The Effects of Cooperative Learning on Iranian University Students' Class-engagement, Self-esteem, and Self-confidence

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Abstract

Not being satisfied with the traditional approaches to teaching translation, translation experts and researchers argue for a move to a more team-based, experiential, and cooperative approach. This study aimed to investigate if teaching translation through cooperative learning improved university students' class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence. Having administered the class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence questionnaires, the control and experimental groups, with 15 students in each, received the treatment for 10 sessions. The experimental group did the translation tasks through cooperative method in groups of 2 or 3. However, the control group was taught through traditional method, and students translated the text individually. Once the treatment was over, the questionnaires were distributed again, and responses were recorded. Employing one-way ANCOVA, the data were analyzed. The results revealed that cooperative learning improved students' self-confidence, self-esteem, and class-engagement. Using this technique, teachers can create a more relaxed, competitive, and stress-free atmosphere, where students are keen to participate in the class discussions and enjoy the cognitive and affective benefits. The results are discussed with regard to self-efficacy theory, attribution theory, and self-worth theory.

Keywords: Class-engagement, Cooperative Learning, Self-confidence, Self-esteem

1. Introduction

Due to the rapid expansion of knowledge and ever-increasing growth of international communication, the need to highly qualified translators is felt more than ever before. Furthermore, translation plays a vital role in scientific, medical, technological, business, and legal aspects of life, thus offering translation courses has become a necessity in almost all universities across the world (Melnichuk & Osipova, 2017). However, previous studies have mostly focused on the translation process and product, as a result, the class dynamics in a translation course and the teaching of translation are neglected areas (Davies, 2004; Melnichuk & Osipova, 2017). Thus, what happens in translation classes and what approaches and techniques can increase the students' learning and engagement are areas to be investigated. As regards translation instruction, the typical approach to teaching translation is very much akin to Grammar Translation Method and 'read and translate' approach (Davies, 2004), thus the students are not actively involved in pair and group work. Several scholars (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Bishop & Verleger, 2013; Calvo, 2015; Davies, 2004; Gerding-Salas, 2000; Motta, 2016; Nechayeva & Novitskaya, 2012) argued that due to the complex nature of translation process, there needs to be an alternative approach to teaching translation which prepares the students fully through engaging them in real world tasks.

Cooperative Learning (CL) has been shown to be very effective in a large number of grades, levels, and fields (Abrami, Lou, Chambers, Poulsen, & Spence, 2000; Ghaith, 2003a, 2003b; Tahmasbi, Hashemifardnia & Namaziandost, 2019; Vaughan, 2002). Increasing the students' motivation and bringing about fruitful cognitive activities, it is supported by both motivational and social-cognitive theories (Bandura's self-efficacy theory, 1993; Covington's self-worth theory, 1992; Piaget's social transmission theory, 1964; Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, 1978). Consequently, it is expected that CL can lead to improvements in students' motivation, self-confidence, and class-participation. It is argued that CL can greatly lead to an increase in learners' intrinsic motivation (Abedi, Keshmirshekan & Namaziandost, 2019; Dörnyei 2001; Jacobs & Goh 2007; Kagan & Kagan, 2009; Ziafar & Namaziandost, 2019). It can be used as an effective method for teaching social skills, changing the students' attitudes, as well as improving their speaking skill (Al-Sobhani, 2013; Nasri & Biria, 2017; Namaziandost, Sabzevari, & Hashemifardnia, 2018; Ning, 2011; Ning & Hornby, 2010; Pattanpichet, 2011; Sühendan & Bengü, 2014). Some other studies have shown that CL can decrease the students' anxiety levels, which leads to better learning of languages and communication skills (Casado & Dereshiwsky, 2001; Dornyei, 1994; Frantzen & Magnan, 2005; Oxford, 1999; Young, 1999). However, there have been opposing results as regards

the effects of CL on the language learners' level of self-confidence. While several researchers support the positive effect of CL on self-confidence (Fahami & Ezzati, cited in Heydari, Zarei, & Zeinalipour, 2013; Ghaith, 2003a), others found that CL did not impact self-confidence (Yaryary, 2008). This is the main reason this study addressed this area to shed light on this aspect of cooperative learning.

