

Investigating EFL Achievement Through the Lens of Demotivation

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Abstract

It is generally agreed that demotivation is any forces that reduce a student's passion or enthusiasm to learn. Despite some studies on demotivation across language levels, culture, and languages; research has not been conducted on university students from different language levels in Thailand. The aim of this mixed-method study is three-fold. Firstly, it attempts to factorize types of demotivation among English major students. Secondly, it examines the effect of demotivation on EFL achievement. Thirdly, it investigates the differences of demotivation in different levels of EFL achievement. The study involved undergraduate students majoring in English completing a questionnaire and being interviewed. The results revealed that there were four potential types of demotivation among English major students: 1) Media, teaching styles and teacher competence; 2) Attitudes towards teachers and classmates; 3) Experiences of failure and attitudes towards English learning, and 4) Characteristics of lessons and class materials. Findings also showed that Demotivation Type 3 (Experiences of failure and attitudes towards English learning) influenced EFL achievement ($p < .001$). Interestingly, there was a significant difference in the degree of influence of Type 3 among low, moderate, and high levels of EFL achievement. In the conclusion, pedagogical implications of these findings are discussed in order to help teachers understand important factors that demotivate students to achieve in English language learning so that the occurrence of those factors may be avoided.

Keywords: demotivation, EFL achievement, English language learning, English major students

1. Introduction

The fact that most Thai students are unsuccessful in developing proficiency in English despite having studied English since they were in kindergarten or primary school (Thonginkam, 2003) has led many researchers to study factors affecting EFL achievement. Among the various factors, demotivation is one of the problematic determinants. Demotivation can be defined as any force that reduces behavioral intention or an ongoing action (Dörnyei, 2001). Students that remain highly motivated to learn are inclined to maintain their efforts and willingness to achieve their specific goals, hence they tend to be more successful in their learning (Ely, 1986). On the other hand, demotivated students tend to lose interest in achieving their goals and fail to achieve (Dörnyei, 2001). Demotivation significantly influences English language learning achievement (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Kim, 2015).

Demotivation occurs among university students majoring in English as well in other non-English majors. As an English teacher in a university, the researcher noticed that English major students who seemed to be motivated to learn English at the beginning and wanted to graduate in English tended to lose their interest to learn over time. It would be helpful to students if the causes of this loss of interest can be identified and addressed. When teachers notice demotivation among students and attempt to reduce it, students tend to be encouraged to study again. Consequently, this study focuses on investigating demotivation among English major students together with identifying the influence of demotivation on EFL achievement.

1.1 What Is Demotivation?

Demotivation results from negative influences during the learning process. Demotivation initially refers to a reduction in motivation level resulting from external factors that cause previously motivated students to lose motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Additionally, demotivation can be defined as any forces that reduce a student's interest to learn or as the absence of a force stimulating a student to learn (Zhang, 2007, as cited in

Dinius, 2013). Various themes of demotivation have emerged. Oxford (1998) proposed four broad themes of demotivating factors including: 1) teacher's personal relationship with the students; 2) teacher's attitude, teacher's lack of energy, ineffective course management and close-mindedness; 3) mismatch between teaching and learning styles; and 4) the nature of classroom activities. This was supported by Ushioda (1998) who conducted an analysis of demotivation among college students and found that demotivating factors were primarily correlated with negative aspects of the institutionalized learning context such as teaching styles and classroom activities or tasks. Specifically, Ushioda (1998) determined that students were demotivated by outside factors rather than personal factors such as learning failure or uncertainty of language abilities. Therefore, the studies by Oxford (1998) and Ushioda (1998) showed somewhat similar demotivating factors occurring among both high school and university students. Apart from these two studies, Dörnyei (1998, as cited in Dörnyei 2001), a pioneer in studying demotivation, conducted a quantitative study of demotivating factors and found that Japanese learners were demotivated because of nine factors; namely teacher's characteristics and teaching method, inadequate school facilities, previous experiences of failure, negative attitude towards the L2, learning L2 as a required subject, interference from another foreign language being studied, negative attitude towards the L2 community, attitudes of peers, and textbooks. In terms of instructional communication, researchers in this field are interested in the communication that occurs in classrooms between teachers and students. The researchers have also focused on the causes of demotivation in the classroom. They tended to be interested in demotivation because demotivation was found to be a frequent phenomenon related to the teacher's interaction with the students (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). The studies on demotivation in the field of instructional communication were originally established on the assumption that teacher behaviors have an impact on students' behaviors and motivation within the classroom context (Gorham & Christophel, 1992). While empirical investigations focusing explicitly on demotivation still remain infrequent, Dörnyei attempted to inspire many researchers to continue studying demotivation or exploring demotivators specifically within the Japanese context where students learn English as a foreign language.

