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Review Article

Creating learning environments that support autonomous-relational self-construlas

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Abstract

Educational settings should be organized to support autonomous but relational self-construals in order for a person to be self-driving and self-directed. An individual who has an autonomous-relational self is an individual who has managed to be oneself within ourselves. He/she can move his/her own reasoning into social thinking without hesitation. Both remote and face-to-face constructivist classes are inherently flexible enough to support this self-construals. If planned correctly, it is possible to implement both autonomy and cooperation together in these classes. This review study discusses how learning environments that support autonomous-relational self-construals can be created and presents a three-dimensional approach to structuring this process. These three dimensions are categorized and conceptualized according to the related literature in the context of instructional design with the theme of "becoming oneself" in regard to how self-esteem, self-confidence, self-control, epistemological belief, and self-determination should be developed through learning outcomes and how independent self-construals should be supported"; and the theme of "becoming ourselves " in regard to how to ensure that we can be ourselves in the process through cooperation and conflict management, and how to support a mutually dependent self-construals"; and the theme of "becoming oneself within ourselves" in regard to protecting the self in the group with task-oriented strategies in which individual differences are preserved, and how autonomous-relational self-construals should be supported.

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Introduction

The *self-concept* refers to the whole of the individual's representations about himself. From this point of view, the concept of self can be defined as the general idea that a person has about himself, his qualities, and his characteristics, so it can be considered as a summary of a person's perceptions that include cognitive representations of himself (Bilgin, 2007).

Some researchers have defined the concepts of *independent self* and *interdependent self* to distinguish between different self types existing in different cultures (Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Hogg and Voughan, 2007). Accordingly, people in *individualist (West-North) cultures* often have an independent self, while people in *collectivist (East-South) cultures* have a mutually dependent self. The independent self is an autonomous self with clear boundaries between the self and others. Internal qualities such as emotion, thought and ability are stable and not very affected by the social environment. The behavior of the independent self is mainly shaped according to the inner/personal characteristics of the person. The interdependent self is flexible. It does not have a clear boundary line between self and others. Relationships are tightly bound and highly sensitive to social settings. Others are seen as part of the self, and the self is seen as part of other people. If there is no collective element, there is no self. A person's behavior is mainly shaped by the thoughts and actions of other people's emotions.

The basic characteristics of the independent and interdependent self as follows: The independent person is stable and autonomous, has personal qualities that guide his action, is success-oriented, sets personal goals for himself,

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defines life as successfully achieving the goals, is responsible for his own behavior, is a competitor, and strives to satisfy himself. A mutually dependent person depends on someone, is fluid (drivable), directs his action in social relations, is oriented to collective behavior, fulfills his obligations, complies with norms, defines life as contributing to the collectivity. He is responsible for common behavior (along with others), he is cooperative and subjects himself to the collectivity (Fiske, Kitayama-San, Markus and Nisbett, 1998; Hogg & Voughan, 2007).

Kağıtçıbaşı (1997, 20) defines a third category of self in addition to the above. This category is autonomous-related self. In the literature, relatedness and autonomy have often been defined as concepts that are opposite to each other. In other words, autonomy is given the meaning of isolation and separation from others. In this case, it is expected that it is not possible for a person to be both autonomous and very associated with others. However, Kağıtçıbaşı suggested that these two characteristics belong to different dimensions (interpersonal distance dimension, activity dimension) independently of each other, so it is possible for them to coexist (Bilgin, 2007). For example, a person who has gained economic independence is no longer financially dependent on his or her family, but his or her emotional commitment continues, meaning that he or she is both autonomous and associative (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1997).

This research is based on the idea that the ideal profile to be achieved through education should be to have an autonomous-relational self. As a matter of fact, it is believed that a purely independent self can manifest itself in the long term with narcissistic tendencies, and a mutually dependent self can manifest itself in bondage in the long term.