Not lagging behind experts and researchers in teaching English, translation researchers asserted that there must be a move away from individual translation methods to a more team-based, experiential, and cooperative approach (Davies, 2005; Kolb, 2015; Lage, Platt & Treglia, 2000; Roehl, Reddy & Shannon, 2013; Shreve, 2006; Stewart, Orbain & Kornelius, 2010; Tucker, 2012). Even translation experts (Buzelin 2007; Chesterman, 2006; Nord, 2005; Risku, 2010; Risku & Windhager, 2013; Solum 2017; Vienne 2000) believe that doing translation tasks in groups and teamwork can be beneficial for the learners. In real world, many translators have to work in teams and cooperate with other colleagues when translating different parts of a large text or translating the same text into different languages. Although most of the translation job is done in the translator's mind (Mossop, 2001), working in the real world requires team work and social skills (Kelly, 2005).

Kiraly (2000, 2003) argues that students' interaction while translating text is an essential element of translation instruction and learning since learners can build their knowledge and required skills for translating in real-world situations. Besides, most students and professors prefer to do the translation tasks and learn translation through group-work, not through individual and traditional approach (Zainudin & Awal, 2011). Considering the advantages of CL in other areas such as language learning, and its effects on students' motivation, class participation, attitudes, self-confidence, and reducing anxiety; teachers could implement it in teaching translation. However, Rodger, Murray, and Cummings (2007) stated that although there has recently been an increasing number of researches on CL at university levels and in teaching English, understanding and evaluating the students' involvement in translation skills and cooperative translations tasks have not received much attention (Gerding-Salas, 2000). Thus, the current study aimed to investigate if using cooperative learning improved the students' class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence.

2. Literature Review

CL is one of the most widely supported and frequently used approaches to active learning and pedagogy in academic settings. It lies at the end of collaborative learning continuum, and still remains as one of the most useful teaching techniques in academic institutes (Rodger, Murray &

Cummings, 2007). At university level, this approach is implemented, using various intellectual and interestingly challenging activities. According to Rodger, Murray, and Cummings (2007), there exists little research on CL at university level, so more research is needed to increase our understanding of CL and its potentials for language learning. They conducted a research on the differences in male and female university students' achievements while focusing on cooperative learning. It was found that male and female university students employ very different learning styles. Considering this lack of research, the study aimed at considering the effect of one cooperative learning technique on university students' individual differences and attributes.

Using CL in translation courses and classes can be beneficial in several ways. It makes the courses more efficient and effective (Bishop & Verleger 2013; Tucker, 2012), it leads to active engagement and improves higher order thinking skills (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001), it can even foster lower order thinking skills such as understanding and implementing various translation techniques and strategies (Lage, Platt & Treglia, 2000), and it makes students responsible for their learning and helps them internalize the new knowledge (Zhong, 2008). Through experiential learning, students can start doing the translations alone, then they can compare, discuss, and analyze their texts with their peers. As a result, they have to do reflective observation and find their errors. These will lead to a better grasp of language forms, so learners can transfer the skills they learned in familiar or new situations in the future (Davies, 2005; Shreve, 2006; Calvo, 2015; Motta, 2016). Unlike these studies which looked at the cognitive effects of cooperative learning, this study aimed to examine the effects on the emotional and affective side of the learners.

Springer et al (1999, cited in Rodger, Murray & Cummings, 2007) conducted a research on undergraduate students in technology, engineering, mathematics, and science majors. He found that group work and CL led to a higher achievement among these students. Involvement in CL was shown to be a strong predictor of students' academic achievement, and there was a strong positive correlation between the importance of grades to students and their class participation. Zainudin and Awal (2011) studied the techniques used by Malaysian students while translating and the effects of using "cooperative work procedure" on their attitudes and translation quality. It was found that 90.7% of the students liked to translate their texts in pairs, while 93% of the students did not like to work in groups. These students held positive views towards teaching translation through CL, responding positively to 10 out of 18 items of the questionnaire. They believed that CL encourages discussion, leads to better understanding of the source text, increases friendship among students, motivates students to speak, results in

idea exchange, and gives them the chance to correct each other's mistakes in translation. However, CL can be too noisy, some students might not contribute to the discussions, and conducting group work is energy taking.

