issues following the premise of GT which considers the processes of data collection and analysis to be interrelated (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). Then, I conducted the interviews in Company 2 and analysed data judging whether codes and themes developed from data analysis in Company 1 could incorporate new data and made necessary updates. In

each theme, I provide detailed quotations to safeguard credibility indicating the source in parenthesis through the abbreviations *MNGR* (manager) and *EMPL* (employee).

5.3. The demographic profile of participants

Participants had different positions in the two companies (see Table 3 above). Their demographic data, collected at the end of the interviews, are presented in Tables 4 and 5 below.

Table 4: Demographic data of managers

Companies	Years in current company	Years of mngr tenure in current dept.	Years of organising training	No of employees to train every year	Involvement in training design	Training in coaching/ feedback skills
	Average	Average	Average	Average		
CO1	10	7	7	6	Yes	Yes
CO2	12	8	8	15	Yes	Yes

Table 5: Demographic data of employees

Companies	Area of work	Years of experience in such position	Years in current company	Frequency of attending training	Importance of training	Involvement in TNA
		Average	Average	Average		
CO1	Project managers	3 years	3 years	Every six months	Very important	Yes
CO2	Sales assistants	8 years	5 years	Every two months	Very important	Yes

5.4. Introductory question: Exploring the experience of training across levels: listening to managers and employees

This section compiles data from the first question asked to managers:

> *"Could you describe a training programme your employees attended in the last six to twelve months? What was the training about and how it was implemented?"*

and to employees:

> *"Could you describe a training programme you attended in the last six to twelve months? What was your experience with it?".*

This question explored training practices in the two companies setting the framework for the interviews by capturing participants' views and experience. The time frame, *last six to twelve months,* ensured that employees had had the time to apply trained KSAs on the job since transfer usually takes place more in the long (one year) than in the short run immediately after training (one to three months) (Cromwell and Kolb, 2004). This happens because in the long run employees have more opportunities to apply new KSAs or manage their workload (Guadine and Saks, 2004; Russ-Eft, 2002).

Company 1

Being an SME with limited resources for external training, the manager in CO1 trained employees when they were first employed and later according to needs. She provided a detailed account of a training she had implemented with a new employee who joined the company as an intern. She said that this training was similarly provided to all new employees:

> *We have a recent example of a training programme...We selected one young lady to come into our company...I committed myself to spend time on a daily basis with this young lady from the morning every day at least from two to three hours and monitoring her work and her results for three or four months' period. And it was good I think and valid experience for her. (MNGR)*

The employee gave her account of the training showing consistency with the manager's perception about its importance and the manager's role:

> *I was next to my manager,..., who in essence was my trainer, I learnt many things. I continue to work in the company with positive results I believe. I was next to her, she explained to me everything about the job, from the simplest to the most complex...I also learnt to organise my time more effectively, my working time, my job. (EMPL2)*

Participants' responses stressed the value of training and employee's skills. The manager said that building employee ability benefited both of them:

> *So, that was a relationship that we developed, me being the informal trainer and the trainee and this is the last example which for us was also very, very useful. (MNGR)*

The manager also stressed the importance of training and transfer for personal and professional advancement and development:

> *It's a general advancement. So, if you improve, you improve. You go forward, so upgrading is good, updating is good, anything that takes you from point A to point B and point B is higher or,..., better, it's important. So, this is how I perceive training, and in that sense we think it's very, very important. (MNGR)*

All employees considered training valuable too showing they perceived training as an investment that could bring financial benefits in the future and that the manager was a role model who helped them advance:

> *All this experience I gained next to such an established person cannot be compared with a situation in which I went somewhere and took 500 or 600 euro for three months. I consider that it is an investment that in time will bring even more financial benefits. (EMPL 2)*

> *Training helped me get the feeling of the job really. You may have work experience but at the same time you need to adjust to the reality of a new company you go to. If the company is willing to develop you, then training is one way to help you perform better and more efficiently. It's one of the*

best ways. And then using what you learnt really changes the way you work and feel about the job. (EMPL 4)

Apart from stressing the long term benefits of transfer, their responses also showed that unless training leads to changes in performance, a core issue in transfer, it is wasted.

Company 2

The Greek subsidiary of a multinational company, CO2 had systematic, formal and compulsory training procedures for new and old employees. Training was implemented both by an internal and by external trainers hired by the company according to employee and company needs. The managers' explained how training was implemented.

The first manager commented on how training made employees feel part of the team stressing its social aspects:

> *There are two categories of employees, first those who are newly hired...so they attend the first seminars which are important and certainly when they come back to the store, it is a three-day training, they feel they belong to the environment. They learn the basics. (MNGR1)*

Other managers supported the systematic approach to training espoused and enacted for all employees stressing its role for both professional and personal development:

> *There is a monthly training plan which is separated in product training related to retail and a big part which is about job skills. The job skills part includes all the techniques and tools we can give employees in the stores such as sales skills, floor management, principles of makeup, skin care, perfumes. We also train them in skills required for the back office, such as PC skills, procurement, accounting skills etc. (MNGR3)*

> *We do training about the products. What are the products and what are the ingredients and how to sell them. But we focus also on the personal skills, on the people, in order to have an attitude within the store and in order for them to develop their skills and perform better. (MNGR6)*

Their responses show that training should focus not only on hard skills but also on soft skills that lead to personal development, an issue further supported below.

Employees said that they regularly attended training on business skills and product training supporting the point above:

> *We begin from these (general skills) with new employees and then we are trained about specific products or groups of products. (EMPL1)*

> *I attend most of the trainings about our products and...trainings on sales techniques and many other trainings. (EMPL2)*

> *We regularly attend training on different brands. (EMPL6)*

The managers said that they considered employee skills the cornerstone of organisational performance and the requirement for mutual gains:

> *Employee skills are very important for their performance and for company development since they serve the customers, interact and communicate with them and so they must be ready for this important task. (MNGR 2)*

> *It is the base of everything. If people do not have skills and do not know how to work they will not perform...We need first to give the skills, to show them and to educate the people in order to get their performance. We need to have people to serve the customer, they need to be trained in very important skills and to develop the skills in order to develop as well the performance. (MNGR 5)*

The response by MNGR 5 makes an important distinction between training and performance implying that they are two related by distinct processes. Training is the first stage and performance follows, a point which stresses the value of transfer.

Other managers stressed the value of employee skills too:

> *They are very important because it's those which promote talent in sales since this is our object. (MNGR 5)*

> *Skills are very important. First the employee learns the job, then he performs better. Without knowledge you do what you can but you can't do your best. (MNGR 7)*

MNGR 7 also differentiated between training and performance, saying that first an employee learns and then she performs better, implying again that transfer must take place.

Employees too said that all the trainings they attended gave them new knowledge and skills and motivated them. Motivation is important as the basis for employees to expend DE and transfer training. This also implies that DE and transfer might not be elicited if employees are not motivated and if they do not perceive training as a process which makes them feel good:

> *All the seminars we have attended were excellent. (EMPL6)*

> *The seminars make you feel good. You come back to the store feeling differently. You feel motivated. (EMPL7)*

However, as one of them said, training was very good but the application of new knowledge and skills on the job was not always easy due to workload and the reality at work stressing the role of the manager in providing employees with opportunities to perform. This was not raised by managers, however:

> *The pace of the job, the workload do not always allow you to apply new knowledge and skills. (EMPL7)*

These were participants' responses about how training was implemented in the two companies. In CO1, training was systematic and delivered internally by the manager whereas in CO2 it was formally and regularly implemented by the internal or external trainers for new and old employees.

Managers and employees valued training and considered it important for building employee skills. At a second stage, performance changes were expected. Indeed, participants considered training and employee skills the basis of performance but differentiated between the two processes, stressing the value of transfer. Also, if training motivated employees, when they returned to the job they felt more active and ready to perform. This was essential for eliciting DE and transfer training (Batt, 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2000). However, as an employee said, applying new KSAs was not always easy due to the pace of the job and work load making transfer problematic. This is an issue managers need to consider to facilitate employee performance and opportunities to transfer new KSAs.

5.5. Conclusions

This chapter gave an overview of the data, the participants' demographic profile and the analysis of the data generated through the introductory question to managers and employees.

Chapter 6 includes the thematic analysis of all the data generated through qualitative interviews around six themes, an updated definition of high transfer as well as the updates, and their justification, to the HTTS which after data generation was renamed *High Transfer System* (HTS).

CHAPTER 6

THEMATIC ANALYSIS: ANALYSING THE FACTORS AFFECTING TRANSFER AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE HIGH TRAINING TRANSFER SYSTEM

6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the thematic analysis of the data in six themes: Theme 1: Learning, training and transfer as ongoing, informal, tacit and collective processes; Theme 2: Exploring change in employee performance as a result of training and transfer; Theme 3: Technical factors in the HR system and job design affecting high training transfer; Theme 4: Training design and its effects on high training transfer; Theme 5: Social factors in the work environment affecting high training transfer; and Theme 6: An overall evaluation of the factors affecting high training transfer.

For each theme, the discussion is structured first around cross level data from CO1, then from CO2, followed by cross level and cross company final remarks. The discussion highlights the antecedents of high training transfer and issues that make transfer problematic, identifying to what extent the data supported the premises and arguments of this study and the HTTS. Due to space limitations only parts of the data are presented. The interview questions are presented in Appendices 6 and 8 and two sample interviews, with a manager and an employee, in Appendices 7 and 9.

6.2. Thematic analysis

6.2.1. Theme 1: Learning, training and transfer as ongoing, informal, tacit and collective processes

This theme encompasses data revealing the respondents' perceptions of learning, training and transfer as ongoing, informal, tacit and collective processes. As the

respondents said, training is only one part in the process of learning and performance since they continuously learn at work informally and they do not only transfer KSAs acquired in formal training but also those they already possess or those they acquire through observing peers.

Company 1

The manager viewed learning, training and transfer as ongoing and collective processes. She stressed the role of the team in the process of natural advancement and growth:

> *There are typical terms, training sessions that have a start and an end. But the training that I believe is something that people do it individually as an ongoing process, they do it with their team, with their co-workers, it's a natural advancement, professional growth...I believe in professional growth, and training...to me equals professional growth. So, it doesn't have to be only structured in a room with a specific trainer and a specific methodology or...material. After that it has to continue. (MNGR)*

As she explained, their work demanded continuous learning and application of new KSAs to meet market demands. It is interesting that she used 'we' in her response implying that she considered herself part of the process and did not believe that only employees should improve. This point also stressed the instrumental role of the manager for learning and transferring KSAs which either facilitates or inhibits the process:

> *We don't think that we have learnt anything. Things are moving fast, the knowledge doubles, triples every year so we have to be ahead of time, we have to have an eye in the market, we have to be aware of the new technologies, we have to be aware of new services, new trends. So, all this requires training and a lot of reading, so training to me it's an ongoing process. (MNGR)*

An employee stressed the collective and tacit nature of training, learning from peers and transfer:

> *I think when you are in an environment where...your colleagues are competent you try also to be competent and to develop more skills... Actually I started to learn from my colleagues and to be influenced by their skills regarding organising my job and be more professional. (EMPL3)*

Another employee agreed that it was not only training that helped her at work. Rather, she said that she learned all the time, she learned from more experienced peers at work and then used new KSAs to develop:

> *Training is only one part. It helps me get new skills and work better, make less errors, work faster and be focused. But it's also about learning all the time and learning from your colleagues who have more experience. It never ends really...Our job changes as the European Union changes and we have to be there and learn about new things all the time and use them at work. That's how we develop. (EMPL4)*

The responses above reveal important points. Learning is not only about formal training in fixed periods of time. Effective learning that can lead to performance improvement is continuous, informal and social taking place as employees work. This provides justification of the reasons why the transfer problem exists since transfer research, with few exceptions, explores mainly the role of formal training for transfer.

Company 2

The data from CO2 supported the continuous, informal, and tacit nature of learning, training and transfer, stressing their collective and social nature. The company implemented a formal system of developing in-store trainers in the past but at present employees who attended a training programme transferred their knowledge to peers

when back at the stores. This stresses that transfer is not one way, from employee to her job, but also to peers, for achieving organisational outcomes.

One manager's response revealed that she valued informal learning and training and considered that transfer took place when people were willing to communicate in a supportive social environment on a continuous basis:

> *It is a requirement for the spark to become a flame and develop to have the right environment. This has to do with the store environment...The person who comes to training must be willing to transfer knowledge to the other employees in the store..., the rest of the team...to be willing to listen to what he has to say, the manager to have built his team so that this is a natural process. It is basically a chain which may sometimes break in some parts but when it is done correctly, training has no limits. (MNGR3)*

Her comments stressed the value of on-the-job training that one team member provided to others which, although difficult with attitudes compared with products, was very important. They also stressed that transfer is not the result of formal training only but of training implemented in an already favourable social environment which reciprocates transfer among employees and on the job. This was supported by the responses of other managers too:

> *Probably one individual out of 15 has taken the knowledge and is able to transfer it to the rest of the team. This is not very easy when we have to do with behaviours. It can easily happen with products which are specific but when we have to do with a concept, attitude, it is not so easy to transfer it form one individual to the team. (MNGR3)*

> *It has results because every time one employee attends a seminar the rest of the team expects her so as to learn the specific features of a product and generally what was the content of training because each employee has a specific job description but we all know the general things. But if a new brand comes to the store...even from a personal interest I expect the person who comes to tell me something more. (MNGR2)*

The responses above stress the social and informal nature of learning implying that transfer is not easy to achieve under formal conditions only. Peers must already have a productive social relationship between them so as to accept the trained employee as their informal trainer and actually expect this.

One employee provided the following view about peer learning revealing the fact that not all individuals respond in the same way to new learning and that people must be interested to learn and transfer training. The trained employee must also be interested to transfer new knowledge:

> *Some of them are positive, others negative and others indifferent. They don't all react in the same way. When I try to transfer knowledge to someone... I make up a nice fairy tale first especially with people who don't like training so much so I believe that this is the most important. (EMPL1)*

Cross-level and cross-company concluding remarks

Data showed that respondents in both companies knew they had to continuously facilitate new learning both informally and as a result of formal training. In CO1 employees consciously learned from peers and in CO2 employees who attended training transferred new KSAs to colleagues in the stores. However, not all individuals in CO2 responded to peer learning in the same manner. Employees' responses showed that they exercised their agency in consciously learning and transferring KSAs continuously to keep in pace with market trends. The data supported the HTTS and the literature stressing that transfer is enhanced by a continuous learning culture fostering the shared belief that learning and transfer is everybody's responsibility (Egan et al., 2004; Gilley and Hoekstra, 2003; Kontoghiorghes, 2002). Participants' responses about learning from others to improve their own performance also implied that employees experienced

intrinsic job satisfaction which increased their interest both in their job and in the object of learning on condition that new learning was relevant to them and that they were ready to engage in the process (Krapp, 1999). Such engagement was expressed when they consciously expended DE to learn and transfer new KSAs (Bryson et al., 2006; Egan et al., 2004; Watkins and Marsick, 2003). This supports the HTTS and the literature in that intrinsic job satisfaction contributes to DE (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Hutchinson et al., 2002) and individuals need to expend DE to acquire and transfer KSAs in 'a discretionary activity' (Reagans and McEvily, 2003: 243; Kelloway and Barling, 2000).

The data have implications for transfer and the transfer problem. First, they stressed the collective nature of learning (Watkins and Marsick, 2003). Second, they highlighted that the transfer process was not only about formally trained KSAs but involved the acquisition and transfer of tacit knowledge through observation and informal workplace learning among peers (Cheng and Hampson, 2008; Reagans and McEvily, 2003). This finding sheds new light in the transfer process and calls for a creative shift in transfer research towards the exploration of more holistic and deeper mechanisms driving transfer beyond formal training in the everyday context where people work. Finally, they revealed that transfer is a dynamic and reciprocal process from and to peers in social interaction.

