



Investigating the Difference in Demotivation Factors: A Case Study of Two Groups of Indonesian EFL Learners.

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Abstract

Investigating demotivation factors of two different groups of EFL learners might provide more insights to reduce demotivation among students. Nevertheless, there is lack of studies toward demotivation, especially ones that analyze demotivation of Indonesian's EFL students. Adara (2018) analyzed demotivation factors of a group of EFL students in Bekasi. However, her study only focused on one group of learners and did not compare demotivation factors which may affect different group of learners. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the differences in demotivation factors of two groups of Indonesian EFL learners. Whereas one group consists of 44 English literature college students, another group is 41 students major in communication study. Applying a mixed-method approach to obtain the results, the present study distributed a set of questionnaires adapted from Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) to two groups of college students whereas the interviews were administered to six of them. The results indicate that both groups of learners were mostly demotivated by teachers' incompetence and teaching styles, lack of intrinsic motivation, and inadequate school facilities. The results of present study suggest the importance of teachers' roles in providing appropriate teaching approach for learners as well as learning content and materials to avoid students' demotivation.

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the interest in investigating motivation, there is a lack of studies toward demotivation. It is because demotivation can be considered as a fairly new term in FL learning (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2010; Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Oxford, 1998). However, it does not mean investigating demotivation is less important than motivation. As the opposite of motivation, demotivation can have

negative influence on learners' attitude and behaviours (Falout, Elwood & Hood, 2009). In addition, demotivation might reduce the effectiveness of learning process, resulting in negative effects on the overall learning (Krishna & Pathan, 2013). Whereas a motivated learner can affect others positively, a demotivated learner can influence other learners as well as decreasing the efficiency and purpose of lesson (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003). Investigating demotivation might provide more information on how to overcome demotivation among learners. As argued by Ghadirzadeh *et al.*, (2012), investigating demotivation might help teachers with demotivated learners from various educational contexts. Besides that, analysing demotivation might support understanding of theories of motivation (Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009). Considering its negative effects on students, demotivation seems to be an important issue to be investigated.

Similar to motivation, demotivation needs to be investigated as wide as possible. Besides being an under-researched area, investigating demotivation factors of FL learners might help these learners learning the target language effectively (Kikuchi, 2011). Furthermore, investigating demotivation needs to involve a variety of learners (Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009) as it might help reducing demotivation if it is researched in a variety of contexts and levels of education (Molavi & Biria, 2013). It is why a study which specifically analyses demotivation in Indonesian EFL contexts is needed to help understanding of demotivation as well as overcoming it.

However, due to its nature as one of under-researched areas (Chen, 2013; Dörnyei, 2005; Kikuchi, 2009), there is a lack of studies toward students' demotivation which specifically analyses Indonesian EFL contexts. Although Adara (2018) conducted a study on demotivating factors of a group of Indonesian EFL learners, her study only focused on demotivation factors affecting a group of EFL learners. This might not reveal demotivation factors which affect different group of learners. In addition, there seems to be a lack in studies which compare the differences in demotivation factors of two EFL learners in Indonesia. In order to provide deeper insights in the nature of demotivation especially in the context of Indonesian FL learning, the present study aims to analyse the differences in demotivation factors of two groups of EFL learners in a private university in Indonesia. The present study is specifically guided by following research questions:

RQ1. What are the most salient demotivation factors in two groups of Indonesian EFL learners?

RQ2. Are there any differences in demotivation factors which affect particular groups of learners?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section aims to discuss theoretical background of present study. Thus, the section will discuss demotivation and previous studies which become the background of present study.

Demotivation

Demotivation can be influenced by both internal and external factors. In this sense, demotivation refers to certain drives which reduce someone's motivation (Dörnyei, 2001a). Furthermore, Trang and Baldauf (2007) maintain that demotivation has negative impacts on students, preventing them from reaching learning outcomes. Although Dörnyei (2001b) argues that can only be caused by specific external drives which reduce motivation in learning, both external and internal factors can lead to students' demotivation. In this sense, demotivation might not only be caused by factors outside of learners such as teachers, learning content and materials, or else. Internal factors such students' self-confidence and attitudes to FL learning have also been argued as the factors that cause demotivation (Arai, 2004; Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Kojima, 2004; Tsuchiya, 2004). The weight of evidence suggests that both internal and external factors can lead to students' demotivation.