Several studies have shown that CL can increase students' motivation, sense of self-efficacy in language learning, encouragement, feedback, and interest in course work (Abedi, Keshmirshekan & Namaziandost, 2019; Ghaith, 2002, 2003a; Ghaith, 2003b; Ghaith & Bouzeineddine, 2003; Ghaith & El-Malak, 2004; Kagan & Kagan, 2009; Liang, 2002; Liao, 2006; Sellers, 2005; Ziafar & Namaziandost, 2019). Ghaith (2003a) showed that high school students learning English as a foreign language through CL did much better on achievement tests compared to those who worked in whole-class groups. Although university students receiving instruction through jigsaw tasks did not outperform those taught through whole-class in literal reading comprehension, they had a much better performance when the reading tests measured higher-order reading comprehension skills (Ghaith & El-Malak, 2004). Some of the studies have favored CL in other emotional domains. Students receiving cooperative instruction felt much more personally-supported by their teachers and peers, felt a lesser amount of school alienation, and more class cohesion and fairer grading (Ghaith, 2002; Ghaith, 2003b). Lower achievers received more personal and academic support from their instructors when compared to higher achievers when they were taught in a cooperative learning environment (Ghaith & Bouzeineddine, 2003). Employing the "Co-op Co-op" method and collecting data through semi-structured individual and focus group interviews, survey questionnaires, learners' reflection papers, and evaluation reports, Sellers (2005) found that CL could increase the learners' sense of group belonging, reduced their stress, and motivated them. Liao (2006) investigated that effects of CL on Taiwanese students' motivation, strategy utilization, and grammar achievements. She conducted a 12-week quasi-experimental study and came to the conclusion that CL had a large positive effect on students learning motivation, their out-of-class strategy use, and grammar achievement. The effect was much more obvious at higher achievers and lower achievers.

CL can also affect the students' achievements and progress in different language skills. It can affect students' speaking skill (Al-Sohbani, 2013; Hall Haley & Ferro, 2011; Namaziandost, Hashemifardnia, & Shafiee, 2019; Namaziandost, Sabzevari & Hashemifardnia, 2018; Nasri & Biria, 2017; Ning, 2011; Pattanpichet, 2011; Sühendan & Bengü, 2014; Tahmasbi, Hashemifardnia & Namaziandost, 2019). Ning and Hornby (2010) found that significant progress could be made in students' listening, speaking, reading, writing and vocabulary as a result of CL treatment. On the other hand, researchers have found a negative correlation between CL and language learning anxiety (Casado & Dereshiwsky, 2001; Dornyei, 1994; Frantzen &

Magnan, 2005; Young, 1999), while Tsai and Duxbury (2010) found no relationship between these two factors among American students and a positive relationship between them among Taiwanese students. Zainalipour, Zarei, and Heydari (2013) investigated the effects of CL on Iranian high school students' self-confidence. Some 100 Iranian high school students took part in this study, took the pre- and post-tests, and filled out the self-confidence questionnaires. They found that using cooperative learning techniques increased the girls' self-confidence significantly, but this improvement was not significant among Iranian boys. Given the importance of CL in language learning and its effects on students' motivation, proficiency, achievement, and progress in language skills, it might turn out to be effective in teaching translation too. However, most studies mentioned above have either focused on motivation level, achievement, anxiety, and thinking skills. There exists little research on the effects of CL on students' class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence. Thus, this study was conducted to answer the following research questions.

1. Does using cooperative learning significantly affect the class-engagement of Iranian university students?

2. Does using cooperative learning significantly affect the self-esteem of Iranian university students?

3. Does using cooperative learning significantly affect the self-confidence of Iranian university students?

3. Method

3.1. Design and Participants

In order to answer the above-mentioned research questions, a quasi-experimental study with two-group pre-test post-test design was conducted to unravel if the intervention (cooperative learning) was effectual in improving the students' class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence. The researchers did not have access to many classes to use random sampling, so the participants were not randomly selected, and the researchers included the students who were present in their classes. The participants of the current study were 30 students majoring in English Translation Studies doing their MA's in Islamic Azad University, Isfahan branch. They were assigned to the experimental and control groups equally. Their age range was between 20 and 30 years old. The study was carried out in the first semester of 2019/2020 academic year, taking 10 weeks.