The data also revealed issues that make transfer problematic. First, formal training only is not adequate in facilitating transfer either on the part of the trained employee or of peers. Second, transferring behaviours and attitudes from one employee to the peers was not always as easy or effective in CO2 as with products. This happened probably because peers resisted the acquisition and application of new knowledge due to low levels of self-efficacy or motivation to learn and transfer training (Lim and Johnson,

2002; Machin, 2002). These findings stress even more the importance of DE for high training transfer and the role of the organisational HR system and other HR practices which can elicit employee DE.

6.2.2. Theme 2: Exploring change in employee performance as a result of training and transfer

Training transfer is about individual change (Baldwin et al., 2009; Yamnill and McLean, 2001). This theme captures different aspects of change in employee performance after training relating to KSAs, personality and productivity, and explores why and how such change occured attributed to personal, social and work environment factors.

Company 1

Changes in employee skills

The manager said that training had effected a complete change in the skills of the employee she had trained:

> *More than 100 %, we have a completely different kind of person. When she came...her weak points were so many that she couldn't even draft a professional email. And we have reached a point to learn a completely new business activity to actually go in depth into this activity because it's multi-tasking. She now goes out, she presents the company, she makes presentations on projects, she has become a project manager. So we talk about a person who didn't know what a European project is and now is a project manager of a European project. (MNGR)*

Her response shows her own perception about efficient employee performance stressing the fact that sometimes transfer is problematic because it is the manager rather than the employee who sets learning goals.

The employee agreed that training gave her many skills implying, however, that they were skills decided by the manager and the demands of the job:

> *I was given a lot of skills. Namely, I knew where to search and how to search in this specific way. (EMPL 2)*

The responses of other employees revealed that training and the acquisition of new KSAs made them more productive. After training they managed their time, set priorities and organised tasks more effectively and efficiently. As I observed during the interviews, they were proud of being more efficient:

> *Time management was the most important because work is a matter of organisation mainly, set priorities and avoid missing work. You become better in your job, again it is a matter of time management, you organise your work better, you become more efficient and you hope for more, to give more work to the company because of your training. (EMPL2)*

> *I learnt to organise better the time of each task and learnt how much one task can be so...I can be more effective. (EMPL 3)*

The data show that transfer enhances employee self-efficacy since they work better. They also reveal, however, that employees expect something in return by the company due to improved performance stressing the value of mutual gains for transfer.

Changes in employee attitudes

The manager commented on changes in the attitude of the employee she trained. She stressed that training transformed the employee who transferred new KSAs with positive effects on herself, her peers and the company. This response shows again the manager's expectations from the employee and also that reciprocal and continuous on-the-job learning leads to transfer and changes in performance:

I had a young lady who was always late and now she always comes earlier, I had a young lady who was supposed to draft a report and she was doing it without even re-reading it to see what she has written and now she writes a report, she corrects a report, she corrects her colleagues, she helps her colleagues, so we're talking about a complete difference. And I'm really, really pleased about it. (MNGR)

She also commented on change in employees' self esteem, another factor facilitating or inhibiting transfer in the social work environment:

...this is also self esteem...what these people appreciate is that they are here to do a small part and all of the sudden they see their business card and their role, their job description change into a project manager, all automatically they fit more comfortably in the environment, they enjoy it as well. They are not just a trainee who came and left, all of the sudden this person becomes a member of a bigger team and they enjoy that, they enjoy this status, this self esteem because we are all humans, we have to enjoy these things, these are the little pleasures of life, it's our self accomplishment. (MNGR)

Employees shared the same opinion about changes after training. They also stressed the importance of the transmission of the experience of others and the need that all parties be committed to the process:

I was taught several tasks on the job.. and they helped me very much... because I saved time from the experience of my managers...they gave me in action to understand what I have to do, the way in which I had to work so that I could gain space and time in my professional life. And I consider that they helped me a lot. (EMPL 1)

This employee attributed changes in performance and her attitude towards her work to the social support she received on the job. This stresses that transfer can be problematic if this support is absent.

Actually at training period is very important because you can learn and on the same time you can develop skills and you...gain experience so you are

better prepared for a real job and for...real responsibilities, so anyway is
challenging and an opportunity. (EMPL 3)

The response of this employee shows as well that unless people perceive training,
learning and transfer as an opportunity which provides a challenging work
environment, performance changes are not given.

Measuring change

As the manager commented, the company did not have a specific procedure to measure
transfer but relied on the observation of employees' performance after training and the
feedback by customers and project partners. This can make transfer problematic since it
is connected to employee rewards after training and transfer and it is an issue requiring
attention so that employees are positive towards these processes.

Company 2

Changes in employee skills

Most managers in CO2 said they observed changes in the performance of employees
who used new KSAs after training. One manager commented on changes in employee
KSAs relating to communication with customers and peers and to sales:

> *They had better communication with the customers and better*
> *communication between them because for a new employee it is difficult to*
> *integrate in the small community...when she does not know certain things.*
> *(MNGR 1)*

Two more managers agreed that training led to changes in employee behaviour and performance in the store:

> *When they attend this training, certainly their behaviour and performance in the store changes because they learn well the general rules that they have to know and also specific things, some secrets, some tricks. (MNGR2)*

> *We can see the results now in this year that yes they are performing better, they organise their job better. (MNGR 5)*

This response shows that transfer needs time. The manager must give employees time, and opportunities, to transfer new KSAs rather than expect this to happen immediately after formal training. This implies also that the period between training and transfer is crucial since the organisational context shapes employee perceptions, facilitating or inhibiting transfer.

As another manager said, employees worked in a more professional way after training since they applied the steps they had learnt on the job revealing again the managers' perception of efficiency and their role in later rewarding employees:

> *While before they did the sale process in an amateur way, after the training they could implement the sales techniques by following certain steps of how to approach the customer, how to sell, how to identify customer needs, reaching the goodbye stage. (MNGR 6)*

One employee said that after training she was aware of the way she worked and changed her weak points implying, however, that employees must be willing to change their performance after training otherwise transfer does not occur:

> *Coming back to the store I immediately realised that when I kept my old habits that were wrong I corrected myself and I saw that this had an effect. (EMPL 2)*

This is an important issue to explore further and understand the reasons why employees decide to transfer training. As this thesis argues, these reasons are found in the wider organisational context which precedes and follows training. If this context is supportive and favourable, then transfer occurs.

Another employee commented on the changes in her performance after training and showed that she too realised and corrected her weaknesses so that she could serve customers and communicate with them more effectively, stressing the point made above:

> *After training I do my job in a more correct way. I use the new things I learnt and this helps me. When we do product training in particular every time we need to use different knowledge and skills to sell a product since it changes and we need to inform the customer in the right way. I also learn how to communicate better with customers and be more professional. (EMPL 3)*

The response of another employee was similar in that training helped her change the way she worked and perform more effectively. This depended, however, on whether she transferred training not on training per se:

> *I can serve the customers differently. I can speak about the philosophy of the company, the products, it is easier than before. (EMPL 4)*

Changes in employee attitudes

The managers commented on how training changed the employees' attitudes towards their job. As two of them stressed, employees felt more secure and wiser after training and this had a positive impact on their performance:

> *They felt more secure. The old employees who attend seminars regularly become wiser, they learn something new after they have learnt the basics every time they learn something new about creams, perfumes or make up. (MNGR 1)*

It is important that the manager uses the term 'wiser' showing that training affects the whole of the individual and the way employees perceive their job.

> *When the company gives you the incentive to learn both about products and sales skills, things that can help you, you will become better and feel more secure. (MNGR 7)*

Security, mentioned by the manager, is one element in the organisational context leading to mutual gains and it is important for transfer.

MNGR1 also stressed the feeling of security and equality with peers that employees felt after training:

> *So, when she starts learning things she feels equal to other employees in knowledge....the other employees who learnt about a product, felt more secure and could sell it better. (MNGR 1)*

Another manager commented on behavioural and performance changes after employees attended training and applied new KSAs:

> *When they attend this training, certainly their behaviour and performance in the store changes because they learn well the general rules they must know and also specific things, some secrets, some tricks. (MNGR 2)*

She added that employees were more passionate on the job after training:

> *They come back more passionate and they want to prove to the store and to themselves their better performance. (MNGR2)*

This response reveals the power of the organisational context. If it is favourable and supportive, then employees respect it and they want to transfer training and change their performance. Also, it reveals the power of self-esteem for transfer.

Employees shared their experience about training saying that it changed the way they worked and how they felt about themselves. As one of them said, she felt more confident and able to interact more effectively with people, transfer her knowledge to peers and sell products better:

> *A very specific training that we did...helped me with my personality and with how to interact in the store with more people, transfer my knowledge and behave more professionally. Since I know a product well, I feel more confident to transfer knowledge to other people...I am certain about this and can sell it better. (EMPL 1)*

This response shows that employees are conscious of transferring new knowledge and about the value this has for them, the customer and the organisation.

Another employee said that training was an important experience that changed her attitude to the customers and improved her performance. She also said that it influenced her as a customer in other stores which showed she changed not only at a professional but also at a personal level:

> *It was an important experience because through this training I came back to the store a very different person because my attitude towards our customers and first of all myself as a customer somewhere else was very different and my performance in the company I think was much better. (EMPL 2)*

Training affected the way another employee felt. It made her feel good and more prepared to do her job:

> *I feel good in the training environment, I feel special, I feel that someone cares about us because transferring knowledge is very important, basically she (the trainer) gives us power and reliability in this field, I feel very good, more complete, more prepared when I come back to work. (EMPL 1)*

As another employee commented, new KSAs made her feel enthusiastic and energetic:

> *Personally, after a training programme I come back very enthusiastic. I am more informed about my job and I will do my job in the right way so I come back more energetic. (EMPL 2)*

Better preparation, confidence and enthusiasm to do the job were also expressed by another employee:

> *It's strange with training. Sometimes you are even bored to go and then you go and learn new things and when you come back you feel differently. You feel better because you know more things and the customer is also more satisfied when you serve him. It's very good. You feel more confident that you know your job and you want to work harder. (EMPL3)*

This response reveals that transfer is affected both by the training event itself but also by the organisational context when employees return to work which can foster enthusiasm so that they transfer training. In the opposite case, transfer can be problematic.

Overall, changes in employee skills and attitudes related to how employees felt about their job and the company. This affected transfer and managers noted that they felt good in a climate of partnership and a good environment:

> *As the company philosophy, we don't want the employees to feel as employees but as partners. So, they always know company plans and results and this makes them feel a part, feel very close to the company. (MNGR4)*

> *Because they are individuals who like to communicate with other people, the fact that they can do this in a clean, tidy and perfumed environment, and a friendly environment, I think that this satisfies them. Yes, I think they love their job and they try to do it in the best way. (MNGR6)*

Other managers stressed employee priorities and how they affected the way they worked:

There are employees who see their job creatively, there are others who may work out of need and they follow the procedures they don't have a problem but they would probably like to do another job. (MNGR1)

It depends on what each employee expects...Certainly we make sure that all employees are equally interested, whether they see their job as a temporary one or whether they want to advance. (MNGR2)

The managers' responses reveal the power employees have on their performance. Also, they imply that it is not only the employees' priorities whch shape their performance at work but also their own management style and interest for employees supporting the arguments of the thesis.

The second manager added that employees who liked their job changed more after training:

Yes, they perform better, they want to prove something different and they want to show that. (MNGR2)

One employee perceived her job as a challenge implying that she transfers training for this reason:

It has a daily challenge, it keeps me alert, all my senses are at the maximum. (EMPL1)

She felt like this because of positive social relationships at work which can enhance transfer:

Communication with the people very much, communication with colleagues. (EMPL1)

Other employees said they loved their job and this contributed to improved performance:

I love it. If you love your job and you feel good, you perform. (EMPL2)

I like my job, I wanted to do this job...But now we are stressed not to lose our job and we do our best to keep it. (EMPL5)

Measuring change

Managers responded that they evaluated employee performance based on the volume of sales but there was no specific measurement system for transfer or qualitative performance elements:

> *Quantitatively, we can measure this change, we give targets about the products employees were trained on...we tell employees and they have to achieve this target. So, quantitatively we can measure the change. Quantitatively it is more difficult to observe or measure the method that each employee uses to sell the product because you have to be next to him to see that. (MNGR1)*

> *The feedback we have is quantitative based on the sales volume and also qualitative based on our observations in the stores. (MNGR3)*

> *The result is not measurable based on data. It is measured mainly through observation. If the training was systematically implemented in total for each employee, we could observe the change based on specific evidence of our sales....But the way it happens now you can't really say you can see a difference. (MNGR6)*

This absence of measurement could inhibit transfer because the company would not attribute performance changes to it and so the process of rewarding employees and eliciting their DE would be disrupted.

Cross-level and cross-company concluding remarks

The data revealed consistency across levels about the changes in employee performance due to training and transfer, professional and personal, although changes were seen as

the result of different reasons and personal priorities. Both managers and employees exercised their agency and affected transfer, evident when after training, aware of their strengths and weaknesses, employees changed the way they performed by correcting themselves and managers said that they should also encourage employees to change their performance. Responses of most employees showed that they wanted to transfer training and contribute to company performance. Also, they showed an awareness of the weaknesses that they could improve through training and a willingness to do so and provide quality customer service. These changes, however, were effected under certain conditions such as a positive social climate at work and a favourable organisational environment.

Changes in employee performance in both companies were attributed partly to previous experience, knowledge and qualitative elements as MNGR1 in CO2 observed and partly to new KSAs acquired in training. Respondents considered that training and the application of new KSAs made employees more efficient by managing their time, organising tasks, setting priorities, and working more professionally. One employee's response that knowledge and skills gave her power was also important since power is one of the objective characteristics of skill unleashed through transfer (Payne, 2009; Lloyd and Payne, 2008; Evans and Davis, 2005). Relating to attitudes and feelings, employees experienced higher self esteem, self awareness and improvement, security, equality with peers, passion and enthusiasm about the job, the desire to prove themselves at work, more confidence and a more positive attitude towards their job, all under the conditions identified above.

Changes in skills, attitudes and feelings affected mutual gains and employee DE as antecedents of high training transfer, supporting the HTTS and the literature in that training builds and improves employee ability, motivation and opportunity, and creates

feelings of self efficacy (Dubinsky and Skinner, 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2000). If employees possessed job specific KSAs they contributed DE, feeling good about themselves and motivated to work more effectively driven by a personal need to improve and provide quality customer service. The feeling of security employees felt had a twofold importance: first, employees felt more secure by acquiring new KSAs and so contributed DE and transferred KSAs (Appelbaum et al., 2000); second, transferring new KSAs led to job security since employees performed more effectively. Job security was essential for mutual gains which elicited more DE if employees had a share in these gains (Hutchinson et al., 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). Feeling self efficacy and enthusiasm, and perceiving their job as a challenge and an opportunity, increased employee intrinsic job satisfaction and transfer motivation, required for mutual gains and DE (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Dubinsky and Skinner, 2002; Hutchinson et al., 2002; Seyler et al., 1998; Ford and Weissbein, 1997).