1.2 How Does Demotivation Play Role in EFL Learning?

Demotivation becomes a pivotal determinant for EFL students since English is not their first language. Possibly they encounter unfavorable situations which make them lack enthusiasm to learn. Kikuchi and Sakai (2009) extended research on demotivation and found that Japanese EFL learners were demotivated by six primary features including teachers, characteristics of classes, previous experience of failure, classroom atmosphere, materials used in class, and lack of attention. In addition, Kikuchi (2011) developed a demotivation questionnaire to administer to Japanese students who learned English as a foreign language in order to examine demotivating factors. In their examination, five demotivating factors emerged: 1) learning contents and materials; 2) teachers' competency and teaching styles; 3) insufficient school facilities; 4) lack of intrinsic motivation; 5) exam scores. Therefore, it would appear that motivation of EFL students could be reduced by both external forces and internal forces. It was found that the two factors with the highest mean were learning contents or materials and test scores. Contrary to expectation and previous research findings (Oxford, 1998; Ushioda, 1998), teacher variables did not emerge as the strongest demotivating factor. This latter finding leads the researchers to speculate whether demotivation relates exclusively to external factors or may also implicate internal factors.

Recently, there have been survey studies investigating the relationship between demotivation and achievement among EFL students (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2015; Hu, 2011). Hu (2011) investigated the relationship between demotivating factors and English language proficiency of EFL college students. It was found that language achievement had a significant correlation with all de-motivators: burnout and teachers, characteristics of classes, experiences of failure, class environment, class materials, and lack of interest. In addition, a study by Ghanizadeh and Jahedizadeh (2015) showed results similar to those of Hu (2011) which indicated that demotivation from class materials and lack of interest highly influence language achievement.

1.3 Demotivation Studies Among English Language Learners in Thai Universities

There have been few studies in Thailand on demotivation. Most studies of Thai university students study about types and levels of motivation, while demotivation is only occasionally mentioned. For instance, N. Kitjaroonchai and T. Kitjaroonchai (2012), conducting a motivation study of undergraduate students majoring in English, found demotivation being mentioned in open-ended responses of the students. They mentioned that the students experienced difficulty in the classroom because of different accents of English language teachers and that this difficulty impeded students' achievement in learning English since it caused them to misunderstand what teachers said. In addition to different accents, listening exercises or activities in the classroom, grammatical features and a limited vocabulary tended to obstruct Thai students when learning English. Likewise, Wimolmas (2013) identified demotivating factors in responses to open-ended interview questions. This study revealed that

there were some major language problems which can reduce students' motivation in learning English. Among the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing; writing problems was rated by the students as the most difficult to learn. The researcher mentioned that students most likely encountered this problem because they had to complete class assignments, quizzes, midterm and final papers in writing. Apart from the studies of motivation, Phukanchana (2017) recently investigated internal and external demotivating factors occurring among Thai EFL university students and the ways in which the students re-motivate themselves to engage in an advanced EFL writing class. It was revealed that internal demotivating factors was learner-related issues including perception of writing deficiency, thoughts and feelings regarding learning and teaching in English writing course, and work obligation. The external factors related to teaching methods, teaching materials, and learning environments. In addition, the students re-motivated themselves by employing self-reliance, the determination to improve writing ability, and positive thinking toward the future.

In the current study, demotivation is measured by responses to questions related to both internal and external factors which demotivate students. The researchers employed statistical and content analysis to investigate demotivation among English major students by examining the following research questions.

RQ1: What types of demotivation occur with undergraduate students majoring in English?

RQ2: To what degree, do different types of demotivation affect EFL achievement of undergraduate students majoring in English?

RQ3: Do differences exist among types of demotivation in different levels of EFL achievement?

These questions act as a guideline in investigating demotivation among students who study English as a foreign language. As these students will eventually work in occupations which require them to use English, it is useful to investigate factors obstructing their learning process and to help them eliminate or reduce those factors.