3.2. Materials and Instruments

The researchers preferred to develop a new questionnaire on the basis of the previous ones available. This was done because the questionnaires

developed before were either too old, too long, or designed for specific context thus not suitable for the Iranian context. Besides, the researchers aimed to investigate the students' self-confidence, self-esteem, and class-engagement in the English class, so they had to choose a limited number of items, modified their wording, and make them specific to the context of translation. The first instrument was a class-engagement questionnaire in five-item Likert Scale including (strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, neutral=3, agree=4 and strongly agree=5). This questionnaire was to a great extent based on the questionnaire developed, validated, and verified by Pöysä, Vasalampi, Muotka, Lerkkanen, Poikkeus and Nurmi (2019). It consisted of 20 items. Since it was developed by the researchers, its validity was checked by five English experts and its reliability was determined in the pilot study (0.76).

The second instrument employed for this study was a self-esteem questionnaire with the same format as the above-mentioned questionnaire, consisting of 13 items. This questionnaire was based on the revised version of Rosenburg's (1965) self-esteem questionnaire which is widely used for measuring this construct. In fact, it has been revised and updated by Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger and Vohs (2003) and Ciarrochi, Heaven and Fiona (2007). The researchers adopted the revised version by these researchers. The questionnaire was validated by two psychology professors at Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch. Cronbach's alpha reliability of the questionnaire was 0.95.

The third instrument was a self-confidence questionnaire with the same format as the other two ones, including 12 items. The self-confidence questionnaire was mostly based on the questionnaire developed by Jones (2001). This questionnaire included 22 items, but the researchers, experts, and conducting the pilot study with 22 participants led to drastic changes in the number and form of the items. The last version of the self-confidence questionnaire in this study consisted of 12 items. Just like other questionnaires, the self-confidence questionnaire was also validated by two experts in psychology at Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch, and it enjoyed Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.92.

3.3. Procedure

The first step of this study was to administer a pre-test of class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence questionnaires consisting of 45 items (20+13+12) (see Appendix 1). The questionnaires were piloted first, and the obtained reliability coefficients of class-engagement questionnaire, self-esteem, and self-confidence were 0.76, 0.95, and 0.92 respectively, indicating that they enjoyed a good reliability coefficient. It took students about 30 minutes to fill out the questionnaires. Then, the treatment began. The students in the experimental and control groups were grouped in pairs or

triad, and the cooperative learning technique and traditional approach were performed during 10 sessions as it comes in the following:

1) In experimental group, the instructor brought a 150-word paragraph of moderate difficulty level 13 to the class each session, and the students were required to individually read the text first and understand it before translating it. Then, they were given an hour to cooperate with their classmate/classmates in groups, share their ideas on the complicated and complex sentences, and figure out the meaning. In this team work, each student listened to other students carefully and mentioned their own ideas or asked their questions if they had any problems with the translation of the text. When they reached consensus on the most agreed-upon understanding, they went through the next sentence, and the same process was carried out for the rest of the text. Having done this, each student was required to write their own version of translation. This process was carried out for 10 sessions, and each session lasted for one and a half hours.

2) The control group students received the same materials during the study. First, they filled out the questionnaires, but they were supposed to translate 10 texts of 150 words each session during the term individually. The teacher took a text to the class, and the students were required to translate the text individually. The control group also filled out the class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence questionnaires at the beginning and the end of the study.

3) In the last session, the same questionnaires of class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence were administered to unravel whether the cooperative translation technique had any significant influence on the students' class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence.

3.4. Data Analysis

The questionnaires were graded by the researchers (strongly agree received five points; agree received four points; neutral response received three points; disagree received two points; and strongly disagree received one point). The total score for each questionnaire; namely class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence was calculated for both pre- and post-tests of the control and experimental groups. Therefore, the upmost and downmost possible scores for class-engagement was between 20 and 100; for self-esteem, they were between (13 and 65) and for self-confidence, they were between 12 and 60.

The last step was to enter data into SPSS (version 26) and an analysis of Covariance was utilized to examine whether a significant difference was found between the control group and the experimental group in terms of class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

This section presents the results of the study. First of all, the descriptive statistics of the pre-tests and post-tests of class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence questionnaires will be presented. These will include the mean, maximum score, minimum score, and standard deviation.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Pre-tests and Post-tests of Class-engagement, Self-esteem, Self-confidence

Tests	Pre-test	Values	Post-test	Values
Class-engagement	Mean	63.93	Mean	73.47
	Min	43	Min	50
	Max	75	Max	98
	SD	7.55	SD	15.25
Self-esteem	Mean	37.30	Mean	46.37
	Min	15	Min	26
	Max	58	Max	59
	SD	10.43	SD	8.03
Self-confidence	Mean	40.17	Mean	44.37
	Min	21	Min	29
	Max	74	Max	58
	SD	9.68	SD	8.11