However, neither company systematically measured changes in employee performance as a result of training transfer. Although improvements in employee performance were observed after training, the companies did not measure them specifically and so could not define what induced them. Thus, they were not in a position to evaluate and account for the specific factors that drove these changes and reward them accordingly. The indicators they used were the increased volume of sales or better interaction with customers. Changes in performance also involved qualitative elements stressing the transfer of tacit knowledge, experience and intangible skills but they were not measured either (Lloyd and Payne, 2008; Payne, 2000; Keep and Mayhew, 1999). This could make transfer problematic since employee contribution was not specified and so the company could not define a share in company gains for them which would elicit their

DE (Kochan and Osterman, 1994). This stresses the need for specifically measuring transfer which can define mutual gains and elicit employee DE by rewarding employees who transfer new KSAs and also existing tacit knowledge, experience and intangible skills so that employees have gains for transferring KSAs and continously expend DE contributing to mutual gains (Lloyd and Payne, 2008; Payne, 2000; Keep and Mayhew, 1999; Phillips, 1996).

Further, employees' priorities and attitudes towards their job could make transfer problematic in some cases. Employees who liked their job were willing to put effort and perform well through transfer whereas employees who worked only for the salary were not interested or committed and so did not transfer new KSAs. Also, as one employee commented, in this economic crisis, she felt stressed not to lose her job and so she did everything to keep it. This is an external environment factor affecting transfer which here seems to have positive impact. However, under other economic conditions in the external environment, it could make transfer problematic. One should not disregard also the role of the manager which is catalytic in facilitating transfer.

6.2.3. Theme 3: Technical factors in the HR system and job design affecting high training transfer

To achieve high transfer, the HTTS foresaw that training should be embedded in the organisational HR system in internal fit with other HR practices which could contribute to mutual gains and elicit employee DE (Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Boxall and Purcell, 2000; Kozlowski et al., 2000). Also, it foresaw that jobs should be redesigned after training to accommodate new KSAs and increase employee intrinsic job satisfaction (Keep et al., 2006). This theme presents the data relating to HR practices, financial

rewards, promotions and job design and how they were enacted in CO1 and CO2 to achieve high training transfer.

Company 1

Financial rewards

The manager considered rewards important:

> *We need to balance...if somebody is really poor and they have three kids to feed or one kid to feed, then you know a salary or a bonus is still very, very important. (MNGR)*

She commented that if employees liked the training this was also a reward for the company and the employees, stressing the role of the organisational context for transfer:

> *The fact that people like this training, then they see themselves fit in our company it's also a reward for us that they actually appreciate all this philosophy. And for them more technically, I mean, either it can be...a hiring,...a bonus, we do have all these methods in here...we believe in those tactics. (MNGR)*

An employee said financial rewards showed that the company acknowledged her efforts:

> *A pay rise or a bonus is very good. They show that the company appreciates what you do, they praise you. Why should someone try more if they don't expect anything? I don't mean that rewards are everything, but they are important for my work. (EMPL1)*

This response implies that if a reward is present, it is worth the effort of performing better, whereas the opposite happens if it is not.

Another employee stressed fair rewards:

> *Rewards are important. I can't say I use what I learn in training only for the sake of it. You work and you need to be rewarded, and it has to be fair as well...fairness is what motivates you. (EMPL4)*

She means that they are important and instrumental for effective on-the-job performance through transfer.

Promotions

The manager said employees could be promoted if their performance improved after training implying the role of transfer:

> *I could say that somebody could get a promotion, I have seen that, it has happened here. The young lady that we were talking before, she has become a full time employee, so this is a reward. (MNGR)*

The employees too considered promotions an incentive to invest more effort:

> *The perspective of promotion, of better salary, of financial also perspectives, influence you to sacrifice more of your time, to invest more at your job, to be better every day, to become better every day. (EMPL3)*

> *Becoming the manager in a project is also a reward. It shows the trust of the company and you feel good. And it is a way to learn all the time, to be trained on the job again. It is a very important reward. (EMPL4)*

The employees' responses show that other HR practices are important for transfer and they activate employees to expend DE. The opposite case is also important if such rewards are absent.

Job design

Respondents stressed the importance of autonomy to work differently and express their ideas after training implying that is necessary for transfer:

> *There is autonomy in the sense that you can get information, express your opinion...and then this is evaluated by the managers to see if it is correct and then proceed with implementation of any of the ideas. (EMPL2)*

Employees wanted to be considered responsible for their job something which gives

them a feeling of achievement and enhances intrinsic job satisfaction and transfer:

> *I think autonomy is a basic factor, that influenced my training, my job because I have the opportunity to express myself, my ideas and to undertake tasks and to be responsible for them so...I feel more responsible, more professional...when I have more autonomy to implement the tasks in my job. (EMPL3)*

Company 2

Financial rewards

A manager said that when the company saw a change in employee performance it

rewarded them:

> *In the product training we see a change in employee performance, we see a change in the volume of products they sell and the company has an incentive scheme for these employees. (MNGR4)*

Another manager commented on financial and psychological rewards as being important

factors for performance and the role of the manager:

> *The reward sometimes is not only financial, it is also an ethical reward basically from the manager who sees that the employee works better and so rewards her psychologically which is a very important factor too besides the bonus they take.(MNGR1)*

Two managers, however, stressed that rewards in the company were not related to

training showing a reason why transfer cannot be achieved. Also, their responses show

that their company did not measure the effects of training on employee performance

also hindering transfer:

The company sets targets and there are bonuses. These, however, are not distinguished or awarded to the person who went through training and went well. (MNGR2)

No, it hasn't happened because the result is not measurable and so it would be unfair and partial. (MNGR6)

These responses show that transfer could be problematic due to the lack of measurement in performance changes after training. Employees were not rewarded for applying new KSAs and so transfer was not facilitated.

Employees responded that improving their performance meant more sales and rewards:

Basically, improving performance means more product sales...So we reach the targets and we get paid for these targets. (EMPL1)

Also, there is a bonus or product gifts, the rewards are also tangible. (EMPL4)

Most employees said that rewards were in products rather than money. This does not clearly link to transfer, however, since it might not be adequately valued by employees.

EMPL1 considered ethical satisfaction and status important:

One part is financial, the other, at a personal level, is the ethical satisfaction and the professional one. And it is also about status. In our job which has to do with sales, we have status from the way we sell. (EMPL1)

This response sheds light into the personal reasons why employees transfer training, one of them being status at work, implying that the manager must speak to employees and learn these personal reasons for maximum results.

Another employee, however, said that in her store there were no rewards:

> *There is an issue with our store. We tried a lot all these years but we do not have rewards. (EMPL2)*

and added:

> *It is not good if you have nothing to expect. You don't feel the same energy. (EMPL2)*

Her words stress the role of the HR system and by clearly indicating that if she does not expect rewards, her performance does not improve, also shows the employee's power to transfer. It is this expectation and knowing that it will be met that drives transfer.

Promotions

One manager explained that promotions did not depend only on employee performance after training but on continuous performance stressing the need to bundle HR practices:

> *For sure training only does not define employee advancement but based on annual appraisals and the daily performance in the store, we see which employees are able and can advance. (MNGR4)*

His next comment highlighted the need to bundle HR practices:

> *All aspects in an HR system are interrelated. Besides that, after training is it essential to supervise employees and provide continuous training, so that they know that training will continue and will be repeated. (MNGR4)*

Other managers said that transferring new KSAs could lead to a promotion:

> *...the more you learn and the more active you become in the store and perform better than before, it helps a lot with a promotion. (MNGR1)*

> *The employee must change in many parts in the store, relating to training, her behaviour, her results because the next step from the position of the sales assistant is to the position of the supervisor. (MNGR2)*

These comments imply that transfer develops in a cyclical process with performance: employees transfer training and so their performance improves and in turn they get more rewards which motivates them to transfer again.

The manager of a less central store, however, had a different opinion and did not consider that employees could be promoted despite changes in their performance highlighting the role of the organisational context:

> *The truth is that in our store promotions are frozen because there are not other nearby stores for employees to be promoted so there is one position for the manager and one for a supervisor. Regarding the supervisor, it is a fact that someone is promoted because of her skills and emotional and personal engagement but it is difficult to connect it with training. (MNGR6)*

Her response also stressed the value of measurement after training.

One employee said that:

> *Training helps you to be more confident about yourself and the product. (EMPL1)*

but added that promotions depended on more than training including personal factors and previous performance:

> *There is always the possibility of promotion but it is not only about training. You must have the whole package, a stable character, reliability, respect, a stable behaviour over time and a stably increasing performance. (EMPL1)*

Another employee said that there were opportunities for promotion but not as a result of training transfer:

> *We may become supervisors for example. (EMPL4)*

Job design

When asked whether employees were given more challenging tasks after training, one manager said that employees could make suggestions about their job as long as they aimed at organisational benefits:

> *We accept suggestions by the employees which can help the company and the store. (MNGR4)*

Other managers stressed the qualitative elements of performance and the value of autonomy on the job:

> *There are limitations because there are regulations and procedures that we all need to follow. After that it is on employee discretion to do her job more easily...faster...and satisfy the customer. Beyond the procedures that we must follow, it is in our discretion how to achieve this outcome... it is qualitative. (MNGR1)*

> *For the person or the team to feel autonomy and initiative gives them dynamism. So, employees are productive and they bring results. This exists here in this store and it is positive always of course within the framework of company guidelines. (MNGR2)*

These responses reveal that managers are aware of the value of redesigning jobs after training so that employees can transfer new KSAS. However, this did not happen systematically in the company.

A manager in a less central store, however, said the company did not provide autonomy to employees:

> *The company system is very guiding and employees are only executing more precisely. There is no autonomy. (MNGR6)*

Employees mostly agreed they had autonomy but under control by the company management. This, however, should be cautiously accepted since employees could have been selective in their answers or they did not realise exactly what autonomy involves:

> *We have to discuss this with a superior and then we see. We don't come to the store and do something on our own initiative...If there is agreement and something must happen yes, there is no problem. (EMPL1)*

> *We can choose which part in the company we like more. (EMPL4)*

> *We also show which are our strong points and we undertake a new role in the store. (EMPL4)*

Cross-level and cross-company concluding remarks

Cross level and cross company data supported the HTTS in that rewards, promotions and autonomous job design made employees more willing to expend DE and transfer training because they have a share in company gains. They revealed that training should be embedded in the organisational HR system enacted in bundles with other HR practices to create mutual gains and elicit employee DE for high training transfer (van Emmerik et al., 2010; Batt, 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994; Hackman and Oldham, 1975). Also, they supported the HTTS and the literature in that jobs should be redesigned so that employees can use new KSAs and experience more intrinsic job satisfaction through intellectual and task discretion stressing also the role of individual agency (Karasek, 1979). Individuals worked for the salary but their DE depended on something extra (Hornung et al., 2010; Lloyd, 2008; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Osterman, 2000). Bundling training with rewards and promotions enhanced transfer because employees had a share in company gains and expended DE. Autonomous job design increased task and intellectual discretion and determined the influence employees had on how hard they worked; what tasks they did; how they did

them and to what quality standards. This could create intrinsic job satisfaction and lead to mutual gains, eliciting employee DE for transfer (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Felstead et al., 2007; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Karasek, 1979).

However, the data were not always consistent about espoused, enacted and perceived practices. In CO2, HR practices were enacted differently and bonuses or promotions were higher for employees in central stores. The result was that employees in less central ones did not expend DE without the expectation of financial gains and this made transfer problematic. Also, rewards and promotions were not linked to employee performance improvements after training but to overall performance. As respondents said this is the result of transferring more than new KSAs, such as tacit and intangible skills, emotional skills and experience. This, however, does not support training transfer (Lloyd, 2008; Lloyd and Payne, 2008; Payne, 2000; Keep and Mayhew, 1999). Relating to job autonomy, the data in both companies showed that employees were somewhat autonomous to express and implement new ideas always within company guidelines. In CO2, employees in central stores were more autonomous. However, neither company redesigned jobs after training to incorporate new KSAs. Performance improvements could not be linked to training and transfer nor could rewards or promotions. This affected intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and employee DE to transfer training.

Overall, the data supported the argument that the transfer process is not driven by training only but is affected by other HR practices and job design (Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Baldwin and Magjuka, 1997). Supporting the HTTS, if financial rewards, promotion opportunities and job autonomy exist, this provides employees with a share in company gains and so elicits DE and enhanced transfer more than training alone (Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Delery and Shaw, 2001; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994).

6.2.4. Theme 4: Training design and its effects on high training transfer

Theme 4 discusses data about training design factors including TNA, training content, mentoring and feedback, practice and follow up and their effect on mutual gains, DE and high training transfer.

Company 1

Manager involvement in TNA

The manager accepted that her involvement in TNA was important in setting clear and explicit goals for employees:

> *It's very, very important. I think the starting point is very important, why do I undergo this training? So...it has to be clear. The relationship has to be very clear, and we have to have a goal, there has to be a need for this training. (MNGR)*

Her response implies the value of common and clear goal setting with the employee for maximum results through transfer.

Employee involvement in TNA

Employees perceived this similarly. They could express their needs for new skills and this enhanced transfer:

> *I think they all like it as an idea and I like the idea that the people I work with do not ask training just to ask training. I mean they have seen in their daily routine what is actually needed and missing to them and will better*

their skills and competences. So I think this is very important because I might suggest something but the person who is actually doing the job...it's much better in a position to also see...what is actually needed. (MNGR)

As one said, asking for training meant that she needed new skills and then she applied them more effectively:

I sometimes ask for training and it's good that my manager listens. There are times in everybody's job when he has to be trained in new things. When you ask for a specific training it means that you need it and then you use everything on the job. It's much more effective. (EMPL4)

The content of training

The manager considered that theory was inadequate and employees needed practical content to improve performance:

I believe in content that is not so theoretical. The person wants to know...what am I supposed to do in this case? What it is best to do and the fact that I did this way did it cost me, did it give me another option? I mean things more practical. That will help I think the trainee. (MNGR)

This also stresses the fact that transfer not only requires practical content but also time given to employees to apply new KSAs.

Employees also said that when content was relevant, they used it immediately:

It is very important, application is immediate. Here everything is practical, in parallel. Whatever you are trained on, this applies. Tasks are done as I was trained. (EMPL2)

They are very specific in terms of communication, in terms of implementation of the projects, they are very specific skills...and to implement quickly the tasks so I think training helped me a lot, it was relevant. (EMPL3)

The responses above are in line with the HTTS and with the literature about the value of training design for transfer.

Mentoring and feedback

The manager used the term 'mentoring' showing deeper and genuine commitment to employee development:

> *And also this informal mentoring...the trainee has the chance to go a level more in depth, to speak with the trainer for something more than the content. I think a combination of the content with some mentoring, with this friendlier, psychological approach, I think it's worthwhile. (MNGR)*

Indeed, the role of mentoring for transfer is an issue requiring further research since mentoring is effective not only for the transfer of formally trained KSAs but also of the tacit knowledge and experience of the mentor which could facilitate transfer.

Employees did not mention mentoring but said that feedback was important for their job and personal life:

> *Of course it is very important and it happens in our company. Whatever we do we get feedback and I believe this is what helps us improve our job and also to improve as individuals in our personal life. (EMPL2)*

> *The friendly environment it's....very important for me and very useful to develop my....professional skills...to give the feedback every day and to advise me how I can do it better and...to give me new tasks every day and to feel confident that I can...implement them and to rely on me, on my responsibility. (EMPL3)*

These responses implied the value of feedback for facilitating transfer through personal and professional improvement.

Company 2

Manager involvement in TNA

Managers responded that they were involved in TNA for performance improvement either in a systematic or in an informal way through communication with employees or observation of their performance:

> *I see who needs training and these people are trained. (MNGR1)*

> *Through their work in the store, and with their immediate contact with me as a manager and with the supervisors, we discuss it and they tell us their weaknesses and so they can tell us what they need. (MNGR2)*

> *Certain trainings come standardised from the headquarters relating to our strategy and plans. Another part is product training...And from then on a part of training is related to the feedback from inside the stores. (MNGR3)*

> *This communication exists. It is not standardised so that it takes place once a month or through a questionnaire. But we also have informal needs analysis. (MNGR3)*

These responses stress the manager's role in employee performance beginning from the early stages of TNA in line with the HTTS and the literature.