Previous studies

Demotivation has been a subject in numerous studies which attempted to investigate the factors which cause demotivation among foreign language learners. A study of Arai (2004) toward 33 university students showed that majority of participants experienced demotivation in foreign language classrooms. Arai collected their comments and narrowed the participants' demotivation factors into four major categories; teachers, classes, class atmosphere, and others. Arai's findings indicated the first category as the most demotivating. Another attempt to discover demotivation factors and the effect of demotivation factors to students' language proficiency was conducted by Falouta, Elwood, & Hood (2009). They

categorized demotivation factors into external conditions of the learning environment, internal condition of the learner and the reactive behaviours to demotivating experiences. Their findings suggested internal and behavioural reactions influenced students' learning outcome.

In addition to those studies, Tsuchiya (2004a; 2004b) narrowed down demotivation factors by concluding the findings in Dörnyei (2001a) and Falout & Maruyama (2004). Thus, she listed nine factors such as teachers, classes, compulsory nature of English study, negative attitude toward the English-speaking community, negative attitude toward English itself, lack of self-confidence, negative group attitude, lack of positive English speaking model, and ways of learning as demotivation factors. Attempting to investigate the relationship between language proficiency and demotivation level, she applied a 37-item questionnaire based on the aforementioned categories and distributed it to 129 college students whom are divided into low and high level of English proficiency. The findings showed that those groups had significant differences in level of demotivation.

Demotivation factors in foreign language classrooms might differ depending on the participants. Kojima's (2004) study on 2198 high school students concluded learners' level problem as the most demotivating. On the other hand, a study of Kikuchi & Sakai (2009) found books, scores, non-communicative method, and teacher's competence and style. Hasegawa's (2004) study which used a questionnaire with open-ended questions to 125 junior high school students and 98 senior high school students indicated teachers' behaviours as the most demotivating. Nevertheless, as Kikuchi & Sakai (2009) argued, generalizing Hasegawa's findings might be difficult because her participants came from one public junior high school and one private senior high school. The argument of Kikuchi & Sakai raised the needs to investigate language learners from various backgrounds of age, education, and socio-economic level.

In regards of the last statement in the above paragraph, several researchers have investigated demotivation with various groups of learners and teaching contexts. Based on their previous research (Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009) in possible demotivation factors, Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) narrowed demotivation factors into five categories (a) learning content and materials, (b) teachers' competence and teaching styles, (c) inadequate school facilities, (d) lack of intrinsic motivation, (e)

test scores. These categories were put into a 35-item questionnaire and distributed to 656 Japanese high school students. Their results showed learning contents and materials as well as test scores as the most demotivating factors for the participants. Several studies have also used Sakai & Kikuchi's (2009) questionnaire. Meshkat & Hassani (2012) adapted the questionnaire and distributed it to 421 high school students in Iran. In contrast to Sakai & Kikuchi, inadequate school facilities, overemphasis on grammar and the long reading texts were shown to be the most demotivating factors in Meshkat & Hassani's (2012) study. On the other hand, a study of Ali & Pathan (2017) on 150 freshmen in from a university in Pakistan indicated course content and teaching materials as the most salient demotivation factors. Using the adapted version of Sakai & Kikuchi's (2009) questionnaire, Çankaya (2018) study on demotivation factors of 60 university students in Turkey showed class characteristics as well as class environment as the most demotivating factors. The above studies showed how different results might differ, depending on the participants and teaching contexts.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study applied a mixed-method approach to obtain the results. The research instruments used in the present research are a set of questionnaires adapted from Sakai and Kikuchi's (2009) questionnaires from demotivation as well as semi-structured interviews conducted to six respondents. The questionnaires were translated from English to Bahasa Indonesia to help respondents understanding the questionnaires better. To ensure the reliability of the questionnaires, a pilot study had been conducted before the questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. The Cronbach's Alpha of each item is more than 0,65. The respondents were 85 university students from two different disciplines. The respondents from Group A are 41 communication study students whereas Group B' respondents are 44 English literature students from same university. In regards of the interviews, there were three respondents from each group, totaling six respondents.

DISCUSSION

This section is divided into two sub-sections. First sub-section will analyse the questionnaires' results whereas the second sub-section will discuss the results and

compare them with previous research.

Results

Following are the results of questionnaires from two groups of EFL learners.

Group A has 41 respondents whereas Group B has 44 respondents.