As the results in Table 1 show, the mean score for class-engagement improved from 63.93 to 73.47. This 10-point increase in the mean score might indicate that the treatment had been effective, but it is soon to judge about this without running the required inferential statistics. The SD has almost doubled from pre-test to post-test, and the maximum score has gone up from 75 to 98. However, the minimum score has not changed much. With regard to self-esteem scores, the statistics are quite different. The mean score has changed much less, just 6 point. Nonetheless, it should be pointed out that the number of items and as a result the possible score in this questionnaire is much lower. The minimum score has changed well (15 to 26), but the maximum score has not improved noticeable, just one point. Unlike the class-engagement' SD, the standard deviation of the scores has decreased. The last row represents the changes in the scores of students' self-confidence. The changes made in the scores of this test are the least of all. The mean score of the self-confidence has changed just 4 points, the minimum score has increased 8 points. However, the most striking difference is that the maximum score has decreased form pre-test to post-test. It must be mentioned that this is exactly the reason that the SD has decreased too.

The first research question examined whether cooperative translation could significantly affect class-engagement among the students in the control and experimental groups or not. The results of one-way ANCOVA presented in Table 2 signifies that cooperative translation significantly enhanced class-engagement of the experimental group as compared to the control group. In other words, a significant difference was found between the control group and experimental group's class-engagement after controlling for pre-test scores, $F(1,27) = 96.63$, p value = .000.

Table 2

ANCOVA Results for Comparing the Class-engagement of Students in Control and Experimental Groups

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	5359.166a	2	2679.583	51.963	000	.794
Intercept	2888.792	1	2888.792	56.020	000	.675
Class. Eng. Pretest	131.966	1	131.966	2.559	121	.087
Control. Experimental. Groups	4982.82	1	4982.826	96.629	000	.782
Error	1392.30	27	51.567			
Total	168672.00	30				
Corrected Total	6751.46	29				

The second research question investigated the effect of cooperative translation on the self-esteem of the participants. According to the results of ANCOVA statistics presented in Table 3, a significant difference was found between the control group and experimental group's self-esteem level after controlling for pre-test scores, $F(1,27) = 19.20$, p value = .000. Thus, it can be safely concluded that cooperative translation significantly influenced the students' self-esteem in the experimental group.

The third research question probed whether cooperative translation could significantly affect self-confidence of the target students. As the tabulated results in Table 4 indicate, cooperative translation had a significant impact on students' self-confidence. In other words, a significant difference was found between the control group and experimental group's self-confidence level after controlling for pre-test scores, $F(1,27) = 12.88$, p value = .000.

Table 3

ANCOVA Results for Comparing the Self-esteem of Students in Control and Experimental Groups

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	822.031a	2	411.016	10.580	.000	.439
Intercept	4274.859	1	4274.859	110.037	.000	.803
Self. Esteem. Pre	.398	1	.398	.010	.920	.000
Control. Experimental. Groups	746.179	1	746.179	19.207	.000	.416
Error	1048.935	27	38.849			
Total	66367.000	30				
Corrected Total	1870.967	29				

Table 4

ANCOVA Results for Comparing the Self-confidence of Students in Control and Experimental Groups

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	662.701a	2	331.350	7.167	.003	.347
Intercept	2839.664	1	2839.664	61.422	.000	.695
Self. Conf. Pretest	.001	1	.001	.000	.996	.000
Control. Experimental. Groups	595.885	1	595.885	12.889	.001	.323
Error	1248.266	27	46.232			
Total	60963.000	30				
Corrected Total	1910.967	29				

4.2. Discussion

The first finding was that cooperative translation significantly affected the students' class-engagement. Although there are no studies conducted on the effects of cooperative learning on class-engagement, there are several studies indicating that CL leads to the reduction of students' stress and anxiety levels (Casado & Dereshiwsky, 2001; Dörnyei, 1994; Frantzen & Magnan, 2005; Oxford, 1999; Young, 1999). It is quite clear that when students do not have stress and anxiety for learning, they will attend the classes more willingly and are keen to participate in the class discussions. This finding finds support from previous studies which concluded that CL can change the tiring and demotivating atmosphere of translation classes to a setting where students can experience a better learning (Bishop & Verleger, 2013; Tucker, 2012), or can bring about active engagement on the part of learners (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). This is made possible through CL since it makes understanding and implementing various translation

techniques and strategies easier for the students (Lage, Platt & Treglia, 2000). Furthermore, students feel more responsible for their learning and become independent learners, the main element of which is class-participation (Zhong, 2008). Finally, most students and professors are interested in doing and teaching translation tasks through group-work, not through individual and traditional approach (Zainudin & Awal, 2011). As a result, they will attend the class and participate in the class discussions, which not only improves their skills and abilities in translation, but it also leads to better performance on the exams and getting higher grades on the exams.