Employee involvement in TNA

Employees were involved in TNA formally or informally stressing its value. As the managers said:

> *It happens informally by us. The formal procedure is that when someone needs to be trained, his manager has to see that...and then through a discussion with the employee. (MNGR1)*

> *Every two or three months, we do interviews with the employees. We inform them about the brands, the developments, the customer service...we see the weaknesses and also the employees tell us themselves. (MNGR2)*

One manager said it was important for employees to say which training they needed implying that this facilitated transfer:

> *This shows that the employee wants to develop, learn even more things about the company and be able to perform well in her current position and also in her advancement in the future. (MNGR2)*

She stressed differences in the performance of employees who asked for training adding that the manager's support at work was important. This showed the manager's awareness of her important role for bringing changes in employee performance:

> *Yes, certainly. Immediately after the seminars there is a difference. Of course for this difference to be maintained and not be lost, we must always, the manager and the supervisor, be there, acknowledge the effort, support, inform, correct, generally to support the employee. (MNGR2)*

Employees said they were involved in formal or informal TNA and understood its value for their performance and development:

> *Yes, of course, if I need something I can say that. And also on a regular basis they ask us as well. They send us documents to fill in, they are personal, each one of us his own, what needs he has, what he has done. (EMPL1)*

> *We always express our needs...personally when I have a need, I am very lucky probably because I say it. (EMPL2)*

> *Yes because every month we do a meeting, we see how the store went, we say what we need and the manager sees if there is a relevant training in that month and there is enough time, we attend it. (EMPL4)*

As EMPL2 added this helped her transfer KSAs:

> *Because now I know my weaknesses...I don't want someone to come and ask me for something and think that I don't know. I want to be sure for the things I have to do. (EMPL2)*

The content of training

Training content was considered important by managers. As they said it was focused and this helped employees:

> *Usually the content is focused and this helps employees. It is rare that employees come back and say that they did not understand or did not need it. (MNGR1)*

> *Because we are a company that has been doing training for many years now, we have learnt what helps us and what not. So, every year we keep what helps and we change what did not go well. (MNGR2)*

Employees noted also the importance of specific content for transfer and performance improvement:

> *It personally helps me a lot, to learn of a product. I am a person who needs to dismantle something to understand it. I want to see the product composition...so knowing the product, touching it, smelling it, understand what it is, who is it for, its ingredients, I am more prepared to offer it, understand the customer's need and see if it is satisfied by this product or not. (EMPL1)*

> *When we do a general training, it is more unclear. When we do product training, we learn very specific things. This helps us remember the most important things and apply the training. (EMPL4)*

Practice and follow up

For content to contribute to transfer, practice and follow up were needed implying the need to have time to use new KSAs:

> *They practice during training sometimes but the next day after the training the employee has to apply the things he learnt during training in the store. (MNGR1)*

Employees have the opportunity to practise during training. They come into contact with the product...and at that moment they can ask questions for each product and have an answer. (MNGR2)

But always there is the prerequisite of follow up after training. (MNGR3)

Employees agreed that there was follow up and practice in the real work context and this was useful for performance improvement:

We come back on a regular basis, we do a revision about the product, learn about its new composition which probably we have for a long time and is renewed, one or two persons are trained and they transfer the knowledge to the rest. (EMPL1)

We don't attend irrelevant trainings...in our job which is about cosmetics, we must know first sales techniques, and how we can promote each product in the right way. Second, we must know how to apply it in the right way. We must know so as to be able to give the right advice. (EMPL2)

Yes, usually there is theory and then we apply the product, smell, use the makeup and then they stay and we see how the products are and tell the customer...We are more certain because we have seen the results. (EMPL5)

Cross-level and cross-company concluding remarks

The data supported the HTTS and the literature in the value of training design for mutual gains, DE and high training transfer. Managers and employees participated in mutual goal-setting during TNA clarifying employee performance goals and expectations, engaging employees in decision making and eliciting their DE (Levine, 1995). Participants valued relevant content which helped employees focus their efforts on solid goals and transfer training (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Chiaburu and Tekleab, 2005). Mentoring, feedback, practice and follow up after training also supported transfer.

However, it was not clear that the companies had a formalised TNA process but rather it was mostly informal. This could make transfer problematic since important performance goals and objectives could be underevaluated. A systematic TNA process would enable employees to express their training needs and so support transfer by providing training in relevant and essential skills for employees to perform effectively (Broad, 2005; Brown, 2005; Richman-Hirsch, 2001).

6.2.5. Theme 5: Social factors in the work environment affecting high training transfer

The HTTS foresaw that social factors at work, and particularly the way managers enact the HR system, support technical ones. To increase intrinsic job satisfaction, achieve mutual gains and elicit employee DE for training transfer, the manager should support employees and facilitate their performance after training so they could apply new KSAs. The HTTS had to be properly enacted by managers who contributed their own DE in a favourable work climate positively affecting employees' experience at work (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Hutchinson et al., 2002). The role of peers and of the trainer in the transfer process emerged from the data.

Company 1

The manager's role

The manager saw her role in motivating and facilitating employees to learn and develop and considered interpersonal relationships important for performance:

> *I think (what is important is) the direct relationship between manager and employee. (MNGR)*

She considered the sense of belonging to the team and growing important to motivate employees:

> *...me personally I value the social factors. Why? Because I think that the sense of belonging, the sense of growth, professional growth, the sense of becoming better and have a career orientation, that is the basis for somebody to move ahead. (MNGR)*

> *...and we have to motivate people and enable people to move ahead. Because a salary can be a salary today and can be lower a day later, but then if you don't have the social skills, the self esteem to fight, to be ready to cope with situations, then you're lacking a very important character strength. (MNGR)*

As she stressed, her commitment to the training was essential:

> *I committed myself because I think this is the heart of any training, to have the trainer committed, if it's...an ad hoc training...that it's not structured in a training environment. (MNGR)*

This reveals that the manager must also exert DE to achieve transfer as this thesis and the literature argue.

Employees considered the manager an important link between training and transfer, a role model who guided them:

> *An essential factor that I believe in is the open-minded employer. I consider very important that your supervisor can listen to you because the training we did was the result of our request. We tell the manager all the time that she should train us. She is open-minded and helps us a lot. (EMPL1)*

> *When there is communication between the manager and the employee, the manager to be able to pass through to the employee the things that he or she wants to say, to have direct communication and be able to organise his*

or her job effectively so that this can be passed through to the employee as well. (EMPL2)

The role or my manager is certainly very important because every day I learn things from my manager and also....the way she treats every task that I'm implementing. (EMPL3)

If you don't support your employees, you can't expect the change, the improvement. It's also that applying new skills, new things, takes time, it needs repetition and the manager has to be there to repeat things, to say things again to people. Training is not enough, the manager has to support us after, otherwise we wasted time...and money. (EMPL 4)

These responses reveal that employees transfer training because of several reasons in the complexity of the organisation. Training is not enough and the manager is a catalyst for giving value to training and enhancing transfer.

Relationships with peers and the work climate

A good team and a climate of cooperation were considered important by all employees for effective performance and the achievement of common goals:

A team must be created in every company, a support team which will contribute to a common goal which is the good of the company. A good cooperation, a good link between people in the company...always for the common good...(EMPL1)

The most important factor is social. If there is no team, the right team, to be able to cooperate, a nice environment, without quarrelling...there will also be difficult moments in the job...but...when there is laughter, pleasure, communication with the people at work I consider that for me at least, the social factors are more important and the financial factors are second. (EMPL2)

I think the most important is also the environment because for me the job is very important and I invest a lot of my time and of my life so... I really like to be with people that I'm that I... feel nice to work with and it's a good cooperation atmosphere. (EMPL3)

You have to be with good people at work. We spend most of our time here. If your colleagues don't support you, you can't go very far. It's very important, that you speak to each other and understand. This happens here, the climate is very good and we learn and work together. (EMPL4)

These comments reveal the complex process of transfer which does not depend on formal training only. Employee responses stress the fact that if they do not feel happy at work, their performance does not improve so as to lead to maximum effectiveness through transfer for them and the company.

The trainer's role

The trainer was considered an important participant who could engage employees. As the manager said:

So, the trainer is the key player, he can actually...spread some magic around the room and make the other ones...interested in the content. (MNGR)

and added:

I believe in that, in their chemistry and how the trainer is engaged, how much the trainer is interested in passing over this knowledge. (MNGR)

One employee also stressed the trainers' role in facilitating transfer by transferring their own KSAs:

And it's also the trainer, he has the power to inspire! A good trainer can make a boring content, a treasure...It's important, it has to do with personality and passion about communicating with people and passing knowledge and skills. It's about passion and really wanting other people to learn. (EMPL4)

These comments suggest that the trainer is also an important agent in the transfer process supporting the social aspects of transfer.

Company 2

The manager's role

Managers agreed that their support after training was important for employees to use

new learning and transfer it on the job:

> *We always discuss so that I can see the content they learnt...I observe the customer service they offer...and there the employee is assessed. There is an acknowledgement, if she has difficulties she receives help...After I use this employee as an example so she can train other employees in the store...So, she becomes more passionate about her job and we have the best result. (MNGR2)*

> *First of all I have to understand what they learnt in the seminar...Also, about new products you have to give them an incentive and also reward them through a bonus or the sales person of the month award. So, as a manager you need to make employees feel that it is not only about going to the seminar but also help them understand better and urge them with something more tangible.(MNGR7)*

As this manager added, it depended on the manager to reward employees

revealing the manager's agency for mutual gains and transfer:

> *There is a bonus in the company, both the daily bonus which is a reward for all of us. At a personal level, it depends wholly on the manager what to give to this individual to distinguish him from the others. (MNGR7)*

However, as she said, it was sometimes difficult to reward employees personally since

this could cause conflict in the team:

> *Apart from the daily and monthly bonus, there are also bonuses and rewards for specific products. But this is a team reward. The manager can make it personal but this is difficult and the manager needs to avoid conflict in the team. (MNGR7)*

Employees agreed that their managers supported them after training to transfer knowledge:

Basically with our supervisor with whom we discuss, we transfer our knowledge on the things we said during training and then she gives us the required time to discuss the programme, to contact each employee tell her about the products, help her, show her the products so that we can transfer this knowledge to others. (EMPL1)

After each training, they ask us what we learnt not to check us but we discuss what we liked. This helps us remember because the manager asks us about the products, tells us to tell the rest of the team in the store so that they can serve the customer. If we don't remember, the manager reminds us about the products, go to a seminar or ask another employee to tell us. Also, we make a revision, either alone or with the manager. (EMPL5)

Another employee mentioned that the manager demanded that they transferred training but also facilitated their performance:

She demands it. As we come back she demands that we are better. We always discuss what exactly we did and she is informed because it is a part that she has to work on, work on us. We inform her so she knows where I perform better, what I have learnt so if she sees that if I make an error by accident, immediately she corrects me and I perform better. Of course the role of the manager is very good. (EMPL2)

Relationships with peers and the work climate

The managers said that the climate was very important. One of them defined good climate:

Not to have problems, or conflicts between employees, generally the job to be done smoothly and employees to come and work in a good mood, smile, serve the customer and all these things we must show to people outside. After training also the climate is important, I will say about security again. When you have someone who feels good, has her bonus, her salary, can

*have a promotion, it's very important to have security and know about
products. All these things make someone work well....(MNGR1)*

Other managers said that team relationships, open communication and value to
employees defined a good climate essential to motivate employees to perform:

> *The main aim is to have a united team and to know and understand that
> we are all here for common goals and jobs. I believe that an important
> role is played by information, not to keep something for ourselves, the
> acknowledgement and so you can gain the employees, by giving them
> value, that they have the basic role for success, and they think that they
> are the main players. (MNGR3)*

> *So, it's really important in order to motivate them, to create a very good
> social climate to listen to the team and act accordingly and to have
> different action to show them that we are behind them and we think about
> them before thinking about anything else. (MNGR5)*

Employees agreed that the manager influenced the climate and that performing better
was not the result of their own effort only while stressing the role of others for their
performance:

> *She influences the supervisors, the supervisors influence us. That's how it
> goes, when there is a positive climate it's better for everyone. And when
> someone cares about training and she is superior, it's even better.
> (EMPL1)*

> *Some people want to help you, others not. And then you must be able to
> use new things. But it's other people again who allow or not you to do
> this. It's not the company management or CEO. It's your colleagues, the
> people you communicate with every day. (EMPL3)*

Employees mentioned that the training and store climate affected them positively both
professionally and personally:

> *Because our trainings are very pleasant, they are not strict because if they
> were strict I wouldn't want to go. They do a very good job, they have a*

very nice way to approach us so it is pleasant and they make us come back very enthusiastic. (EMPL2)

Yes, it influences us how to use the training, how we will behave in the store and in our personal life because at present at least work is the main part of my life. (EMPL5)

For another employee, the manager and peers were instrumental:

I must say that it is not only training that helps me do my job in a right way. It's the general situation and climate in the store and also very important it's the people I work with. It's important that my colleagues and the manager want to help me to improve at work. I can learn from others if they let me learn. (EMPL3)

The trainer's role

As one manager stressed, the trainer's role, and especially the internal trainer's, was important:

For us it is important that training is done by internal trainers. In this way training time is more productive because internal trainers know the structure, the operation and the object of the company. (MNGR6)

An employee agreed that the trainer transferred a lot of knowledge to her:

And during the training from my trainer whom I appreciate very much and she really transfers me a lot of knowledge, I feel more prepared to come back to the store and sell a product. (EMPL1)

As another employee said, the trainers' enthusiasm made her feel enthusiastic too and so she could provide better customer service:

Because the seminar was good, they made us like the products and love them. They showed that they liked the products and we had to believe that the products were good and we were enthusiastic and we could show them to the customer. (EMPL5)

These comments reveal more dimensions of transfer stressing that it is not a process which depends on the employee only but also on other individuals at work, such as the supervisor and peers. Thus, everybody must engage in continuous transfer to achieve individual and organisational performance.

Cross-level and cross-company concluding remarks

The participants' responses highlighted the importance of social factors and their effects on the employees' sense of belonging to the team, sense of growth, and self- esteem supporting the HTTS and the literature (Kontoghiorghes, 2004 and 2002; Dubinsky and Skinner, 2002; Seyler et al., 1998). Peer support and interpersonal relationships and feelings of fairness were mentioned by participants as factors influencing transfer. The trainer's role was stressed as important for learning and the acquisition of new KSAs during training and also for creating a pleasant environment conducive to learning (Hutchins, 1999). A good and friendly climate before, during and after training was essential to make employees feel good and perform effectively through teamwork, good communication and common goals. Peer learning was important for acquiring skills, competences and experience, highlighting the value of workplace learning (Sfard, 1998).

The data stressed the manager's role, supporting the HTTS. Positive employee perceptions of the manager built employee trust contributing to a healthy and positive relationship and enhanced DE and transfer. Managers realised their role in understanding employees' needs, giving them a share in the gains and eliciting their DE. By contributing their own DE, managers mentored employees, gave them feedback and made follow up discussions after training, using various techniques both demanding that employees applied new KSAs and facilitating their performance (Purcell and

Hutchinson, 2007; Hutchinson et al., 2002). These findings supported the HTTS and the literature in that management style and expectations are prerequisites for intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Dubinsky and Skinner, 2002; Hutchinson et al., 2002).

