DESIGN – TRANSLATING THEORY



Today we welcomed Al Bandura to our class *Transformative Design*. He came to tell us about his concept of self-efficacy – the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations. This is a key component of Al's social cognitive theory – understanding the ways that people see themselves and learn. It's a wonderfully rich view of people and their motivations and therefore of considerable significance to our class in human-centered design.

Al is high profile and his work is very accessible. Something struck me today however. Al's concept of self-efficacy is, of course, part of what in social theory we typically term agency. People are self-organizing, proactive, self-reflecting,

and self-regulating, in the context of social structures and cultural values, and, yes, the duality of structure which so concerned those of us back in the 80s who were struggling to develop a theory of material culture and design.

This is exactly why we need theory – it enables us to make connections across very different disciplines and fields.

Theory is translation



Albert Bandura