2. Research Methodology

This study employed a mixed method by collecting quantitative data through a questionnaire and qualitative data through semi-structured interviews.

2.1 Participants and Sample

The target population of this study were 433 undergraduate students majoring in English of Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok. As stated in the previous section, the current study aims to investigate the influence of demotivation on EFL achievement. In this study, EFL achievement referred to English major students' accomplishment in learning English as a foreign language which was evaluated by grades obtained in the Interactive English Skills course. This course emphasizes on practicing the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Student grades for the Interactive English Skills Course were collected and categorized into three levels: high, moderate and low levels. Grades of A, B+, and B were categorized as high, C+ and C were moderate, and D+ and D were considered to low. A grade of F in this course was given to students who rarely attended classes and/or who withdrew from the program, thus they were excluded from this study.

The sample size of the study was calculated based on Yamane's formula (Yamane, 1973: 125). According to the formula of finite population, a sample size of 99% confidence level, 0.5 standard deviation and margin of error (confidence interval) of +/-5% was 208. Therefore, the sample size for this study should be at least 208 students. Then, quota and simple random method were applied to choose appropriate representatives for this study. To gather data using quota sampling, English major students were divided into three groups according to their EFL achievement levels. The number of appropriate samples was set to 70 for each level. Therefore, the total sample for this study was 210 students. In addition to the quota sampling method, the random sampling method was used to select participants from those returning questionnaires. The simple random technique is used for selecting respondents so that all samples in a population have an equal and independent chance to be selected. The simple random process was based on the following two criteria:

- 1) Participants were students who did not get "F" in the Interactive English Skills course.
- 2) Participants were students who had class attendance of at least 80%.

2.2 Instrumentation

The quantitative data were gathered from the completed questionnaires, while the qualitative data were gathered from the semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire items were developed in two phases. Firstly, the Thai version of the questionnaire was adapted from a 35-item questionnaire of Kikuchi and Sakai (2009). The English version of the questionnaire was adapted from that of Mahbudi and Hosseini (2014) but as these questionnaires

were used to investigate demotivating factors among high school students, some items had to be adjusted to make them relevant to university students. In the second phase, questionnaire items were derived from open-ended questions responded to by five Thai university teachers who have taught English for English major students for more than one year. The contribution made by university teachers was helpful to the current study because they contributed authentic data obtained from observations made in English language classrooms. The possible demotivating factors identified from the open-ended responses of the five teachers were categorized. The factors identified in this phase were compared to the items in the first phase. Newly occurring items from the university teachers' responses were added to the questionnaire items. During the questionnaire development process, there was a total of 48 items. The 48 items were sent to five university teachers in order to check the accuracy of their responses. The researchers decided to construct the questionnaire in both Thai and English in order to reduce confusion. The original Japanese version of the questionnaire was translated into Thai by a professional translator. The Thai version was then back-translated by a professional translator and modifications made if necessary. Questionnaire items which were not appropriate in this context were eliminated. In terms of validity, the questionnaire items were submitted to five experts in English language teaching to examine the Index of Consistency Values (IOC). The IOC values of items which were more than 0.6 were accepted (Keskomon et al., 2015). Any items receiving a value less than 0.6 were revised, while the items obtaining a value of 0 were deleted. From the original 48 items, 42 items had a score of 0.6 or higher, five items had scores of less than 0.6, while one item was evaluated as 0. Therefore, five items needed to be adjusted, and one item was eliminated. The improved version of the questionnaire was sent back to the five raters in order to confirm the validity. The final version of the questionnaire contained 47 items. Furthermore, the questionnaire items were piloted among 30 English major students in July, 2017 to evaluate reliability. The 30 students completing the pilot questionnaire were not included in the study. The value of Cronbach's alpha was 0.858 which was an acceptable reliability coefficient (Wood & Haber, 2014).

Apart from the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted. The interview protocol included explanation of the purpose of the study and risks and benefits as well as the semi-structured interview questions. There were 8 interview questions which led students to share their opinions on demotivating factors and how those factors affected EFL achievement.