As one manager admitted although she had the power to distinguish and reward individual employee performance, she avoided it to prevent conflict. This could obstruct transfer, nevertheless, because despite the value of team cohesion, employees must share the gains in the company at an individual level too to be committed and expend DE for high training transfer (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Egan et al., 2004; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Osterman, 2000). The data in both companies revealed that the manager, peers and trainer, contributed to training transfer through transferring their own knowledge and experience and, together with employees, they should exercise their agency and DE to enhance the process. All these findings further reveal the complexity and collective nature of transfer.

6.2.6. Theme 6: An overall evaluation of the factors affecting high training transfer

The effectiveness of the HTTS for high training transfer depends on the following factors: training should be embedded in the organisational HR system in bundles with other HR practices (Anguinis and Kraiger, 2009; Baldwin et al., 2009; Kontoghiorghes, 2004); the HR practices should be properly enacted by the manager (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Purcell, 1999); and jobs should be redesigned after training to accommodate new KSAs (Keep et al., 2006). The continuous interaction of these factors affects employee intrinsic job satisfaction, creates mutual gains and elicits DE for high training transfer.

Company 1

The most important factors affecting high training transfer

The manager considered social factors and engagement the most important:

> *Me personally I value the social factors. I think that the sense of belonging, the sense of growth, professional growth, the sense of becoming better and have a career orientation, that is the basis for somebody to move ahead. (MNGR)*

> *... training can only offer as long as the person who is taking the training is receptive and the ones who offer the training they commit themselves and they do it not as a procedure but they also get engaged into that, they understand that this is a learning important process for the trainee. (MNGR)*

These responses highlight also that everybody should transfer KSAs not only the employee who attends training.

Employees stressed teamwork and appreciation by the company as the most important factors:

> *A team must be created in every company, a support team which will contribute to a common goal which is the good of the company. A good cooperation, a good link between people in the company...always for the common good. (EMPL1)*

> *But it's more than the salary really, isnt't it? It's more about feeling good and proud of your job, of yourself...and the manager should tell you this, should show that he appreciates what you do. It's for free to say a bravo, right?. (EMPL4)*

Also, they said that both parties must be actively and positively involved and transfer their knowledge and experience:

> *A major role is that of the manager. I consider the open-minded manager the major link for the effective implementation of training...also we as subordinates, we should show all the time the good things of training and its results. It is not enough to be given a training seminar. I consider that I*

too must do something to show the good results and maintain what we have achieved. (EMPL1)

We are not alone in this process. It is a common effort and all of us and out manager must try to do our job in the best way and achieve our targets (EMPL4)

Employee gains

As the manager said, employees gained if they perceived training as an opportunity:

If they have actually taken advantage of the training they have seen the opportunity, and if training is actually useful. (MNGR)

Employees said they gained if the manager listened to them and gave them autonomy.

Training helped them save time and be more productive supporting their professional

advancement. Trust and cooperation were also important:

The most important factor is that the person above you is open to accept and listen to what you want. This gave us multiple benefits, it gave us the ground to undertake a task, and then this task became our own project which means for sure that we had better rewards and it gave us freedom of action and working time. (EMPL1)

The most important factor? I think trust and communication with the manager first and then with your colleagues. Rewards and promotions are also important but you can't have them always. So, good relationships and trust can compensate you when you can't have rewards. If you can have both of course, it's perfect. (EMPL4)

Working is an exchange. If the company gives me something more, I will give something more in return. They can't ask us to give more all the time without any extra rewards. (EMPL1)

These data highlight the collective and reciprocal process of working, learning and transferring KSAs. Employees are aware of this and expect the manager's support while they perform.

Company gains

The manager said that changes in employee performance showed that the company offered the right training revealing the role of the organisational context for transfer:

> *The technical part I think it's important for both parties because even for us is a reward because we have seen that the training that we believe in and that we offer actually matters and has results, because also for us we have to evaluate the training we provide...If we never see the results, so we obviously we're doing something wrong." (MNGR)*

She considered transfer a collective experience in which everyone gained:

> *My personal opinion is that here we are all on the same boat, we all have the same destination, the same trip, the same difficulties, so whatever makes the trip easier, smoother it's good for all of us. So, if one takes the training, we will all enjoy it. Somehow because...we believe in sharing knowledge, we don't believe in competition within our team members, we believe in teamwork. So, it's like there is a spill over, somebody takes the training we all feel already a bit better about it, more secure, because somebody has something more to help us in this trip. (MNGR)*

This response is important showing that transfer is a collective process occurring beyond the employee. The realisation '*we are all on the same boat*' is catalytic for individual and organisational performance in a systemic process where all individuals, company culture, climate and systems interact at work. This stresses even more that transfer is not about formal training only.

Employees saw gains for the company resulting from their performance:

> *Those who were trained in the specific software could undertake at least four times more projects, which was very important. (EMPL1)*

> *Training is an important aspect for each employee to be able to advance and as a result, for the company to advance. (EMPL2)*

One employee mentioned that the company gained from young employees with fresh and innovative ideas revealing other aspects of transfer towards innovation:

> *The company benefits especially when you are a young person from the fresh ideas, the new ways of implementing projects, and...I think it's good to have this interaction with young people...they can introduce new ideas in the company. (EMPL3)*

Company 2

The most important factors affecting high training transfer

As one manager said, the most important factor was to provide practical and continuous training both to improve KSAs but also to show that the company cares:

> *The most important factor is to do the training in such a way so that employees can understand it and then can apply it...and it is also very important that training is frequent, not to train someone today and then train her after three years, to have such a time gap, because the employee feels neglected, that the company doesn't care. (MNGR1)*

This response also showed that the manager linked training with performance and was aware of the organisational context and her own role in the transfer process.

Supervision and measurement of employee performance and feedback after training were also stressed by managers as elements achieving desired outcomes:

> *The most important factor is measurement on what they learnt and came to apply in the store, to be assessed. Because they went and learnt new things, I want them to practise them, I will be there to help them in any*

way I can and reward them...Measurement both for the bravo and for the reprimand if this is needed. (MNGR2)

One part is to give employees feedback, tools, time, the willingness of the team or the supervisors in the store so they can apply training and probably one important part is to know that he will be evaluated for training, that there will be a follow up. (MNGR3)

One manager considered employee trust for the company the most important factor, an element essential for mutual gains and DE:

After training...they must have a strong trust within the company, to work in a good climate, to believe in the company and to see the future within the company. So it will be the motivation of what they have to do, what they will do for tomorrow. For me is key that we have a strong culture of company, a strong culture of the people and that we respect and we listen, it is really key. (MNGR6)

Despite the value of training, as managers said, alone it was not enough to positively affect employee performance because it had only short term results and employees needed more challenges to apply KSAs:

I would say that everything has a role because we said that for somebody it is important to get a bonus, to be trained on a product, sell it and get a bonus so that he can work well. For someone else this is not so important as his promotion. (MNGR1)

It has but with something more there would be a bigger challenge to change the way they work. (MNGR2)

Training alone can have results but not long term results. (MNGR3)

It is the result of several things and the cooperation of all the departments to be able to say that training was properly delivered, that employees learned the content and can apply it. Some of these things relate to follow up which includes training related target setting, even an evaluation of the employee when she is in the store, the follow up of the manager. (MNGR3)

Employees also agreed that training alone was not enough to bring changes in performance:

> *No, there are other factors. The role of the trainer, what the training is about, how people will react in the store. No, training is not enough on its own. (EMPL4)*

The response above depicts the role of social relationships at work which affect transfer.

Other managers said that the most important factors affecting transfer included other HR practices, a positive climate and the support of all the departments:

> *We are not robots, to go to training, learn, save and act. All these things happen through a process, and human relationships, discussion and a good climate. (MNGR1)*

> *What happens during the training in a room or in the store is the spark. We give the basic information, the basis of a pyramid to be able to develop training. If it begins properly, it can develop properly but with the help of the whole company, of all departments. (MNGR3)*

The following response reveals the premise of this thesis that training is not enough for transfer. Rather, rewards and ethical support are also important:

> *Training only is not enough. It is about the reward system in a company, we don't only speak about monetary rewards. We also mean ethical rewards. (MNGR4)*

Employee feelings and ethical rewards are seen as important by the managers who in fact have a principal role in providing such rewards.

Another manager stressed the positive climate and follow up as the most important factors:

It is rare that training alone can be effective because then the employee must be self-motivated. It is very difficult to happen and for this to happen both the climate must be good and there must be a follow up in the training, it must proceed to the next stage. There must be re-training so that the process goes further, matures. (MNGR6)

An employee said that she could not think of one factor because it was the combination of several factors that influenced transfer depicting organisational complexity which affects transfer:

I would put all of them, I really couldn't distinguish something because everything is a chain, everything is necessary. But I repeat that it is also a matter of people's character how he sees knowledge, if he likes it or not. And of course there must be respect for the trainer. (EMPL1)

Another employee considered the trainer was the most important factor:

In a training it is very important for the trainer to help people understand. The trainer must not speak generally but focus on the essence, and they have understood this. So if they make things simple we understand and so we come back to the store feeling better. (EMPL2)

Employee gains

Managers stressed that employees gained because the company was interested in them and provided development opportunities. Measuring their performance after training also showed that the company cared for them and facilitated them to perform:

It shows interest, that the company hasn't left the employees alone. It gives them some helpful keys so that they can sell the products more easily. (MNGR1)

Above all employees expect to see whether there is someone who will measure what they are going to do in the store, someone who will control them in quotes. Because if they come back to the store and they see indifference, they are not asked what they learnt, how the training was, see

how this can be adapted, the employees will be indifferent too. So, they must see that the manager is also interested about training and about the experience. (MNGR2)

Measurement, however, was not about transfer but about the volume of sales. This could inhibit transfer since employees were not given gains for improving their performance by combining existing and new skills. It must be accepted that an increase in sales is an indication of transfer but without systematic measurement of all factors affecting employee performance, gains are not essential for employees.

Another manager said that ethical rewards and acknowledgement were also gains for employees:

They expect only an ethical reward if the training goal has been achieved. If it happens they expect acknowledgement. (MNGR6)

An employee said she gained through the knowledge she acquired because, for her, knowledge was power. The knowledge she gained could create common gains for herself and the company and personal advancement. This shows individual values about learning and transfer:

You take knowledge for yourself and then you can use it as you want, for yourself, for the team, for the company. If you have knowledge you must transfer it because when a team has knowledge it always works better. And I don't think that you must always be rewarded with money or with a bravo. If I feel good with the knowledge I gain, for my personal advancement, knowledge is power. (EMPL1)

She added that applying knowledge and doing her job better could bring more gains in the long run. This shows the long term value of transfer and the time employees need:

By doing your job better, if you have knowledge you are a better professional you believe in a better future, I will do my job better,

someone will see that and appreciate it and from there on everything takes its route. (EMPL1)

Another employee said she expected financial rewards:

Not specifically promotions because in our store in particular there are no opportunities, there are no positions. A financial bonus. (EMPL2)

Company gains

Managers stressed that the company gained through quality customer service and profit as well as a stable workforce. The fact that employees perceived training as an investment was also a gain for the company:

Better customer service and profit. (MNGR2)
First of all, the company benefits. The employees benefit as well. They feel part of the company. They feel that the company invests in them. So the big benefit of the company is that we have a stable workforce. There is a structure, an organisation. Employees know they will be trained and they know that this will help them in their promotion and advancement in the company. They expect to be trained because this is part of our philosophy. (MNGR4)

This comment reveals the creation of mutual gains through job stability and security not only for the employee but also for the company and this makes transfer even more important and a common issue for both parties.

Cross-level and cross-company concluding remarks

Data mostly showed consistency about the most important factors affecting transfer beyond training. Respondents agreed that employees expended DE and transferred training if they saw that the company appreciated their performance and gave them a share in the gains.

Employees gained because the company invested on them and facilitated their personal and professional development or through good communication with the manager and peers, trust and autonomy to apply KSAs. Gains also included rewards, more responsibilities and job challenges, appreciation for their effort and ethical acknowledgement. As most employees said, for training to be effective and lead to transfer, they wanted personal benefits. As managers responded, employees gained if they perceived training as an opportunity, an investment and relevant to their job. Company gains included benefits for all stakeholders when an employee was trained, quality customer service and profit, a stable workforce and employee commitment. Also, they included the fresh and innovative ideas of young employees, good cooperation and trust between manager and peers. The data supported that transfer brought gains not only for employees who attended training but also for their managers and peers. Both employee and company gains were antecedents of intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains, DE and high training transfer (Osterman, 2000).

Participant responses stressed that transfer is affected by several other factors beyond training, supporting the arguments of this study that training alone cannot increase intrinsic job satisfaction, create mutual gains and elicit employee DE and high training transfer since this has short term results only. To challenge and motivate employees to willingly apply KSAs, the cooperation of all the departments is essential, bundling of training with other HR practices, such as rewards, or promotions, ethical rewards, social support and a positive climate (Baldwin et al., 2009; Boxall et al., 2007; Delery and Shaw, 2001; Baldwin and Magjuka, 1997). Supervision and measurement of performance changes, continuous and systematic training, feedback and practical tools are essential combined with the transfer of managers' and peers' KSAs (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Batt, 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994). The

employees' responses revealed that unless they had a share in company gains, they were not motivated and willing to contribute DE. This made transfer problematic since in several cases employees were not rewarded, as was especially the case with employees in less central stores in CO2.

6.3. An updated definition of high transfer

Based on the existing literature and new findings, the definition of high training transfer provided in Chapter 3 is updated here to capture the transfer process more fully, stress its informal, collective and tacit elements and encompass both the factors that affect it and its antecedents:

> *High transfer is a collective, reciprocal and discretionary activity referring to changes in individual, peer and organisational performance resulting from the effective and long term application and generalisation of new and existing, tangible and intangible skills, previous experience, explicit and tacit knowledge, skills acquired from, and transferred to, manager and peers. These changes are driven by the organisational HR system and job redesign, proper enactment by the manager, the support by peers and trainers, embedded in social processes which increase employee intrinsic job satisfaction, create mutual gains and elicit employee DE as antecedents.*

This updated definition highlights the complexity of the transfer process which involves several more elements beyond the transfer of formally trained KSAs by one individual in the immediate work environment. This process does not begin nor end with training and although it initiates within the individual, it develops at the social and organisational level (Kozlowski and Klein, 2000). It develops in a reciprocal loop of acquiring skills and experience from the manager, peers and the trainer and transferring new and existing skills and tacit knowledge back to them and to the organisation. This definition synthesises existing definitions of training transfer provided in the literature

while integrating the factors considered to affect the transfer process that emerged from the data in a more holistic way.

6.4. Updates to the High Training Transfer System based on key findings- the High Transfer System

Based on the findings, certain updates are implemented in the HTTS. The system is renamed *High Transfer System* (HTS) to highlight the fact that high transfer is not only about formally trained KSAs but also about previous employee experience, explicit and tacit knowledge and skills acquired from the manager and peers through informal learning in the workplace making employee agency even more important for intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE. These lead to individual and organisational performance. Apart from the agency of the manager, the agency of peers and of the trainer emerges from the data.

To be effective, the HTS should be contextualised. It is a system to be implemented in line with the changes and demands of the external environment and the market in which an organisation operates, the characteristics of the wider organisational context as well as of the immediate work environment and the individuals involved. This stresses the point made by Wood (1999) that for the HR system an organisation implements to be effective, it has to be idiosyncratic to depict its specific characteristics and meet its unique needs. The HTS comprises technical elements, the organisational HR system with bundles of HR practices and job design, implemented to elicit employee DE by building their ability, increasing their motivation and providing them with opportunities to participate and perform. Its effectiveness is affected by the social system, workplace learning and mentoring, and the social support employees receive including the manager's, peers' and trainer's agency which shape the idiosyncrasy of the system and

contribute to sustainable competitive advantage by affecting factors such as job redesign and organisational culture. Enhanced by a share in organisational gains for employees, these factors build a favourable climate which positively affects the employees' perceptions, fostering trust in the manager and the organisation. Employee agency is positively activated and energises intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE, the mediators of high transfer, in interaction with new, tangible and intangible KSAs, previous experience, explicit and tacit knowledge as well as skills acquired from the manager and peers in social relationships. The end result is high transfer, considering different types of skills, contributing to higher individual and organisational performance. Consistency is required between espoused, enacted and perceived practices in a complex process in which all elements continuously interact. This implies that a system such as the HTS can be effectively implemented in an existing favourable organisational context, it cannot create it (Sparham and Sung, 2008; Purcell, 1999).