No	Item	A (N=41)			B (N=44)		
		Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
1	F1 (Learning content and materials)	2.46	2.00	.505	2.55	3.00	.504
2	F2 (Teachers' competence and teaching style)	3.24	3.00	.663	3.45	3.50	.589
3	F3 (Inadequate School Facilities)	2.56	3.00	.709	2.91	3.00	.884
4	F4 (Lack of Intrinsic Motivation)	3.17	3.00	.629	3.02	3.00	.340
5	F5 (Test Scores)	2.54	2.00	.745	2.05	2.00	.806

Table 1. Questionnaires' Results

The above table shows that the most salient demotivation factors for Group A are teachers' competence and teaching style ($M=3.24$), lack of intrinsic motivation ($M=3.17$) and inadequate school facilities ($M=2.56$). Similar results are shared with Group B ($M=3.45$ for teachers' competence and teaching style, $M=3.21$ for lack of intrinsic motivation, and $M=2.91$ for inadequate school facilities). However, there is a slight difference in least demotivation factors of both groups. Whereas Group A are least demotivated with learning content and materials ($M=2.46$) and test scores ($M=2.54$), learning content and materials ($M=2.55$) and test scores (2.05) demotivate Group B the least.

Discussions

The results of present research suggest similarities in factors which demotivate two groups of EFL learners the most. Both groups are mostly demotivated when teachers' competence and teaching style are not suited with their expectations. For instance, students feel demotivated when teachers focus too much in grammar lessons. In addition, based on the comments of interviews' respondents, lack of teaching activities which nurture their English skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) seem to be demotivating for students. Following are some comments regarding teachers' teaching style:

"Okay. Yes, I think so because there's no speak activities, no game, just

focus on materials only, it's no fun for me." Student A
"Umm...because they are just, explain into the...In front of the class. In whiteboard and so other ask to do the test." Student B

Although the above comments show that both respondents did not think their teachers provided enough activities to improve their speaking skills, Student E who came from Group B had different opinions.

In contrast to her counterparts, Student E thought her English teachers have taught her well. However, she noted that her senior high school English teachers did not teach as well as ones from the university because "...my teacher in the university is umm, practiced us with speaking, with listening...Yes with games and activity, example for conversation..." Instead of giving various teaching activities to improve students' English skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing, her high school teachers only focused on giving grammar lesson. Other respondents also expressed much less similar comments regarding their high school English teachers' focus on grammar lesson, considering it as boring and demotivating. In addition, some respondents argued that this lack of communicative teaching style might be caused by their teachers' lack of English teaching background. Following is the comment of Student D regarding his English teacher in senior high school:

"My teacher in vocational school had a master degree but I don't know where she graduated from. She seemed smart but she could not interact well with her students. She just came, gave us tasks, told her students to do exercise without making sure whether our answers were correct or not."

Similar to the above responses, a study of Kikuchi (2009) on a group of Japanese EFL learners indicated the nature of grammar-translation approach which taken by teachers did not provide chances for students to communicate in the target language and resulted in students' demotivation. It can be said that teachers can avoid students' demotivation by providing students with various interesting teaching activities that can improve students' English skills instead of solely focusing on grammar teaching.

Contrary to the above results, a study of Kikuchi and Sakai (2009) found teachers' competence and teaching style as the last factor that demotivate their participants. On the other hand, a study of Zhang (2007) which investigated demotivating factors of students in China, Germany, Japan, and America suggested teachers' incompetence as the demotivation factor that affected

them the most. Arai's (2004) study on demotivating experiences of 33 university students in Japan suggested teachers as the most salient demotivating factor. Takako's (2005) study revealed the ample effect of teachers on learners' motivation as well as demotivation. Besides teachers' competence and teaching styles, numerous studies reported the correlation between teachers' behaviours and demotivation (Gorham & Christophel, 1992; Hasegawa, 2004; Gorham & Millette, 1997; Kim, 2011; Potee, 2002). Furthermore, the findings of Lantolf & Genung (2002) on a group of Chinese learners highlighted teachers' behaviour can be demotivating to students when teachers behaved authoritatively. In addition, Sun & Lei (2013) in their study toward demotivation in Chinese EFL classroom suggested four major demotivation factors (teacher-related factors, student-related factors, teaching contents, and teaching environment) and found teacher-related factors to be most salient ones. It can be said that teachers' related variables can result in students' demotivation, indicating the profound effects of teachers on students' demotivation.

Next, the results suggest that lack of intrinsic motivation happened to both groups. In this regard, intrinsic motivation refers to a type of motivation derived from internal factors such as interest, enjoyment, and satisfaction (Beath, 2010). Similar to the findings of present study, a study of Jomairi (2011) found that lack of motivation can lead to students' demotivation. In addition, Li's (2013) study on internal factors which triggering a group of Chinese college EFL learners' demotivation indicated the lack of intrinsic interest to FL learning as one of main demotivating factors. Nevertheless, the findings of present study show that lack of intrinsic motivation seems to be more prevalent among the respondents in Group A than ones from Group B. Following is a comment of Student B from Group A when he is asked why he felt demotivated after studying English, "Because I feel that it is so difficult. Because so many grammatical that I cannot understand." Student B thought English as something difficult because of the difference in grammatical system than her mother tongue. Similar sentiment is also voiced by other respondents from Group A. Nevertheless, her comment is different with respondents from Group B who thought English as something interesting and fun because they think they will gain many benefits from mastering English. Thus, in contrast to the respondents from Group B, the ones from Group A seem to be more intrinsically motivated to learn English.