2.3 Data Analysis

The participants' responses to all questionnaire items were analyzed using a statistical package. The data were analyzed to elucidate types of demotivation by means of an exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation to analyze the 47 questionnaire items. Three criteria were used to determine the number of demotivating types: eigenvalues, scree plot and interpretability of the factor meaning. In the iterative factoring process, criteria for item deletion was determined by the values of the item loadings on the factors. It was suggested that an item should be deleted when its factor loading was lower than .40 (Field, 2009; Pett, Lackey, & Sullivan, 2003). Hence, the researcher used the criterion of .40 or above to interpret factor loadings, and each factor contained at least five items (SAS Institute Inc., 2010). In addition, multiple regression was used to determine whether types of demotivation affect EFL achievement among English major students or not. For the last research question, One-Way ANOVA was used to determine whether there were differences in demotivation among different levels of English language achievement or not.

In order to strengthen quantitative data and capture different dimensions of demotivation, this study also employed interview analysis. The semi-structured interviews were analyzed to validate the data by content analysis based on the theoretical framework of Dörnyei (2001) and Kikuchi and Sakai (2009).

3. Results and Discussions

This part provides the results together with a discussion according to research questions.

3.1 Types of Demotivation

The results showed that the four types of demotivation identified by Kikuchi and Sakai (2009) reoccurred across the data set (see Table 1).

Table 1. Eigenvalues of varimax rotated factor analysis

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	12.426	26.439	26.439	12.426	26.439	26.439	6.594	14.030	14.030
2	3.555	7.564	34.003	3.555	7.564	34.003	5.581	11.874	25.904
3	2.799	5.955	39.958	2.799	5.955	39.958	4.795	10.202	36.106
4	2.263	4.814	44.772	2.263	4.814	44.772	4.073	8.666	44.772
5	1.804	3.837	48.609						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

As shown in Table 1, there are four types of demotivation extracted from the questionnaire items. The eigenvalues of varimax rotation accounted for 44.77% of the whole variance. The rotated component matrix is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Rotated factor pattern for the four-factor solution (varimax rotation)

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
De1	.275	-.078	.203	.125
De2	.122	.087	.083	.320
De3	.124	-.015	-.034	.534
De4	.266	.025	-.046	.509
De5	.163	.018	.163	.480
De6	.281	.190	.157	.460
De7	.068	-.065	.575	.305
De8	.078	-.042	.786	.003
De9	.164	.150	.565	.116
De10	.367	.266	.288	.320
De11	.577	.177	-.068	.210
De12	.589	.262	.110	.146
De13	.622	.130	-.067	.289
De14	.424	.421	.150	.387
De15	.318	.512	.111	.259
De16	.454	.272	.053	.480
De17	.286	.313	.030	.559
De18	.140	.338	.316	.528
De19	.097	.237	.283	.334
De20	.453	.311	.030	.403
De21	.657	.176	.096	.177
De22	.784	.139	.100	.163
De23	.775	-.042	.139	.115

De24	.690	.077	.104	.195
De25	.500	.219	.127	.109
De26	.250	.283	-.001	.138
De27	.030	.057	.734	.211
De28	.057	.620	-.024	.024
De29	-.033	.640	.065	.197
De30	.155	.579	.198	.223
De31	-.035	-.080	.101	.603
De32	-.002	.442	.495	.250
De33	.284	.274	.398	.285
De34	-.138	.350	.480	-.145
De35	.062	.286	.617	.166
De36	.198	.719	.185	.036
De37	.323	.550	.162	.229
De38	.237	.656	.060	.109
De39	.330	.659	.054	-.077
De40	-.007	.152	.290	.504
De41	.018	-.069	.526	.244
De42	.292	.724	.077	-.042
De43	.182	.093	.721	-.051
De44	.446	.404	.379	-.171
De45	.400	.292	.558	-.211
De46	.706	.251	.084	-.038
De47	.645	.279	.116	.084

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

As shown in Table 2, the final version of the questionnaire consists of 47 items, but only 41 items contain factor loadings of more than .40. Therefore, the 6 items with lower factor loadings were removed. In the process of factor interpretability, the remaining 41 items were categorized by considering the highest loadings of each item. Then, types of demotivation were labelled according to the meaning of items within each type. The demotivation structure showed that there were primarily four factors which demotivate English language learning among English major students: 1) Media, teaching styles and teacher competence, 2) Attitudes towards teachers and classmates, 3) Experiences of failure and attitudes towards English learning, and 4) Characteristics of lessons and class materials.