Constructivist classes are actually based on learning environments that support autonomous-relational self-construals. This idea becomes clear when Brooks and Brooks' (1993) principles that guide constructivist teacher behavior are examined. Accordingly, the constructivist teacher encourages the student to *take initiative* and *act autonomously*. He/she develops the student's high-level cognitive skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation with raw and primary information sources and enables them to create their own reasonings. The teacher helps students express themselves by combining different interests, knowledge, and skills with different content and strategies of the course. He encourages a student to question with open-ended, thought-provoking questions. He emphasizes students' precognition and manages the learning processes by questioning and detailing the reasoning structures they have. He encourages students to reach a new balance by creating imbalances and contradictions in their existing schemes through their experiences. He provides learning by supporting social interaction, cooperation, and discussion in achieving balance. He encourages students to engage in dialogue with each other, asking each other questions. Thus, he allows the meaning to be structured in interaction. He arouses natural curiosity to enable meaningful learning, supports the creation of relationships and metaphors between what they learn.

As seen above, if applied correctly, it is possible for constructivist learning environments to bring both autonomy and cooperation together. In other words, in these settings, there is both autonomy and the ability to protect and develop it in cooperation. For this, it is necessary to ensure that the student first perceives that he/she is the 'oneself' in the classroom, but most importantly, that he/she can balance these two. In other words, it is necessary to ensure that he/she manages to maintain his/her own values within the group values, to be able to hear his/her own voice as well as the group's voice. The school occupies a very important place in a child's life. Placing this understanding in classroom settings, where he/she spends most of his/her time, also brings serious responsibilities to teachers. Autonomous-relational self-development can be encouraged in learning environments if planned correctly. In the following section, this idea is supported by a three-step view.

Becoming Oneself

Educators believe that the concept of self is positively related to school education. Students who rely on their learning abilities and feel that their essence is valuable exhibit greater interest and motivation in school, which brings success. The high achievement also improves self-confidence and maintains self-esteem for learning (Schunk, 2009).

Forsthy (1986) states that each student explains educational outcomes through some causal factors. So the perceived causes of success or failure vary from student to student. This theory, also known as the 'Attributional Theory of Achievement', is briefly described below, based on the statements of Forsthy (1986) and Schunk (2009) with its basic properties: *Causal factors*: Weiner et al. (1971) and Schunk, (2009) driven by Heider's work, assumed that students largely attribute their academic success and failure to '*ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck'*. For example, if a student gets a score "A" in social studies, he explains with his ability as "I'm good at Social Sciences", or explains with his effort as "I worked hard for this exam", or with the task difficulty as "the exam was not very difficult", or with a little luck "I also took a wild guess in a few questions". Subsequent research has identified other attributions such as other people, mood, fatigue, illness, personality, and physical appearance. *Causal dimensions:* Based on the research of Weiner et al. (1971) and Schunk (2009) first showed causes in two dimensions.

- Locus of control; Internal or external for the individual;
- Stability; Relatively stable or unstable over time;

Ability is internal and relatively stable. The effort is internal but also unstable. The difficulty of the task is external and does not relatively vary from one moment to the next. Luck is external and changeable. Familiar expressions such as having a lucky break and catching a break also confirm this view. Weiner et al. (1971) and Schunk, (2009) added a third causal dimension to these two dimensions.

Controllability dimension; Controllable or not by the individual

The results of attribution affect expectations, affective responses, and academic behavior. Accordingly, the dimension of stability affects the expectation of success. Given that the difficulty of the task remains more or less the same, success attributed to unstable causes (high ability, low degree of difficulty of the task) leads to higher expectations than success attributed to unstable causes (instantaneous effort, luck). Because they can't be sure that in the future they can get the same luck or continue the same effort. However, if failure is attributed to unstable reasons such as difficulty in tasks and lack of ability, rather than insufficient effort or bad luck, forward-looking expectations will be low. But they may also believe that more effort will bring better results, or that their chances may change in the future. It is suggested that the locus of control dimension affects affective responses. When the results are interpreted by internal rather than external reasons, the student is proud of his success and ashamed of his failure. If the student attributes success to controllable factors such as effort, motivation, perseverance, he thinks that he can show the same success again in the future, participates in academic tasks, shows effort and patience in more difficult tasks. But if he attributes it to uncontrollable variable factors, he doubts whether he will get the same note in the future, he fears that history will repeat itself. Students who believe that they have little control over academic results have a low expectation of success and have a lower motivation for success. The positive influence of others in performance creates gratitude, the negative influence of others creates anger and resentment.