There are many factors which might lead to this difference in the level of intrinsic motivation. One of them is the fact that the respondents of Group A major in communication study whereas Group B studies English literature in college. Therefore, it seems logical that the latter group to be more intrinsically motivated to learn English. Nevertheless, it does not mean that non-English related majors cannot be intrinsically motivated to learn English. Such students can be intrinsically motivated to learn English if they get sufficient external supports. Student A from Group A is motivated to study English because his father reminded him the merits of studying English. Li & Ruan (2015) argued that teachers should cultivate students' belief about the benefits of participating in English study-related extracurricular activities to create students' interest in English. Such interest needs to be nurtured because as claimed by Li & Zhou (2017), maintaining students' interest in English learning might help students keeping their efforts in studying English. If students are interested or intrinsically motivated in English learning, they will be less demotivated. It can be said that external factors such as parents and teachers seem important in nurturing students' intrinsic motivation and reducing demotivation.

In addition, the findings of present study suggest inadequate school facilities to be one of the most salient demotivation factors that affect both groups. Although the findings of several studies did not indicate inadequate school facilities as the most salient demotivating factor (Çankaya, 2018; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009), Meshkat & Hassani's (2012) study on demotivating factors of a group Iranian EFL learners found 'inadequate school facilities' to be the most salient factor. The participants of previous studies might be satisfied with their school facilities whereas the participants of Meshkat & Hassani seemed to consider their school facilities as lacking, leading to the differences in findings of those studies. The results of present study share the tendency with Meshkat & Hassani. Although the respondents consider computer and internet as important in FL learning, they do not think computers in their schools are used optimally for learning FL. However, one respondent noted that although computers and other facilities as important, teachers are more important in motivating students. Following is a comment of Student E regarding the use of computers in FL learning, "Umm, I'm not sure because sometimes we can change the computer with umm, the stuffs, with the teacher can change it with the stuffs." It can be said that

despite students' opinions on the importance of adequate school facilities, other factors such as teachers seem to be more important. Nevertheless, there should be more studies which focus on investigating the relationship between students' demotivation and inadequate school facilities to support the above statement.

Besides the above results, although it is less significant, the results of present research also show the differences in factors that demotivate both groups the least. Group A was least demotivated with learning content and materials whereas Group B found test scores demotivate them the least. The results indicate that Group A was quite content with existing learning content and materials. However, all interviews' respondents think learning content and materials can cause demotivation if they are not equipped with interesting pictures and only focus on grammar teaching. In contrast, Sakai & Kikuchi (2009) found that learning content and materials as well as test scores as the most salient demotivating factors among their study's participants. Several studies also found 'learning content and materials' as the one of the most salient demotivating factors (Al Khairy, 2013; Ali & Pathan, 2017; Keblawi, 2006). The weight of evidence suggests that learning content and materials can demotivate students if they are not designed to suit to students' needs. Thus, creating more interactive content and materials that can attract students' attention and suit their needs seem important to avoid students' demotivation.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Due to its negative effects on students' FL learning, demotivation needs to be investigated to provide more insights on how to avoid it. In this regard, the present study aims to analyze the differences in demotivation factors of two groups of Indonesian EFL learners. Thus, a set of questionnaires adapted from Sakai & Kikuchi (2009) and interviews were applied to 85 students. The results indicate that both groups are mostly demotivated by 'teachers' competence and teaching style', 'lack of intrinsic motivation' and 'inadequate school facilities'. The results suggest that teachers seem to be an important aspect that affects students' demotivation as they might have important parts in providing learning content and materials and influencing students' intrinsic motivation.

Despite the efforts to minimize the limitations, the present study is not without some limitations. Firstly, the present study might have better results if it has more

respondents. Secondly, other research instruments such as class observations and journals might provide researchers with deeper insights on the subject. However, the present study can be a milestone of further studies on demotivation. Further studies can investigate the effects of teachers on students' demotivation. Besides that, a study which specifically investigates the effect of grammar-focused classroom on students' demotivation might provide researchers on information whether grammar teaching can lead to students' demotivation.

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