3.1.1 Demotivation Type 1 - Media, Teaching Styles and Teacher Competence

The first type of demotivation for the present study was labelled as Media, teaching styles and teacher competence. It contained thirteen important loading features which were all positive loadings. The major important loading features (7 out of 13) related to visual and authentic materials, audio materials, language laboratory, computer, and internet used in class; so they can be referred to as media. The remaining items were related to pronunciation and characteristics of teachers, so they can be referred to as teaching styles and teacher competence. From among eight participants who obtained the highest and lowest scores on each demotivating factor, one student mentioned during the one-on-one semi-structured interviews that:

I prefer learning English by practicing it. It's boring if teachers read every word in the textbooks. When I feel bored, I don't want to study anymore. I want to participate in the class. If the teacher just sits in front of the

class and reads books, I don't learn anything.

This type of demotivation was identified in previous studies. In terms of media, Dörnyei (2001) mentioned that inadequate facilities including insufficient technology could reduce the motivation to learn. As the student mentioned, learning English only from textbooks was outdated and boring. This implies that teachers should support students' learning with a good teaching system and create an environment that allows students to practice their language skills. The use of various media probably encourages students to participate in English language learning. If it is provided, the students may not be motivated to learn. Apart from media, teaching styles and teacher competence were considered to be significant demotivating factors which were identified in many previous studies (Dörnyei, 1998 as cited in Dörnyei, 2001; Dörnyei, 2001; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009; Oxford, 1998; Ushioda, 1998). In terms of teaching styles and teacher competence, the results of this study overlapped with the demotivating factors of Kikuchi and Sakai (2009). While Kikuchi and Sakai (2009) defined teaching styles and teacher competence as teachers' pronunciation, the pace of lessons and teachers' attitudes towards the students; the current study focused on teaching method or teaching styles in English classes together with competence in pronunciation and explanation. This means that demotivation can occur in English classrooms because of teaching method and teachers' ability. The interviews for this study also revealed that the students prefer learning by practicing. As suggested by Dörnyei (1998, as cited in Dörnyei, 2001), there might be a mismatch between teaching styles and students' preferred learning styles. This point was supported by Oxford (1998), who found that students seemed to be demotivated by the teacher's role. Further, Ushioda (1998) mentioned that demotivation happens when students have a negative attitude towards the institutionalized context, that is teaching styles. So, the problem might occur when teachers use styles inconsistent with the students' preference. Therefore, teachers need to listen to their students and attempt to adjust teaching styles to motivate the students to learn. This type of demotivation also results from teacher competency which refers to explanation and pronunciation competency. This is consistent with the study of motivation among Thai universities learners in which accents of English language teachers impeded student achievement in English learning (N. Kitjaroonchai & T. Kitjaroonchai, 2012). Although teachers remain important in the English classroom, it is undeniable that the use of media in the class, teaching styles, and teacher competence are significant factors influencing English learning among Thai undergraduate students.

3.1.2 Demotivation Type 2 - Attitudes Towards Teachers and Classmates

The second type of demotivation in the present study was attitudes towards teachers and classmates. It contained nine important loading features which were all positive loadings. The major loading features (6 out of 9) were related to negative attitudes towards teachers, while other items were related to attitudes towards peers. The student obtaining the highest score for this factor mentioned that:

I found that I was demotivated when I felt that the teacher was biased. For example, when I was absent from class because I was sick, the teacher did not allow me to send any class assignments. But, my friend in the same class who was absent could send it. I thought it was unfair. I could accept it if the teacher set the rules and followed them. The teacher should treat every student equally. I felt depressed and didn't want to study in the class. In addition, the teacher was angry when I did something wrong, so I came to hate that subject and didn't care about the grade.

The result of attitudes towards teachers was similar to Gorham and Christophel (1992), while the result of attitude towards classmates was consistent with the possible demotivating factors of Dörnyei (2001). These studies completely agree that students could be demotivated when they have negative attitudes towards teachers and peers. This type of demotivation was basically grounded on the assumption that teacher and classmates have an impact on students' behaviors and motivation within the classroom context. Particularly, the students mentioned that they were not encouraged to learn when they perceived that the teachers were biased and unfair. In this sense, the attitudes towards teachers and classmates have an effect on the quality of language learning. Therefore, teachers should be aware of this issue and avoid expressing personal biases and erroneous beliefs in classroom.