The individual differences in attribution are as follows; Female students attribute their failures to more internal reasons than male students, and after failure, their performance is more likely to drop than boys.

As a result, it can be said that teachers should check their reactions to test results in classroom settings with precision. The belief that students who fail in the classroom cannot control their learning output can harm both their school studies and their perception of selfness. It can lower motivation. However, if the teacher creates awareness of the factors that the student can control his/her failure, the teacher protects the student from the consequences of failure that will harm him. The success should help him to think between situations that encourage success and the outcome of success, and teach him how to think about his achievements. That memoir should be reinforced and positive expectations should be created with words such as 'You are good at math; You must also be good or have worked hard; you should make an effort' which refers to ability and effort. He must be able to convince the students to be better.

The epistemological beliefs of the student who sees that he can manage his success will rise first. Self-esteem and self-confidence will increase, self-sufficiency and self-orientation skills will develop, self-perception will increase, and the feeling of being a subject will begin to be experienced in the learning environment. At this point, it can be stated that the student begins to gain autonomy.

Becoming Ourselves

A conflict is an event caused by the problems of working together of individuals and groups and causing the cessation or tangling of normal activities (Eren, 1989; Güney, 2007). Baltaş (2004) states, it is impossible for people with different points of view, different infrastructure, and understanding, different skills, values, and norms to not clash. However, conflict allows new options to emerge and also encourages creativity. Avoiding conflict creates an environment where people censor their views and participation falls. If managed well, it can create constructive change and a dynamic climate. In the solution of the conflict, the important thing is that the ambient of Justice should dominate. As a matter of fact, a conflict that has not concluded well reduces communication within the group, increases distrust among members, and weakens commitment to the team. Such a process can disrupt teamwork and therefore settings.

Groups affect people's behavior. Ergan (2007) examines the effects of groups on individuals under four headings.

Normative effect of the group; Individuals behave differently when they are alone and in a different group. Because they perform their roles in accordance with the norms of the group. Ergan (2007) explains this item with research like this. A group of subjects was recruited and the opinions of the group in which they were included were said to these subjects. These ideas are fictional and are as follows; In the first group, it was said that "the group chose you, cares

about you, wants you to stay", in the second group it was said "there are people who want you and there are people who don't in the group", and in the third group, "the group didn't choose you, it doesn't care that you stay. After these feedbacks, it was determined that the group that most complied with the group norms was the second group that thought it was partially accepted, and the third group was the one that complied the least. Because the subjects in the second group are trying more, thinking that they could lose the group. The subjects in the third group know that they are not cared for by the group. They also do not care about the group, but in order not to be completely disconnected, they may show compromise behavior when they are in the group and do not follow the norm when outside.

Impact of the group on attitude change; Groups can increase or prevent members' changing attitudes. Ergan (2007) handles a study with scouts as an example. Accordingly, a group of scouts was given a series of seminars on how studying nature lost importance today, and instead, it might be more beneficial to recognize the opportunities of the city. Before and after the seminar, scouts' attitudes towards scouting were measured. As a result, the Scouts resisted propaganda and displayed their devotion to their group more than before.

Impact of the group on efficiency; The amount of work done with the group is increasing, but the balance is deteriorating against the quality. Ergan (2007) explains this through an experiment. Accordingly; Two people were asked to pull from both ends of a rope, then two separate groups were asked to pull. As a result of the experiment, it was determined that the force that the individuals applied to the rope with the group was lower than the force applied individually, that is, the effect of social loafing occurs.