This study also came to the conclusion that cooperative translation technique improved the students' self-confidence and self-esteem in translation classes. Previous studies (Fahami & Ezzati, cited in Heydari, Zarei, & Zeinalipour, 2013; Ghaith, 2003a; Zainalipour, Zarei & Heydari, 2013) corroborate these results. For one thing, the students' self-confidence might increase as a result of doing the translation tasks in pairs since they will come to conclusion that they can solve problems that they could not do alone before. One possible reason for this is that doing a task for the first time is the most difficult experience; once a person has done the task alone or in group, they will be able to do it again and again, even better. The second reason is that since CL improves the students' motivation and interest (Liao, 2006; Sellers, 2005). Doing the tasks in group not only improves their self-confidence, but also increases their motivation and interest. The third reason might be that the students' self-confidence increases as a result of group work and cooperative translation since they give their peers feedback that will help them improve their translation. Therefore, their faith in their abilities increases, and they will find their strengths and weaknesses. However, these findings are in contrast to the previous study conducted by Yaryary (2008), concluding that cooperative learning decreased the students' self-confidence.

5. Conclusion and Implications

Employing a pre-test/post-test two group design, this study investigated the effects of cooperative translation technique on students' class-engagement, self-esteem, and self-confidence in two intact classes, with 15 MA students in each. The first finding was that cooperative translation improved the students' self-confidence, self-esteem, and class-engagement. These findings show that employing cooperative translation has both cognitive and emotional benefits for the students enjoying this approach to teaching. For one reason, the students become familiar with the successful learning strategies, in this case translation techniques and strategies as a result of discussions and exchange of ideas with peers. Learning better and more successful translation strategies might even go deeper than mere

repetition, and the students might have changed their translation habits and techniques quite consciously.

Cooperative translation might also affect the students learning in other ways such as the increase in student talk time, positive reinforcement and interdependence, and the supportive environment of cooperative learning. This happens as a result of receiving more personal and academic support from peers and teachers (Ghaith, 2002). The next reason might lie in the goal-setting and goal-commitment nature of cooperative learning since all human learning is directed and influenced by goal-setting (Locke & Latham, 1990). One reason for the improvement in the class-engagement of the students can be attributed to their higher motivation for learning. In fact, increases motivation and higher class-engagement in this study are very likely to have a mutual effect on each other. Still another reason is that students can learn better in pairs and groups since they can help one another and move to their next level of understanding. This is elegantly explained under the title of Zone of Proximal Development by Vygotsky (1978). This happens in cooperative environment since most learners give and receive more feedback and understand it better than when working alone and receive no feedback.

On the one hand, the improvement in the students' self-esteem and self-confidence and the resultant enhanced class-engagement can be explained in the light of several theories. The first theory which can explain the improvements in self-confidence is the Bandura's (1993) self-efficacy theory. It is very likely that the equal-opportunity feature of cooperative learning environment helps them believe that translation competence is "acquired". Thus, they evaluate themselves and their abilities by their own personal improvement, while those students who look at translation competence as "inherent" evaluate their abilities against their peers' success. As a result, the cooperative learning environment enables the students to be ready for more challenges in their learning process by making more efforts and using better strategies.

On the other hand, the students' improvements in class-engagement can be accounted for by Weiner's (2000) attribution theory. According to this theory, students' motivation and their class-engagement is greatly affected by "causal stability" of their past successful and failed experiences. In simpler terms, causes such as luck and making efforts are to a great extent unstable and contemporary. Since learners can change these features, they have more impact on their future motivation and class-participation. However, causes such as their peers' behavior and teachers' attitudes are assumed to be stable and uncontrollable, thus they have less impact on the learners' motivation, which in turn affects their class-attendance and participation.