3.1.3 Demotivation Type 3 - Experiences of Failure and Attitudes Towards English Learning

The third type of demotivation was interpreted as experiences of failure and attitudes towards English learning. It contained ten important loading features which were all positive loadings. The important loading features (7 out of 10) were related to problems or difficulties the students encountered in their previous experiences in learning English; that is, getting low scores and not developing proficiency, lacking basic knowledge of English, being unable to memorize words and phrases, not knowing the way to be life-long learners, and losing direction to study English. The remaining items mentioned about attitudes towards using technology in English class, and

attitudes towards English learning. The students who were demotivated by Demotivation Type 3 seemed to have problems with previous experiences of failure. As one student said:

I was depressed when I got low scores on mid-term exams and got a low grade such as D. Sometimes I thought I was not suitable for this major. I got "F" in two English subjects and I had no idea how I could do better. I always thought that I lacked basic knowledge to learn English although I started learning since I was in kindergarten.

Generally, this type of demotivation comes from failure in exams, lack of basic knowledge, lack of acceptance from teachers and others, and inability to learn by themselves. This is consistent with Dörnyei's (2001) nine categories of demotivating factors which found that when students experienced failure, their self-confidence seemed to reduce. When students lost their confidence, they were reluctant to learn. In addition, it was found that students perceived experiences of failure such as difficulty in learning English and getting low scores on English tests as the most influential demotivators when they learn English as a foreign language (Kim, 2009). In terms of attitudes towards English learning, it seemed to be consistent with Dörnyei (1998 as cited in Dörnyei, 2001), who found that students felt that learning English was difficult. Therefore, students lost their motivation when they thought that English was difficult, even though they love to learn English, and seemed to be reluctant to learn.

3.1.4 Demotivation Type 4 - Characteristics of lessons and Class Materials

The final type of demotivation in this study is viewed as characteristics of lessons and class materials. It contained nine important loading features. All were positive loadings. The important loading features in this type were related to lessons and materials used in English class such as textbooks, passages, sentences, and topics teachers provided for them. The student obtaining the highest score for this type of demotivation stated that:

Most content in this major focused on grammar. I knew that grammar was an important basic structure to learn language. As an English teacher said, you can't form sentences and can't communicate if you don't know what the structure of the language is. Yet, almost every subject I studied focused on grammar.

The results for this type of demotivation were consistent with previous studies (Dörnyei, 1998 as cited in Dörnyei, 2001; Kikuchi, 2011; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009). The participants in these studies mentioned that their demotivation was related to class materials, such as unsuitable or uninteresting textbooks and handouts. Since lessons and materials are used as tools in classrooms, it is not surprising that student might be demotivated by inappropriate lessons and materials. As the students in this study said, they were bored because most subjects focused on only grammar and textbooks which were outdated and difficult for them. The students accepted that English grammar was important, but they preferred learning grammar together with practicing the four language skills.

In conclusion, there were four sources of demotivation among undergraduate students majoring in English including: 1) Media, teaching styles and teacher competence, 2) Attitudes towards teachers and classmates, 3) Experiences of failure and attitudes towards English learning, and 4) Characteristics of lessons and class materials.

3.2 The Effects of Demotivation on EFL Achievement

Investigating the impact of demotivation on EFL achievement was conducted by a multiple regression analysis. The results of the analysis showed that there was one type of demotivation influenced EFL achievement of undergraduate students majoring in English: Demotivation Type 3 (Experiences of failure and attitudes towards English learning) ($p = .000$, $\beta = -.490$). According to the standardized beta values, type 3 demotivation showed a negative beta value (-.490), which means that students will get low achievement on EFL because of experiences of failure and attitudes towards English learning. In addition, the results indicate that EFL achievement of undergraduate students majoring in English has a low correlation with type 3 demotivation ($r = .492$). Type 3 demotivation significantly accounted for EFL achievement ($R^2 = .242$, adjusted $R^2 = .227$). Specifically, type 3 demotivation accounted for 22.7% of the variance in EFL achievement, $F(4, 204) = 16.247$, $p < .001$. This is consistent with the study of Hu (2011). The statistical analysis of Hu (2011)'s study showed that learning difficulties including bad experiences in memorizing vocabulary influenced EFL achievement. This factor is similar to type 3 demotivation in the current study since learning difficulties are part of experiences of failure and attitudes towards English learning. As a student mentioned:

Since I was young, I have had difficulty in memorizing English vocabulary items and grammar. I accepted that English structure and vocabulary were important to learn English, but I could not find the way to memorize them. I thought English was very difficult.