Impact of the group on the person's risk-taking; Because responsibility is shared in groups, people are not afraid of failures and negativity and can take more risks. For example, it is possible to observe this in group projects requested from primary school students. These projects are usually carried out by a few students who are the most successful in the group, while other students may not make an effort because their other friends do it anyway.

It is clear that groups have many positive and negative effects on the individual. In learning environments, group work is used to improve the ability to be "ourselves". It is possible for students to learn to be "ourselves" by performing healthful group studies. For this, teachers need to implement collaborative methods in a planned and accurate way in their learning environment.

Johnson, Johnson and Smith (1986) also emphasize the importance of constructive conflicts in learning environments by addressing the method of discussion from collaborative group work. They state that constructive conflicts trigger curiosity, encourage active presentation, and contribute to the re-conceptualization of knowledge, as well as establishing cooperation. They emphasize that increasing constructive conflicts as much as possible will have a significant impact on teaching outcomes and, in particular, improve students' moral decisions and judgment process. They explain constructive conflict management in the six stages within the context of the debate method from collaborative group work and within the framework of the students' reasoning processes; (1) the information is organized, conceptual structures are created, (2) opposing viewpoints are questioned, (3) the incompatibility of ideas, conflict, and uncertainty between groups arise, (4) a curiosity begins for knowledge, and students explore more information to support their own hypotheses and refute the hypotheses of the opposite group, (5) the active presentation begins such as self-defense – refuting the opposing idea, (6) Re-conceptualization is made. The group tries to find a compromise between its own idea and the idea of the opposite group. If necessary, the existing schema is abandoned and the information is taken into a new schema.

Interpersonal cooperation and interaction develop the awareness of the academic success of the peers. In this process, the student not only takes responsibility for himself or herself, but also for the peers. Unity and integrity are ensured inside, and holistic unity against the outside is achieved. The line between the concepts of oneself and ourselves begins to lose its sharpness. At this point, it is dangerous for the students to lose their color within the group. As a matter of fact, group togetherness and becoming ourselves are important, but the student can disappear in a group where he cannot find a presence as an individual. On the good side, tight group associations develop the awareness of becoming ourselves, but the desired thing is to be mutually associated, not mutually dependent. At this point, the next step is to provide an environment that allows each student to express themselves in the group.

Becoming Oneself Inside Ourselves

Why isn't school an attraction center? Why don't high-school young's feel enthusiasm for their school just like what they feel when they go to coffee or the stadium? Is school a place that darkens the soul of students or gives them anxiety? According to Çelik (2009), these are the basic questions that the teaching leader must answer to create a strong and stimulating school culture. We can think that students integrate with the informal groups in coffee, with the team they support in the stadium, develop belonging, commitment, and ownership, are accepted as they are, can

act like themselves, and therefore come to these environments with enthusiasm. Then it may be possible to create similar conditions in the school environment so that students can come to school with enthusiasm. These are the conditions in which the student can be both oneself and ourselves.