The High Transfer System is presented in Figure 5.
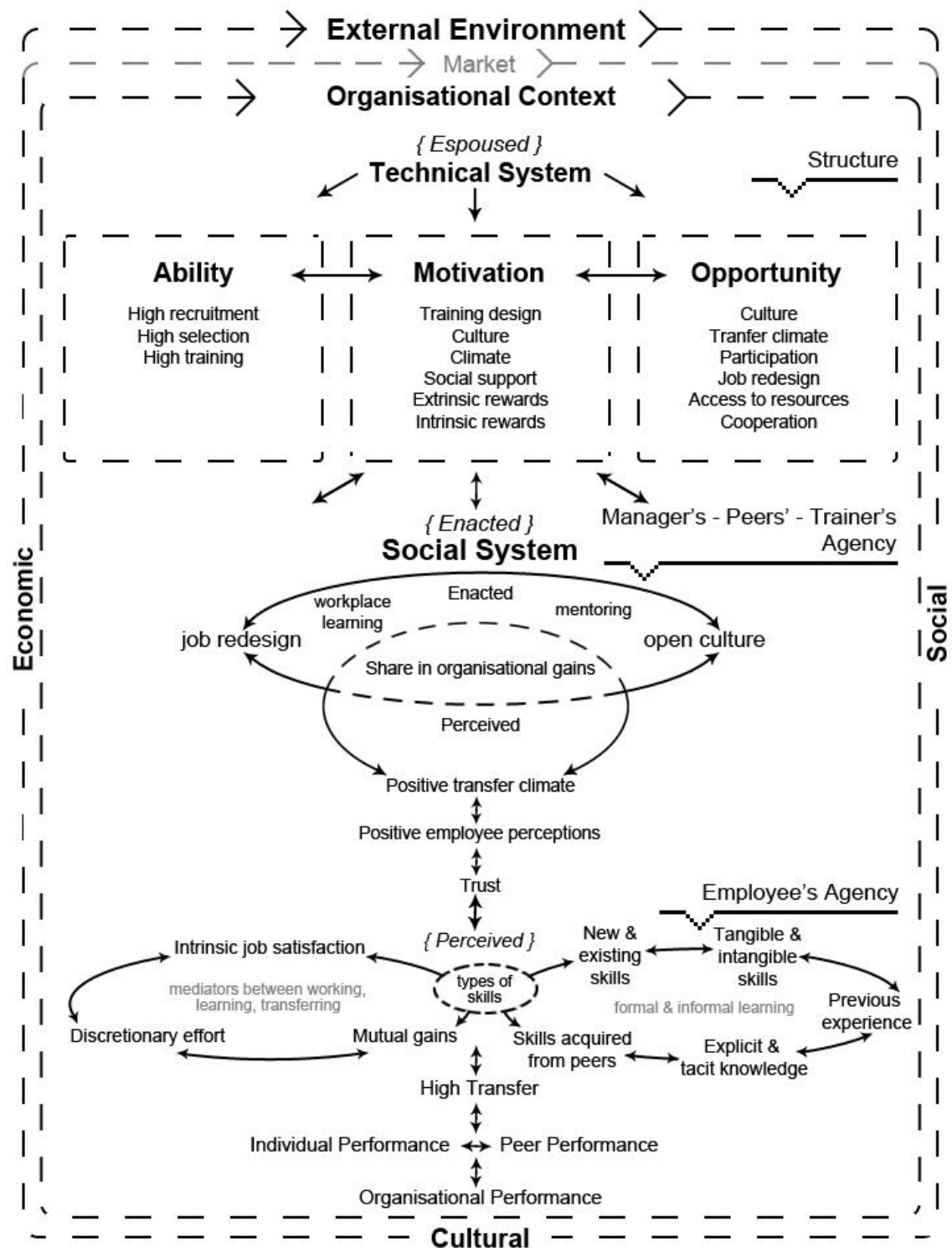
Figure 5. The High Transfer System

6. 5. Conclusions

Chapter 6 presented the six themes that emerged from the analysis of the data. For each theme, the data were presented and discussed followed by cross-level and cross-company remarks relating to the extent to which the data supported the premises and arguments of this study, the HTTS and the literature, highlighting the issues that facilitated or made transfer problematic. An updated definition of high transfer was provided incorporating elements from the literature and the data as well as the *High Transfer System* (HTS) including technical and social factors in the organisational context affecting high transfer and the agents and antecedents of transfer.

Chapter 7 provides an overview of this study by discussing key findings, its contribution to knowledge and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT HIGH TRANSFER

7.1. Introduction

This thesis addressed the transfer problem identifying that it exists because transfer research examines on-the-job training transfer as the result of training only through a process developing mostly at the individual level in the immediate work environment. It argued that this micro approach cannot account for the 'why' and 'how' of transfer and posed the research problem: '*What factors in the technical HR system and social system in the organisation affect individual performance, and how do these factors impact on employee intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and employee DE so as to lead to high training transfer?,* while having the following research questions:

1. Examine the antecedents of training transfer;

2. Examine the theoretical underpinnings of existing approaches to transfer and their strengths and weaknesses;

3. Identify the technical elements of an HR-based transfer system and the ways in which it can be properly enacted so as to provide mutual gains, elicit DE and lead to high training transfer;

4. Explore the role of the manager in properly enacting the technical system and job design so as to increase employee intrinsic job satisfaction, create mutual gains, elicit DE and lead to high training transfer.

The thesis expanded beyond previous theoretical and experiential findings synthesising literatures on skills in service organisations, employee performance, job design, DE, mutual gains and intrinsic job satisfaction as antecedents of high training transfer,

provided a more complete definition and a new HR-based transfer model based on the existing literature and the new data. It argued that training needs to be embedded in the organisational HR system in bundles with other HR practices and that training transfer results from the interaction between the organisational technical and social systems which build employee ability, motivation and opportunity to perform, while activating its antecedents- intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE.

This chapter discusses the findings in relation to the themes raised in the thesis presenting factors in the technical HR system and the social system in the organisation and how these affect individual performance through their impact on employee intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and employee DE so as to lead to high transfer. Through this discussion, the contribution of this study with new knowledge is presented as well as recommendations for further research.

7.2. Discussion of findings

7.2.1. Factors in the technical HR system affecting individual performance through their impact on employee intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and employee DE for high transfer

This study argued that the transfer problem exists because transfer research examines training mostly while considering the organisational context as neutral. As the data from 21 interviews showed, long term changes in employee performance through training transfer cannot be achieved by the implementation of training only but require that several other factors be combined. Indeed, transfer increased when training was implemented in bundles with other HR practices such as rewards, bonuses and promotions. Employees clearly stated that they wanted a share in organisational gains so as to contribute DE and transfer training. When they had a share in the gains, a bonus or

other rewards, or more challenging tasks after training, they perceived their job as more intrinsically satisfying and high training transfer was facilitated.

The findings are in line with the HPWS literature which stresses the importance of bundling HR practices for maximum effect on employee performance. This literature, however, does not explore the deeper reasons why changes in individual performance persist in the long run since it assumes a macro perspective mostly making transfer problematic (van Emmerik et al., 2010; Lloyd, 2008; Sparham and Sung, 2008; Batt, 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Osterman, 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994; Hackman and Oldham, 1975).

The data did not only support the important influence of the technical system of the organisation on employee performance. More than that, they stressed the importance of the external economic environment. As one employee said, she changes her performance after training and uses new KSAs all the time due to the economic crisis in Greece. In the existing uncertain economic environment, she felt stressed not to lose her job and so she did her best to keep it. The economic crisis was a factor active in the external environment in which the company operated which affected the transfer process. In the case of this employee and under these economic conditions, it seemed to affect transfer positively. However, given the continuous changes in the external environment and their impact on organisations, in the long run, it could prove negative since in better economic conditions, if her job was more secure, the employee could probably not be so concerned about transferring training.

These factors are not documented or explored through the micro perspective of transfer research, making the contribution of this study to addressing the transfer problem important. To achieve transfer one should explore internal and external micro and macro factors affecting transfer within the complexity of the organisation.

7.2.2. Factors in the social system affecting individual performance through their impact on employee intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and employee DE for high transfer

The data revealed that social processes are catalytic. A friendly environment, perceived fairness, the sense of belonging to the team, the sense of growth and self-esteem, affect transfer. Findings supported this thesis in that social factors are important for intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains, employee DE and high transfer which require the manager's support and the proper enactment of the HR system and job design. Managers used various techniques both demanding that employees applied new KSAs and facilitating their performance, making the management style and expectations antecedents of DE. The managers were mostly aware of their role in creating intrinsically satisfying jobs, mutual gains and eliciting DE as well as of employees' needs and the trust they should foster to positively affect their perceptions. If employees trusted the manager, then both positive feedback and negative comments contributed to better work and DE. The data also showed that the manager's own commitment and DE were essential for eliciting employee DE. The data also revealed that the managers were restrained by organisational structures in the rewards they gave to employees as well as by the need to avoid conflicts in the team and so individual contributions were often unrewarded. This was a point which negatively affected transfer.

Peer support and interpersonal relationships in a positive climate where individuals perform to achieve common goals influenced the transfer process before, during and after training facilitating the employees to expend DE and contribute to the team.

The trainer's role was important for training transfer as most participants said since the trainer both facilitated learning during training and also boosted employee self-efficacy and enthusiasm.

The above data are in line with previous research and the arguments of this thesis as concerns the role of the social environment for increasing employee intrinsic job satisfaction, providing mutual gains and eliciting DE on-the-job as mediators of training transfer (van Emmerik et al., 2010; Hutchins, 2009; Sparham and Sung, 2008; Chiaburu and Marinova, 2005; Hawley and Barnard, 2005; Kontoghiorghes, 2004 and 2002; Dubinsky and Skinner, 2002; Hutchinson et al., 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Batt, 2002; McDuffie, 1995).

Transfer as a process of using and exchanging existing, new, informal and tacit knowledge on a continuous basis through reciprocal social processes

An important finding emerging from the data is that transfer is not activated only by formal training in organised and scheduled events concerning new and specific KSAs. Rather, it is embedded in social relationships, involving the acquisition and exchange of tacit knowledge and experience from others at work, and building on the employee's own tacit knowledge, tangible and intangible skills and previous experience.

The data showed that respondents regarded learning, training and transfer, as continuous, informal, tacit and collective processes that took place while employees worked in a social environment, including quantitative and qualitative elements. Employees acquired and applied new KSAs all the time, being aware of market trends and skills demands and conditions in the external environment. They learnt from peers stressing the fact that transfer involves workplace learning and the acquisition of tacit KSAs from others in a social activity.

This finding reveals the nature of learning and transfer as informal and continuous on-the-job events, as dynamic and reciprocal social processes in the everyday context where employees perform resulting in a natural personal and professional change in cooperation with the manager and peers. This helped respondents address market

demands for new skills and the provision of quality services. In fact, the employees stressed the importance of acquiring tacit knowledge from the manager and peers at work and said they sought opportunities for such learning implying that they expended DE to learn from others in a supportive social environment. Also, they said that when one employee acquired new KSAs the whole team benefited through transfer not only on the employee's job but to the rest of the team. This reveals the dynamic and reciprocal loop of transfer from individuals to their jobs and also to others at work.

7.3. Contributions of the study

7.3.1. A new definition for transfer

The thesis contributes with a new definition of transfer and changes the discourse of transfer research by introducing new concepts that affect transfer- mutual gains and DE as antecedents of transfer- explaining the 'how' and 'why' employees change their performance by transferring not only training but also their previous knowledge and experience in a holistic way on their job and to others. It also introduced the idea of *high transfer* stressing the fact that it is a major process beyond training for individual, peer and organisational performance, essential for any organisation to achieve high performance and competitive advantage through people.

7.3.2. The *High Transfer System*

The major contribution of this study is the *High Transfer System* (HTS) which was developed based on the previous literature and the findings of 21 interviews. Synthesising the micro approach of transfer with the macro perspective of HPWS research and the new data, the HTS is based on the principle that training cannot lead to high transfer unless it is embedded in the organisational HR system combined with

other HR practices and job redesign, implemented in a favourable social system which reciprocates learning and transfer while fostering employee intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains and DE. All of these elements stress the value of consistency between espoused, enacted and perceived HR practices across levels as well as the importance of the agency and power of all the parties involved in the transfer process- employees, manager, trainer, peers. The HTS surpasses the subfunctional approach of the transfer research to present, explaining how and why high transfer can be achieved and addressing the transfer problem. Further, it brings the individual in the centre of analysis arguing that high transfer and high organisational performance cannot be achieved unless high individual performance is achieved through transfer (Guest, 2002; Truss, 2001).

7.3.3. Methodological contributions

This thesis made several methodological contributions. First, following calls in the literature, it adopted a multilevel research design to capture the variance between different levels of analysis in organisations (Wright and Nishii, 2006; Kinnie et al., 2005). The multilevel design captured the variance between espoused, enacted and perceived HR practices and their effect on intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains, employee DE and high transfer (Hesketh and Fleetwood, 2006; Bosalie et al., 2005; Truss, 2001). It also avoided the single-rater bias which could lead to theoretical and methodological error (Wright and Nishii, 2006; Gerhart et al., 2000).

Second, the study contributed with qualitative interviews which revealed the employees' subjective meanings and experience with the technical and social systems at work. Such research was essential in revealing the intrinsic aspects of the employees' experience by unlocking the 'black box' and providing an explanation of the complexity

of the high transfer process and its antecedents (Nishii and Wright, 2008; Sparham and Sung, 2008; Hutchinson et al., 2002). To explore the employees' subjective experience, researchers should give them the opportunity to speak about it, something that large scale quantitative surveys cannot do (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003). Qualitative research can capture organisational complexity (Kochan and Osterman, 1994) and the people's subjective experience since the existence of one universal truth cannot be supported (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003).

Third, this research contributed with research in service organisations since most of the research to date relating to training transfer, mutual gains and DE has been conducted in manufacture.

Finally, this study contributed to research in Greece where research is very limited and literature on the issues at hand is almost non-existent.

7.4. Further research

This thesis provided findings which can lead to further research in high transfer. Workplace learning, a process taking place through 'the interaction between individual agency and organisational factors' (Bryson et al., 2006:284), and its role for transfer as an informal, collective, tacit and ongoing process should be researched (Cheng and Hampson, 2008). The workplace provides the context for learning directly related to the job and the practical knowledge employees need to perform efficiently (Fuller and Unwin, 2005; Reeve and Gallacher, 1999 in Lee et al., 2004). New and old employees continue learning at work and the organisation should facilitate them (Fuller and Unwin, 2005; Reeve and Gallacher, 1999 in Lee et al., 2004). However, as Sfard (1998) stresses, one should accept that individuals learn either informally as participation, or formally as acquisition and so it would be wrong to dismiss the contribution of formal

training to transfer. Rather, it should be viewed as an important stage in the learning and high transfer processes combined with learning by participation in workplace activities (Fuller and Unwin, 2005).