Owing to failure experiences, students had negative attitudes towards English learning and thought that English was difficult. Because of this, the students might be bored and reluctant to study and probably led them to be unsuccessful in English learning.

3.3 The Differences of Demotivation Among Different Levels of EFL Achievement

In order to determine the effect of demotivation on English major students in different levels of EFL achievement, One-Way ANOVA with Scheffe Post Hoc tests were employed. For this study, EFL achievement was divided into three levels: low, moderate, and high levels. The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the three levels of EFL achievement in only source of demotivation – Type 3 (Experiences of failure and attitudes towards English learning) ($F_{2,206} = 32.661$, $p = .000$). According to multiple comparisons, demotivation type 3 differed among three EFL achievement levels. In particular, the results of mean and standard deviation indicated that Group 1 (low achievement level) had the highest score on that type of demotivation ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.57$), followed by Group 2 (moderate achievement level), and Group 3 (High achievement level) respectively.

Regarding this point, a student whose English achievement was in the high level stated the following:

From the first year until the fourth year of study, I didn't encounter failure experiences. So, I had a positive attitude towards English language. I thought I learned English better than other fields, and I definitely did it well. Only teaching styles made me lose my goal. Although I was not talkative, I prefer practicing spoken English. Because I was majoring in English for International Communication, I hoped to communicate well with foreigners. Teachers should provide speaking activities in all subjects, including those that were not listening and speaking subjects. For instance, when the teacher taught grammar, it would be better if he or she assigned me to apply knowledge of grammar to construct a conversation, and then speak it.

It can be concluded that students who gain different competency levels are demotivated in different ways. The results indicate that low-proficiency students are more highly demotivated by experiences of failure and attitudes towards English than moderate and high-proficient students. This may be because low-proficiency students tend to experience difficulties and failure in learning English more frequently than moderate and high-proficiency students. Then, if low-proficiency students lose the way to improve themselves, they may fail repeatedly.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study of demotivation among English major students has revealed some useful information about Thai university students in different language proficiency levels regarding their motivation to learn. Major findings can be summarized as follows. Four sources of demotivation were found: 1) Media, teaching styles and teacher competence; 2) Attitudes towards teachers and classmates; 3) Experiences of failure and attitudes towards English learning, and 4) Characteristics of lessons and class materials. Among these types, type 3 (Experiences of failure and attitudes towards English learning) influenced EFL achievement. The results also show that there was a significant difference in type 3 demotivation among students with low, moderate, and high levels of EFL achievement. It should be noted that students categorized in low level of achievement were demotivated most by type 3 demotivation.

Raising an awareness of demotivation, especially type 3 (Experiences of failure and attitudes towards English learning) is important. It is noted that Experiences of failure and attitudes towards English was related to students' achievement and the students in these three proficiency levels were demotivated differently by this type. It is suggested that English teachers who teach English should be concerned about this type of demotivator and help the students avoid failure and negative attitudes towards English language learning. For instance, if the teachers see that low-proficiency students obtain lower scores in exams, teachers should inform them personally and keep scores of each student confidential. If students meet with experiences of failure, teachers should encourage them and help them during their language learning process.

The population of this current study was English major students in only one university; hence it is suggested that similar studies be conducted with a larger number of Thai university students in other universities in different provinces in Thailand so as to fully reflect a wider picture of Thai undergraduate students. In addition, it would be better to observe students while they are studying in English classes in order to gain in-depth information on how students were demotivated.

The implication of this study has shed light on how demotivation impedes English major students in EFL achievement. An important suggestion is that teachers should teach stress management skills in order to help students overcome obstacles during English language learning. Teaching styles and materials used in English classrooms may need to be adjusted. The current generation of students prefer speaking and communicating in

every course. It is important to adapt the communicative approach to Thai students, even if the course being taught is a grammar course. Therefore, teachers should use the results of this present study to help them reduce demotivation which can occur during the learning process.

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