Ames (1990) explains how to create stimulating learning environments by analyzing classroom life. According to him, motivational processes are central to achieving educational goals. But conceptualizing motivation as a series of trends aimed only at achieving success means ignoring the impact of specific learning experiences. However, contextual factors directly affect the students' motivation and attitude towards taking responsibility for their own learning. At this point, it is necessary to stop taking only success as the main criterion of motivation but evaluate everything as a whole that happens in the classroom. In other words, the quantitative perspective treats motivation as goal-oriented actions. There are task-oriented activities, and a student's achievement of his/her goal within a certain period of time is an indicator of his/her high or low motivation. However, the qualitative paradigm focuses on the nature of student thoughts. From this point of view, the level of motivation of the student is not considered. Why are students turning to different sources instead of that? Why are some goals more important to them? What metacognitive processes do they use? How do they evaluate their own performance in different success contexts and what factors do they attribute to in relation to their success? It is important to answer questions like these. According to Ames (1986), the classroom environment creates a picture dominated by mandatory, cognitive academic tasks. Teacher-student, student-task, student-student interaction form the value set of this table. The environment, in its structure, gives implicit messages such as what values students should have, how they should interact with each other, along with explicit messages such as learning goals and evaluation criteria. For example, in a competitive structure, the goal is to win, because the best performance is awarded. Students focus more on their individual abilities than on tasks. In collaborative works, succeeding together stands out. The perception, beliefs of the teacher, and the meanings that students attribute to them are also important factors that encourage learning in the classroom environment. Teachers who believe that learning ability can be improved encourage the student to learn by sending a message that they can improve their ability and control their success. The teacher's conscious behavior in the face of success and failure directly affects the student's self-perception, as well as allows him to develop a positive attitude towards the learning environment. However, on the one hand, providing students with different learning options, allowing them to make their own decisions about what to do, when to do, and how to do, on the other hand, not neglecting the socialization process and ensuring that they achieve learning goals without breaking away from the social context can also be considered as important conditions for a positive and stimulating climate.

A differentiated teaching environment is an original environment. It gives the student opportunities to become ourselves, and oneself, and oneself within ourselves. Schunk (2009) expresses the characteristics that make differentiated environments different as follows; In this environment, students work on different tasks and assignments. In a uniform task, it is thought that if the student does not have the ability to this field, his motivation will decrease. Autonomy is high. It is essential that the student decides for himself what to do, when to do, and how to do, which increases both self-control and motivation. There is also group work and individual work. The awareness of becoming ourselves, and taking responsibility for himself and his friends increase motivation. Heterogeneous groups and solidarity strengthen motivation by increasing self-sufficiency. There is a non-explicit grading. There is no benchmarking. Otherwise, it is thought that only the highest grade student will be motivated, and others' motivation will decrease. Gardner and Hatch (1997) also address the importance of cooperative activities. Accordingly, if the learning environment is fed by different activities that require different abilities, cognition will also be distributed among the members of the group to adapt to it. Each student will carry their own interest, knowledge, strategy to the learning environment, different interests and abilities will emerge so that students will have the opportunity to become oneself within ourselves.

Conclusion

The self refers to the whole of the individual's representations of himself. In the independent self, there is a dark line between oneself and ourselves, while in the mutually dependent self, this line begins to lose its sharpness. An independent self-perception can push a person to seek rebellious freedom in the long run, while a mutually dependent self can also cause a person to lose their self-perception within a group.

The purpose of education is to educate self-sufficient, self-directed individuals. This means neither raising an individual who thinks only of himself and lives for himself nor raising individuals who blindly adapt to the group in

which he is involved and has lost every color within that group. The self-sufficient, self-directed individual is the individual who has an autonomous-related self-perception, as mentioned by Kağıtçıbaşı (1997).

An individual who has an autonomous-relational self is an individual who has managed to be oneself within ourselves. He can move his own reasoning into social thinking without hesitation. Teachers should be able to act in accordance with the principles of constructivist learning theory to develop the autonomous-relational self in learning environments. They should enable students to work with collaborative groups and provide an opportunity to express themselves within the group. In this way, on the one hand, the thinking of the individual will be supported, and on the other hand, the thinking of the group will be fed.

Both remote and face-to-face constructivist classes are essentially based on learning environments that support this self-construal. It is possible in these classes that both autonomy and cooperation can be implemented together. Autonomous-relational self-development can be encouraged in learning environments if planned correctly. The idea that autonomous-relational self-perception can be developed in the learning process has been considered with a three-stage view in this research. These three stages are to become oneself, to become ourselves, and to become oneself in ourselves, respectively. Teaching practices should also be planned to support these three stages.

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