Finally, the improvements in students' self-esteem level can be explained via Covington's (1992) self-worth theory. The quest for self-acceptance is one of the most important priorities for every human, and one of the ways for students to do this is to be academically competent. Thus, they do their best to protect and improve their academic competence in order to increase their self-worth. In other words, the cooperative learning environment assists students believe in the worth of themselves, have more motivation to make efforts and conduct constant self-improvement.

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Appendix 1: Class-engagement, Self-esteem, and Self-confidence Questionnaire

ردیف	گزینه
1	برقراری ارتباط در کلاسهای درس، برایم رضایتبخش است.
2	در کلاس، وقتی با دوستانم صحبت میکنم آرامش پیدا میکنم.
3	در هرکلاس، نظرات من، مفید واقع میشود.
4	با بحثهای گروهی در این کلاس، احساس آرامش میکنم.
5	در هر کلاس، دوست دارم کار گروهی انجام دهم.
6	به صحبتهای استادم با دقت گوش میدهم.
7	در کلاس احساس تنهایی میکنم زیرا نمیتوانم همکلاسی های خود را درک کنم.
8	همه همکلاسی هایم در کار گروهی این کلاس مشارکت فعال دارند.
9	وقتی با استادمان صحبت میکنم، آرامش پیدا می کنم.
10	وقتی در کلاسی نظر خودم را می گویم، آشفته و بی قرار میشوم.
11	بیشتر همکلاسی هایم توجهی به کار گروهی در کلاس ندارند.
12	بیشتر اوقات در کلاس، حواسم جمع استاد و درس است.
13	وقتی در کلاس با استادم صحبت میکنم یا سوال میپرسم، عصبی میشوم.
14	وقتی در کلاس، نظر خود را میگویم، احساس خوشایندی دارم.
15	از کلاس امروز لذت می برم.
16	دوست دارم در بقیه کلاسهایم نیز کار گروهی را تجربه کنم.
17	وقتی همکلاسی هایم نمیتوانند مرا درک کنند، آشفته خاطر میشوم.
18	مطالب درسی این کلاس برای من جذاب است.
19	بیشتر اوقات در کار گروهی مشارکت میکنم.
20	در این کلاس فضای مشارکت برای یادگیری باز است
1	بطور کلی از عملکرد خودم در کلاس راضی هستم.
2	گاهی اوقات فکرمیکنم اصلا دانشجوی خوبی در این کلاس نیستم.
3	فکرمیکنم قابلیتهای لازم برای این درس را دارم.
4	به خوبی دیگران می توانم درس را درک کنم.
5	فکرمیکنمانقدر خوب یاد گرفته ام که میتوانم به آن افتخار کنم.
6	گاهی اوقات، در کلاس احساس بیهودگی میکنم.
7	فکرمیکنم باندازه ی دیگران میتوانم دانشجوی ارزشمندی در این کلاس باشم.
8	کاش در کلاس، از احترام بیشتری برخوردار بودم.
9	همواره فکر میکنم بودنم در کلاس اشتباه بوده است.
10	بعضی وقتها فکر میکنم در هیچ کاری مفید نیستم
11	از شرایط فعلی خودم و تواناییهایم راضی هستم
12	نسبت به خودم و قابلیتهایی که در این کلاس دارم، نظر مثبت دارم.
13	میتوانم مهارتهای را یاد بگیرم.
1	دانشجوی خوبی در این کلاس هستم.
2	عضوی مهمی از گروه همکلاسان خود در این کلاس هستم.
3	نقش من در گروه کلاسی مان پررنگ است.
4	هنگام نفهمیدن موضوعی از درس، از همکلاسای هایم خجالت نمی کشم.
5	موقع نفهمیدن درس از استادم خجالت نمی کشم که سوالم را بپرسم
6	همکلاسیهایم به تواناییهای من در کلاس اطمینان دارند.
7	در کلاسهای دیگر نیز، از سوال کردن از استادم خجالت نمیکشم.
8	موقع بحث در کلاس در مورد درس، میتوانم همکلاسیهایم را قانع کنم
9	فکرمیکنم با گذشت زمان، بتوانم درس را بهتر بفهمم.
10	فکرمیکنم بالاخره میتوانم نمره خوبی در درس کسب کنم.
11	فکرمیکنم نمره من در درس حداقل ۱۴ باشد.
12	در آینده می توانم بخوبی ترجمه کنم.

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