Further research could also be carried out in organisational development, the Learning Organisation (LO), which could provide helpful insights into high transfer. Although LO research does not explore on-the-job training transfer (Cheng and Hampson, 2008), its principles are relevant. Transfer is a multilevel process taking place beyond the individual at the organisational level, influenced by several technical and social factors such as the HR system, job design and the manager's support (Kozlowski et al., 2000). These factors are explored in the LO literature which views learning as a continuous and collective process affecting the whole organisation and can constructively support transfer research to overcome its subfunctional approach. Given the importance of employee KSAs for organisational competitive advantage (Paauwe and Bosalie, 2005; Wright et al., 2003; Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Barney, 1991), LO research can contribute with findings on how to induce transfer to handle change amidst challenges created by a global, dynamic and competitive external environment (Mills, 2003; Starkey, 1998). In a LO, HR practices are implemented to attract the right individuals and manage them effectively by safeguarding their welfare, providing individual learning and development opportunities and freedom to express new ideas (Jones and Hendry, 1992 in Leitch et al., 1996).

The role of mentoring for high transfer is an area that deserves further research, especially for the transfer of tacit knowledge and experience as well as of different types of skills. Mentoring is recognised as essential for learning and performance, for the personal and professional development of individuals (Garvey and Alfred, 2000). It is more flexible, realistic and adjustable to their true needs, expectations and business

context (Rute, 2006). In a mentoring relationship of equality and trust, the mentor transfers the just-in-time knowledge, skills and experience employees need and guides them in making performance decisions through self-reflection and evaluation (Barrett, 2006). Employees learn from the mentor's experience in a social context, fostering discovery, experiential and participative learning, which they are likely to transfer on-the-job because it is more meaningful and necessary (Heinonen & Poikkijoki, 2006).

Research can also be conducted in more companies in Greece and in more countries to test the effectiveness of the HTS in new social and economic contexts. Further, longitudinal research could provide more data about the issues examined in this thesis in the future which could help address the transfer problem and contribute to organisational competitive advantage through individual performance. Also, the HTS could be tested in manufacture in companies which implement standardised HR systems to manage employee performance. Last, it needs to be applied under more favourable economic conditions to explore the differences in people's perceptions relating to training and transfer when their jobs are not at stake due to an economic crisis.

7.5. Conclusions

The findings of this thesis stress the fact that, to achieve high transfer, training is not enough. Rather, it must be implemented embedded in an organisational HR system properly enacted by managers and, together with job redesign, build employee ability, increase motivation and provide opportunities to participate with the aim to increase intrinsic job satisfaction, create mutual gains, and elicit employee DE.

Training is an organisational episode implemented in the context in which employees normally perform influenced by the broad organisational context (Baldwin and

Magjuka, 1997). Trainee reactions to training reflect their meaning and experience in the workplace and so it is important to examine factors beyond the training event (Guest, 2002; Truss, 2001; Appelbaum et al., 2000; Kochan and Osterman, 1994).

Failing to consider the interdependencies between training, recruitment, selection, compensation, performance management or job redesign in the organisational context where transfer takes place means ignoring micro-macro relations (Tharenou et al., 2007; Wright and Boswell, 2002; Kozlowski et al., 2000) and reveals the point made by Delery and Shaw (2001) that a single HR practice without support from other practices cannot lead to effective performance. This point highlights the need for an HR-based transfer system, such as the High Transfer System, so as to enhance individual and organisational performance for competitive advantage.

APPENDIX 1

Introductory email requesting permission

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am writing to request access to conduct interviews at your organisation for the purposes of my doctoral thesis. The aim of my research is to examine the organisational factors which influence on-the-job training transfer and the causes of the low transfer rate or the so called «transfer problem». It focuses on individual performance and argues that technical and social factors in the macro organisational context beyond the training programme affect the micro level of individual performance and either facilitate or inhibit training transfer.

For the purposes of my research, I plan to generate primary data through qualitative interviews. These data will help me understand in what ways and for which reasons employees change the way they work after attending a training programme. Employees who have worked in your organisation for at least one or two years are in a position to describe how they change the way they work after training. Also, they are in a position to describe which factors in the organisation drive this change. Managers, on the other hand, are in a position to evaluate whether employee performance changes after a training programme. For these reasons, generating data from both employees and managers can capture the process of performance after training in a more holistic and meaningful way and can contribute to avoiding the single rater bias in my research.

The answers from all employees and managers I interview will form part of my thesis and everything respondents say will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity. Each interview will last for about 25 minutes.

I would appreciate it if I were given access to administer the interview with a group of employees and their manager in your organisation.

 Thank you in advance.

Faithfully,
Sophia Protopapa, Doctorate cand.
University of Leicester, UK
email:sp239@le.ac.uk
mob. 6937212700

APPENDIX 2

Official letter by the University

University of Leicester

Centre for Labour Market Studies
7-9 Salisbury Road
Leicester LE1 7QR
UK

Head of Department
Dr Henrietta O'Connor
BA (London), MLitt (Trinity College, Dublin),
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Sophia Protopapa
29 Proodou Street
Ano Voula
Greece
16673

17th June 2011

REF: Sophia Protopapa

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Ms Sophia Protopapa is a current student of the Doctorate in Social Sciences, studying with the Centre for Labour Market Studies, which is part of the University of Leicester. Her supervisor is Professor Johnny Sung.

Sophia has reached the thesis component of her course, and for the purposes of her research, she will need to collect data for analysis. We would be grateful if you can extend any courtesies to her in this regard.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr Henrietta O'Connor
Head of Department

APPENDIX 3

Consent Form

"A High Training Transfer System: The importance of technical and social factors for high transfer of training on the job".

Researcher: Sophia Protopapa
University of Leicester
(Post graduate student)

Supervisor: Dr. Johnny Sung
University of Leicester

Purpose: To identify and understand the key technical and social factors in the organisational context which support people to change the way they work after they attend a training programme.

Participation
I understand that:

My participation in this study is voluntary.
I may withdraw from this study at any time for any reason.
I may refuse to answer any of the questions.
Confidentiality will be strictly respected and anything identifying me personally or any organisation or people that I may name, will be removed from the written transcript.
I can have access to the findings of the study by contacting Sophia Protopapa.
I understand the researcher will address any questions or concerns I may have about this study.
I also understand that I may register any complaint I might have with the Thesis supervisor.

Researcher: Sophia Protopapa, DSS Student, CLMS, University of Leicester
29 Proodou Str., 16673 Ano Voula, Greece
Tel: 210 8953 804- 6937212700, Email: sophia.protopapa@gmail.com; sp239@le.ac.uk

Supervisor: Professor Johnny Sung, BA (CNAA), MSc (Salford), PhD (Leicester)
Professor of Skills and Performance, University of Leicester
7-9 Salisbury Road, Leicester LE1 7QR, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)116 252 5953, Email: johnny.sung@leicester.ac.uk

PLEASE INDICATE THAT YOU HAVE GIVEN YOUR CONSENT BY SIGNING THE TEXT BELOW

Subject: Consent
I have read and understood the document - Consent Form: "A High Transfer System: The importance of technical and social factors in the work environment for intrinsic job satisfaction, mutual gains, discretionary effort and high transfer on the job" *and agree to participate in this study. I have also received a letter from the researcher indicating compliance with the Greek law, Law 2472/1997, for the protection of personal data.*

Signature: ……………………………………………

APPENDIX 4

Thank you and Data Protection Letter

Sophia Protopapa   Tel: 210 8953804; 69372127000
29 Proodou Str., Ano Voula, Greece   Email: sophia.protopapa@gmail.com;
                                                 sp239@le.ac.uk

Ref: SP/DSS/DP   Date: 29 July, 2011

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you very much for agreeing to assist me. I greatly appreciate you giving up your time in order to help me with my research.

I would like to reassure you that the information, which you give to me in the form of a face-to-face interview, will be treated in the strictest of confidence. All data collected will be treated in accordance with the Greek law, Law 2472/1997, for the protection of personal data. In addition, all the information you give me will be treated with anonymity and confidentiality.

I am an impartial and independent postgraduate research student studying at the University of Leicester. I have no connections with any other bodies, e.g. the Tax Revenue Office, Social Security etc.

My intention is to use the data which you and other participants provide to assist me in my study investigating which factors in the organisation support people to change the way they work after they attend a training programme.

Once again, thank you very much for your participation.

Yours Sincerely,

Sophia Protopapa
Centre for Labour Market Studies
University of Leicester

APPENDIX 5

Creating initial codes (Thematic analysis Stage 2)

Developing a relationship with colleagues at work and the value of social processes

- the colleagues are very nice people
- the most important factor is social
- if there is no team, the right team
- to be able to cooperate, a nice environment, without quarrelling
- when there is laughter, pleasure, communication with the people at work
- cooperation with others
- teamwork
- common goals
- the trainer is the key player
- how the trainer is engaged
- it's also the trainer, he has the power to inspire

Developing a relationship with superiors at work/perceiving superiors in a positive way

- good communication between the manager and the employee
- the role or my manager is certainly very important
- open-minded employer
- manager with good listening skills
- builds cooperation
- builds a good climate
- have communication skills
- have the ability to explain
- have the ability to give instructions

Comparing oneself to others at work

- competences that others have at work
- learn from peers
- be influenced by their skills regarding organising work to be more professional

Learning from others at work/ acquiring tacit knowledge and skills

- competences that others have at work
- learn from peers
- every day I learn things from my manager
- but it's also about learning … from your colleagues who have more experience

- the person who comes to training must be willing to transfer knowledge to the other employees in the store

Training and learning as an ongoing process

- the training that I believe is something that people do it individually as an ongoing process
- but it's also about learning all the time
- training to me it's an ongoing process

Having role models at work

- (the manager) be able to organise his or her job effectively so that this can be passed through to the employee as well
- all this experience I gained next to such an established person

Changes in the way of doing one's job

- you become better in your job
- you become more efficient through feedback
- organise my time
- time management
- set priorities
- organise my work
- professional development
- personal development
- improve our job

Developing oneself

- be better every day
- become better every day
- personal changes
- improve as individuals in our personal life
- be able to organise personal life better
- she has made me a better person

Positive attitudes towards training

- I consider that it is an investment
- training is an important aspect for each employee to be able to advance and as a result, for the company to advance
- so the training was very important for me

Contributing to the team

- sacrifice more of your time
- invest more at your job

Employee agency and personal choice

- the employee must want to show the benefits on his/her job
- sacrifice more of your time
- invest more at your job

Managerial agency

- what is important is the direct relationship between manager and employee
- motivate people and enable people to move ahead
- I committed myself
- an essential factor is the open-minded employer
- to have direct communication
- the role or my manager is certainly very important

Factors beyond training affecting training and transfer

- either it can be...a hiring,...a bonus
- a pay rise or a bonus is very good
- rewards are important
- the perspective of promotion, of better salary, of financial also perspectives
- becoming the manager in a project is also a reward
- autonomy is a basic factor
- the reward sometimes is not only financial, it is also an ethical reward
- one part is financial, the other, at a personal level, is the ethical satisfaction and the professional one

Opportunity to change at work

- have the opportunity to express myself, my ideas
- have the opportunity to undertake tasks and to be responsible for them

APPENDIX 6

Manager Interview Questions

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this interview is to get information that will help me understand in what ways and for which reasons employees change the way they work after attending a training programme. As someone who has had a managerial job in this company for years, you are in a position to describe how training is implemented and how it affects the way people work after training. Also, you are in a position to describe which factors in the company affect the opportunity employees have to change the way they work after training. The answers from all the managers I interview will be combined into an analysis about the factors in the organisational environment that influence employees to change the way they work after a training programme. Everything you say will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity. As we go through with the interview, if you want to know why I am asking particular questions, please feel free to ask. If there is a question that you don't want to answer, just tell me so. Any questions before we begin? The interview will last for about 40 minutes.

Question 1: To what extent do you believe that employees' knowledge and skills are important for the effective performance of the organisation? Do you value their knowledge and skills?

Question 2: I would like to ask you to describe a training programme your employees attended in the last six to twelve months. What was the training about and how was it implemented?

Question 3: Did all employees attend this training? What were the criteria for employees to attend it?

Question 4: What did employees do differently in their job after the training programme?

Question 5: As the manager, what do you do after training so that your employees do their job differently?

Question 6: In what ways are you personally involved in identifying the skills employees need so as to decide about training goals? Why is this important for employee performance after training?

Question 7: Do employees have the opportunity to tell you about the skills they feel they need? Is there a formal procedure in the company, or can they do it informally?

Question 8: Why is it important for employees to say which training they need? How does this help their performance after training?

Question 9: As a manager, in what ways do you think you influence the climate at work and how does the climate affect the way employees work after training?

Question 10: How do you think the content of training helps employees work differently afterwards?

Question 11: Apart from content, what else do you think makes training helpful for employees to change the way they work? (practice, feedback?)

Question 12: How do you know that employees change the way they work after training?

Question 13: In what ways does the company reward employees if they do their job differently after training?

Question 14: Are promotions in any way linked to whether employees do their job differently after training?

Question 15: Are jobs designed in a way that allows employees to be automonous and change the way they do their job after training?

Question 16: How do you think employees feel about their job, do you think they feel the job is challenging and creative? Do you believe that people who like their job change the way they work more after training?

Question 17: In your opinion, which of the points discussed above should always be linked to training so that employees do their job differently after a training programme? For example, rewards, appraisals and promotions, autonomy in the job, other?

Question 18: What benefits do you think employees expect in the company because of doing their job in a different way after training?

Question 19: What benefits does the company have if employees do their job in a different way after training?

Question 20: Do you believe that training only is enough for employees to change the way they work after training? Or do you think that training must be supported by other factors in the company?

Question 21: Overall, which is in your opinion the most important factor for employees to do their job differently after training?

Closing Question: Is there anything else you would like to add before we finish? Something you consider important and was not discussed?

Thank you very much for your cooperation

APPENDIX 7

A sample manager's face-to-face interview

Question 1:   To what extent do you believe that employees' knowledge and skills are important for the effective performance of the organisation? Do you value their knowledge and skills?

Response: Employee skills are very important for their performance and for company development since they serve the customers, interact and communicate with them and so they must be ready for this important task.

Question 2:   I would like to ask you to describe a training programme your employees attended in the last six to twelve months. What was the training about and how was it implemented?

Response: Several trainings take place throughout the year for the biggest part of employees. Every employee has her own part. When they attend this training, certainly their behaviour and performance in the store changes because they learn well the general rules that they have to know and also specific things, some secrets, some tricks. They come back more passionate and they want to prove to the store and to themselves their better performance. On my part, this is measured. When the employee comes back after a seminar, we always discuss so that I can see the content they learnt and everything else about this training, I observe the customer service they offer, from a safety distance always so that the employee does not feel the fear of reprimand or the assessment and there is a margin that we work and there the employee is assessed. There is an acknowledgement, if she has difficulties she receives help and so this is the process we follow after the seminars. We always try to understand if what she does is done well because after I use this employee as an example so she can train the other employees in the store. This gives her an urge to consider that what she does, she does it well. So, she becomes more passionate about her job and we have the best result.

Extra question for the manager to elaborate more:
        In this case there is informal training in the store, one employee transfers the training in the store. Does this have results?

Response: It has results because every time one employee attends a seminar the rest of the team expects her so as to learn the specific features of a product and generally what was the content of training because each employee has a specific job description but we all know the general things but if a new brand comes to the store, I may work at the perfumes' section but I am interested to learn about this new brand even from a personal interest so I expect the person who comes to tell me something more.

Extra question for the manager to elaborate more:

What is the type of training that employees usually attend? Is it product training or is it training on customer services, sales skills?

Response: Always a new employee who comes to the company attends general training, sales techniques, the company history and some general information for our exclusive products. So, this is how she comes to the store. Then, depending on the position she will have in the store, she attends the specialised seminars, make up, perfumes. This happens for all of the employees.

Question 3:   Did all employees attend this training? What were the criteria for employees to attend it?

This question was covered by data provided in the questions above.

Question 4:   What did employees do differently in their job after the training programme?

See response to Question 2 above

Question 5:   As the manager, what do you do after training so that your employees do their job differently?

Response: Always we must do this follow up because it helps me as well to see if this person is worth to send to a new seminar, whether she likes it or not.

Also, see response to Question 2 above

Question 6:   In what ways are you personally involved in identifying the skills employees need so as to decide about training goals? Why is this important for employee performance after training?

Response: After employees have attended the basic seminars, then through their work in the store, and with their immediate contact with me as a manager and with the supervisors, we discuss it and they tell us their weaknesses and so they can tell us what they need.

Question 7:   Do employees have the opportunity to tell you about the skills they feel they need? Is there a formal procedure in the company, or can they do it informally?

Response: Every two or three months, we do interviews with the employees. We inform them about the brands, the developments, the customer service because we do research. We inform them about these things, we see the weaknesses and also the employees tell us themselves.

Question 8:   Why is it important for employees to say which training they need? How does this help their performance after training?

Response: I consider this as a sign of interest on the part of the employee. This shows that the employees wants to develop, learn even more things about

the company and be able to perform well in her current position and also in her advancement in the future.

Extra question for the manager to elaborate more:
Have you noticed any differences in the performance of people after training? Those who want to be trained, perform better afterwards?

Response: Yes, certainly. Immediately after the seminars there is a difference. Of course for this difference to be maintained and not be lost, we must always, the manager and the supervisor, to be there, to acknowledge the effort, to support, to inform, to correct, generally to support the employee

Question 9: As a manager, in what ways do you think you influence the climate at work and how does the climate affect the way employees work after training?

Response: The main aim is to have a united team and to know and understand that we are all here for common goals and jobs. On my part, I believe that an important role is played by information, not to keep something for ourselves, the acknowledgement and so you can gain the employees, by giving them value, that they have the basic role for success, and they think that they are the main players. By giving them value, I think that I gain this.

Prompt
This emerges from the philosophy of the company...

Response: Yes, from the company. And the manager is not here always to reprimand employees and be the bad guy. Always there must be information, the acknowledgement, a balance.

Question 10: How do you think the content of training helps employees work differently afterwards?

Response: Because we are a company that has been doing training many years now, we have learnt what helps us and what not. So, every year we keep what helps and we change what did not go well.

Prompt
So, you evaluate the trainings and see that the content is relevant.

Response: Yes..

Question 11: Apart from content, what else do you think makes training helpful for employees to change the way they work? (practice, feedback?)

Response: Employees have the opportunity to practise during training. They come into contact with the product on which they are trained and at that moment they can ask questions for each product and have an answer.

Question 12: How do you know that employees change the way they work after training?
See response to Question 2 above

Question 13: In what ways does the company reward employees if they do their job differently after training?

Response: The company sets targets and there are bonuses. These, however, are not distinguished or awarded to the person who went through training and went well. Because the direct supervision of these people is the responsibility of the manager, the manager finds ways to supervise this person and distinguish her from the rest of the team.
The reward has to do with the store and not with the company after training. The reward is informal and psychological.

Question 14: Are promotions in any way linked to whether employees do their job differently after training?

Response: This can happen and it has indeed happened. But this cannot happen from one day to the next. The employee must change in many parts in the store, relating to training, her behaviour, her results because the next step from the position of the sales assistant is to the position of the supervisor.

Prompt
What time do people usually need?

Response: It depends on the needs of the company. If the company needs someone at that time. Certainly, you will recommend the best independently of time. I may have a sales assistant for 10 years and another one for 1 year and when the company is about to promote someone, I may recommend the newer employee who has something more than the older employee.

Question 15: Are jobs designed in a way that allows employees to be automonous and change the way they do their job after training?

Response: I think as a store manager that for the person or the team to feel autonomy and initiative gives them dynamism. So, employees are productive and they bring results. This exists here in this store and it is positive. Always of course within the framework of the company guidelines. We don't act arbitrarily.

Response: No, but there is a qualitative type of autonomy, to behave in certain ways and achieve goals...

Question 16: How do you think employees feel about their job, do you think they feel the job is challenging and creative? Do you believe that people who like their job change their way they work more after training?

Response: I cannot answer this 100% because it depends on what each employee expects. There are people who work until they finish their studies and have the money. There are people who see their job in a long term

perspective. Certainly we make sure that all employees are equally interested, regardless of whether they see their job as a temporary one or whether they want to advance.

Prompt

Do you believe that people who like their job change their way the work more after training?

Response: Yes, they perform better, they want to prove something different and they want to show that.

Question 17: In your opinion, which of the points discussed above should always be linked to training so that employees do their job differently after a training programme? For example, rewards, appraisals and promotions, autonomy in the job, other?

Response: There must always exist a measurable factor and especially in our days everybody wants something materially.

Prompt

So, do you believe that training only does not have a result?

Response: It has but with something more there would be a bigger challenge to change the way they work.

Question 18: What benefits do you think employees expect in the company because of doing their job in a different way after training?

Response: Above all employees expect to see whether there is someone who will measure what they are going to do in the store, someone who will control them in quotes. Because if they come back to the store and they see indifference, they are not asked what they learnt, how the training was, see how this can be adapted, the employees will be indifferent too. So, they must see that the manager is also interested about training and about the experience.

Question 19: What benefits does the company have if employees do their job in a different way after training?

Response: Profit. Better customer service and profit.

Question 20: Do you believe that training only is enough for employees to change the way they work after training? Or do you think that training must be supported by other factors in the company?
See response to Question 17 above

Question 21: Overall, which is in your opinion the most important factor for employees to do their job differently after training?

The most important factor is measurement on what they learnt and came to apply in the store, to be assessed. Because they went and learnt new

things, I want them to practise them, I will be there to help them in any way I can and reward them. Namely, the employee must know that there is always measurement of the good, the mediocre. And know that he can go and do the same training or move ahead. Measurement both for the bravo and for the reprimand if this is needed.

Closing Question: Is there anything else you would like to add before we finish? Something you consider important and was not discussed?

Response: No, I think we covered everything.

Thank you very much for your cooperation

APPENDIX 8

Employee Interview Questions

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this interview is to get information that will help me understand in what ways and for which reasons employees change the way they work after attending a training programme. As someone who has worked in this company for years, you are in a position to describe how you change the way you work after training. Also, you are in a position to describe which factors in the company play a role in whether you do your job differently after training and use what you learned on the job. The answers from all the employees I interview will be combined into a report about the factors in a company that influence the way people do their job differently after a training programme. Everything you say will be treated with the highest confidentiality and anonymity. As we go through with the interview, if you want to know why I am asking particular questions, please feel free to ask. If there is a question that you don't want to answer, just tell me so. Any questions before we begin? The interview will last for about 25 minutes.

Question 1: Could you describe a training programme you attended in the last six to twelve months? What was your experience with it?

Question 2: What do you do differently in your job after the training programme?

Question 3: What does your manager do so that you can work in a different way after training?

Question 4: In general, do you have the opportunity to tell your manager that you feel you need training in new skills?

Question 5: Why is it important for you to say which training you need? How does this help your performance after training?

Question 6: In what ways does your manager influence the climate at work and how does this affect the way you work after training?

Question 7: In what ways does the content of training play a role so that you do your job differently afterwards?

Question 8: Apart from content, what else do you think makes training helpful for you to do your job better? (practice, feedback?)

Question 9: In what ways does the company reward you if you do your job differently after training?

Question 10: Do you think you can get a promotion because you do your job differently after training?

Question 11: In what ways do you have autonomy in your job to change the way you work after training?

Question 12: In your opinion, which of the factors discussed above should always be linked with training so that you do your job differently after a training programme? For example, rewards, appraisals and promotions, autonomy in your job, other?

Question 13: How do you feel about your job? Does the way you feel influence whether you change the way you work after training?

Question 14: What benefits do you expect in the company because of doing your job differently after training?

Question 15: Do you think that training alone is enough for you to change the way you work after training?

Question 16: Overall, which is the most important factor that makes you change the way you do your job after training?

Closing Question: Is there anything else you would like to add before we finish? Something you consider important and was not discussed?

Thank you very much for your cooperation

APPENDIX 9

A sample employee's face-to-face interview

Question 1:   Could you describe a training programme you attended in the last six to twelve months? What was your experience with it?

Response: I have attended several seminars during this time. I will speak about all of them because I can't think of a specific one. They help me very much, I feel good in the training environment, I feel special, I feel that someone cares about us because transferring his knowledge is very important, basically he gives us power and reliability in this field, I feel very good, more complete, more ready to when I come back to work and during the training from my trainer whom I appreciate very much and she really transfers me a lot of knowledge, I feel more ready to come back to the store and sell a product.

Question 2:   What do you do differently in your job after the training programme?

Response: If I think a very specific training that we did is by Dale Carnegie, it is a company that prepared us very well to become trainers and train the employees in the store. It helped me with my personality and with how to interact in the store with more people, transfer my knowledge and behave more professionally. This was really one of the best seminars that I have done. More generally, since I know a product very well, I feel more confident to transfer this to the rest of the people. This was our job up until recently as in store trainers and more generally even if I don't transfer it to other people since I know it well, and I certain about this I can sell it better

Extra question for the employee to elaborate more:
             Your training is basically about products or is it about more general skills as well such as sales skills?

Response: Yes, we begin from these with newly hired employees and then we are trained about specific products, groups of products or specific products.

Question 3:   What does your manager do so that you can work in a different way after training?

Response: Basically with our supervisor with whom we discuss, we transfer our knowledge on the things we said during training and then she gives us the required time to discuss the programme, to contact each employee tell him about the products, help him, show him the products so that we can transfer this knowledge to the rest.

Extra question for the employee to elaborate more:

So the role of the manager is active in helping transfer all this knowledge from the training to the store

Response: Yes

Question 4:   In general, do you have the opportunity to tell your manager that you feel you need training in new skills?

Response: Yes, of course, if I need something I can say that. And also on a regular basis they ask us as well. They send us documents to fill in, they are personal, each one of us his own, what needs he has, what he has done.

Prompt

So there is a formal procedure in the company

Response: Yes, of course there is.

Prompt   Can this happen informally?

Response: Yes, informally too

Question 5:   Why is it important for you to say which training you need? How does this help your performance after training?

Response: Because I learn the things I need and this helps me more with my job.

Question 6:   In what ways does your manager influence the climate at work and how does this affect the way you work after training?

Response: Very much. He influences the supervisors, the supervisors influence us. That's how it goes, when there is a positive climate it's better for everyone. And when someone cares about training and he is superior, it's even better.

Prompt

What you say is important. The manager must believe in the value of training as well

Response: Exactly. This is very important

Extra question for the employee to elaborate more:

How do your colleagues influence the climate. You told me before that you come back and you tell them about what you heard...

Response: Some of them are positive, others negative and others indifferent. They don't all react in the same way because I believe that if you want to learn it is your own thirst, you must have it. As far as I'm concerned, when I try to transfer knowledge to someone, I try to thrill them about it, gain something from this and encourage them first. I don't go to them and tell them about the product that it does this and this, I make up a nice fairy

tale first especially with people that are not so.., don't like training so much so I believe that this is the most important.

Question 7: In what ways does the content of training play a role so that you do your job differently afterwards?

It helps me personally a lot, to learn a product. Basically I am a person who needs to dismantle something to understand it. I want to see the composition of the product, I like this, so knowing the product, touching it, smelling it, understand what it is, who is it for, what ingredients it has, I can be more prepared to offer it and understand the need of the customer and see it is satisfied by this product or not

Prompt

So this practice happens during training...

Response: Yes we have them during training, we touch them, we smell them.

Prompt

OK, so do you believe that it is a matter of the practicality of the content, to have the product, touch it, understand it and then because training is practical you can easily apply it on the job?

Response: Both practice but also the theory is important, touch it but also learn about it. If I don't know which is the country of origin, who is the doctor who has made it, and which people, which needs it addresses, I can't be objective to the customer, I don't have the right knowledge. Both theory and practice are important.

Question 8: Apart from content, what else do you think makes training helpful for you to do your job better? (practice, feedback?)

Response: Yes, through time we do, if I think about a product, silverktin, which we launch very much, we come back on a regular basis, we do a revision about the product, learn about the new composition of a product which probably we have for a long time and it is renewed, one or two persons will be trained and these persons will transfer the knowledge to the rest.

Question 9: In what ways does the company reward you if you do your job differently after training?

Response: Basically, improving performance means more sales of the product and of course we will tell the rest of the colleagues and so we have more opportunities to have bigger sales for this product so we reach the targets and we get paid for these targets.

Prompt

So it is financial rewards...

Response: One part is financial, the other, at a personal level, is the ethical satisfaction and the professional one. And it is also about status. In our job which has to do with sales, we have status from the way we sell each

Question 10: Do you think you can get a promotion because you do your job differently after training?

Response: There is always the possibility of promotion but it is not only about training. You must have the whole package.

Prompt

Which is the rest of the package?

Response: I believe a stable character, reliability, respect, a stable behaviour over time and a stable increasing performance. For me stability is very important, because I am a stable person and of course to be honest, descent and all these things.

Prompt

How does training contribute to this stability?

Response: This I think is a matter of character, but training helps you to be more confident about yourself and the product

Question 11: In what ways do you have autonomy in your job to change the way you work after training?

Response: We have to discuss this with a superior and then we see. We don't come to the store and do something on our own initiative.

Prompt

But after the discussion, if there is agreement...

Response: If there is agreement and something must happen yes, there is no problem...

Question 12: In your opinion, which of the factors discussed above should always be linked with training so that you do your job differently after a training programme? For example, rewards, appraisals and promotions, autonomy in your job, other?

Response: I believe both, and it is a matter of how people see training, some love it others don't. But if we think about it materialistically both.

Question 13: How do you feel about your job? Does the way you feel influence whether you change the way you work after training?

Response: It has a daily challenge, it keeps me alert, all my senses are at the maximum.

Prompt

Which elements of the job do that?

Response: Communication with the people very much, communication with colleagues and specifically here we are at the centre, we are at Ermou and I feel that I am at New York.

Question 14: What benefits do you expect in the company because of doing your job differently after training?

Response: By doing your job better, if you have knowledge you are a better professional you believe in a better future, I will do my job better, someone will see that and appreciate it and from there on everything takes its route. We may do a good sale and the manager will say bravo, congratulations, continue like this, encouragement. I think that in our days this is very important.

Question 15: Do you think that training alone is enough for you to change the way you work after training?

Response: I believe that you take knowledge for yourself and then you can use it as you want, for yourself, for the team, for the company. I believe that if you have knowledge you must transfer it because when a team has knowledge it always works better. And I don't think that you must always be rewarded with money or with a bravo if I feel good with the knowledge I gain at that moment, for my personal advancement, knowledge is power. If training was alone then we would have personal benefit and nothing else. But I can't say that, what is necessary happens and of course within the time limit we have every time because Ermou is a very busy store.

Prompt

You mean that because the store is central you don't have the time to apply...

Response: Yes, the store is very busy and so we are more stressed and we try to do things ....

Question 16: Overall, which is the most important factor that makes you change the way you do your job after training?

Response: I would put all of them, I really couldn't distinguish something because everything is a chain, everything is necessary. But I repeat that it is also a matter of people's character how he sees knowledge, if he likes it or not. And of course there must be respect for the trainer. We must respect the fact that when someone gets tired to transfer knowledge I consider everything is very important, I can't distinguish between them.

Closing Question: Is there anything else you would like to add before we finish? Something you consider important and was not discussed?

Response: That I love training.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

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