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Sources of Demotivation in Learning English among Non-English Majors

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abstract

Motivation is a key factor in learning in general and in second language learning in particular. Motivation has a dark side, "demotivation" that is the loss of existing motivation, which can lead to failure of students in second language learning. This study aimed at finding the most important demotivating factor(s) among Engineering and Humanities students in Iran. A modified form of Sakaii and Kikuchi's demotivation questionnaire was administered to 300 university students (150 Humanities, 150 Engineering), from 7 universities of Iran (in Qom, Kashan, Tehran). The result of the study showed that the three factors "Learning contents, Materials Facilities", and "The Teacher", and "Attitude towards Second Language Learning" were the most important demotivating factors in both Engineering, and Humanities students. Significant differences between Humanities and Engineering students in demotivating factors were also found. The findings of this study can benefit material developers, English teachers and language planners.

Key words: Demotivation, Learning contents, Materials, The Teacher, Attitude towards Second Language Learning

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Introduction

Motivation is an important factor in learning a language and it has been studied for many decades. As Dornyei (1998), mentioned, motivation has been widely accepted by both teacher and researchers as one of the key factors that influence the rate and success of second/foreign language (L2) learning. Even though, the presence of
motivation is necessary to success, its darker side, as Dornyei (2001) calls it, "demotivation", can be harmful to learners‟ success. Dornyei (2001) defined demotivation as "specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioral intention or an ongoing action" (Dornyei, 2005). Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) expanded Dornyei‟s definition to both internal and external forces that reduce or diminish learners‟ motivation. Despite the importance of the negative role that demotivation may play in students‟ success few studies have been carried out to understand it.

Literature review

One of the early studies on demotivation was carried out in the field of instructional communication by Gorham and Christophel (1992) to find what factors were perceived as demotives by college students taking an introductory communication class. They found three main categories of demotives: context demotives (factors likely to be regarded as antecedent to the teacher‟s influence), structure/format demotives (factors over which the teacher is the most likely to have some degree of influence, if not complete control), and teacher behavior
(factors likely to be perceived as under the teacher‟s direct control). Teacher related factors, which consist of class structure or format related demotives resulting from teacher behavior, accounted for 79 % of all responses. The results of the study demonstrated that teacher behavior was the most frequent demotivating factor (Trang and Baldauf Jr., 2007).
Chambers (1993) addresses the issue of demotivation for the first time in the field of SLA. The teachers in his study mentioned that demotivated students make no effort and are not eager to learn, do not believe in their own abilities and show laziness. However, students‟ understandings were different from person to person. Some blamed their teachers because they often criticize students and explain things insufficiently. Teachers used old teaching materials and bad equipment. Others pointed the finger at the number of students in the class and language room facilities. In short, his study did not offer clear explanations for how the language learning experience actually affects the

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pupils‟ opinions of language learning. All in all, according to his study three factors had affected the feelings about language learning: attitudes brought to the language classroom from home, previous language learning experience, and the teacher (Hirvonen, 2010).

In a follow-up study to ensure the obtained sources of demotivation, Christophel and Gorham (1995), used the same question to detect demotives with another group of college students studying communication and perceived findings that were consistent with those from the first study. A further study was done by Gorham and Millette (1997) in which teacher participants were asked, with reference to a specific class, to respond to the open-ended question, "What do you perceive decreases students‟ motivation to try to do their best in this class and to achieve your instructional goals?" The results indicated that teachers and students agreed on a set of central factors that are relevant to demotivation. Despite the similarities, teachers were more likely to attribute student demotivation to performance-related factors such as students‟ lack of success on graded work, the students‟ lack of pre requisite skills or knowledge and the students‟ heavy work load. In contrast, students‟ attributed more of their demotivation to teacher behavior, in particular poor presentational skills, lack of enthusiasm on the part of the instructor, and to the instructor‟s overall choice and organization of course material (Trang and Baldauf Jr., 2007).

Oxford (1998) also conducted a study to investigate demotives through analyzing the essays written by American students. 250 American students, including both high school students and university students were asked to write about their learning experiences over a period of five years. Prompts such as

„describe a situation in which you experienced conflict with a teacher‟ and „talk about a classroom in which you felt uncomfortable‟ were used. In fact four themes emerged from this study: 1) teachers‟ personal relationship with the students, including factors such as lack of caring, hypercriticism, and patronage or favoritism, 2) the teacher‟s attitude towards the course or the material. This included factors, such as lack of enthusiasm, sloppy management, and closemindedness, 3) style conflicts between teachers and students, including multiple style conflicts about the amount of structure or detail, and conflicts about the degree of closure, structure, detail, and conflicts about the degree of closure or "seriousness" of the class, 4) the nature of the classroom activities, such as irrelevance overload, and repetitiveness were touched upon.

Although, different factors were known to demotivate students in different contexts, the main demotivating factors identified by Dornyei (1998) are: 1) the teacher (personality, commitment, competence, teaching method) 2) inadequate school facilities (group is too big or not the right level, frequent changes of teachers) 3) reduced self-confidence (experience of failure or lack of success) 4) negative attitude towards the L2 5) compulsory nature of L2 study 6) interference of another foreign language being studied 7) negative attitude towards L2 community 8) attitudes of group members 9) course book (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011). The mentioned factors were classified respectively from the most frequent to the least frequent which resulted in the teacher being the

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most frequent demotivating factor. In a large-scale investigation, Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) reviewed a number of locally published studies of demotivation in the Japanese EFL context, and identified six common demotivating features: 1) teachers (e.g. attitudes, behavior, teaching competence, language proficiency, personality, teaching style); 2) characteristics of classes (e.g. course content and pace, focus on difficult grammar and vocabulary, monotonous lessons, focus on university entrance exams and memorization); 3) experience of failure (e.g. disappointing test scores, lack of acceptance by teachers and others, inability to memorize vocabulary and idioms); 4) class environment (e.g. attitudes of classmates and friends, compulsory nature of English study, inappropriate level of the lessons, inadequate use of school facilities and resources); 5) class materials (e.g. unsuitable or uninteresting materials, too many reference books or handouts); 6) lack of interest (e.g. perception that English learnt at school is not practical or necessary, lack of admiration for English speaking people).

Hirvonen (2010) studied demotivating factors following Trang and Baldauf Jr. (2007) and Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) and explored the range and nature of both external and internal demotives. Based on this study the external demotives experienced by participants fell into four themes: The teacher, learning material and course contents, learning environment, and simultaneous learning of many languages. The internal demotives, negative influence related to the participants themselves, fell into three themes: experience of failure, the lack of success, and attitudes toward English. The findings of this study indicated that the teacher often had been the most influential demotive in the learning experience of English by the participants.

Keivanpanah and Ghasemi (2011) identified five categories of demotivating factors: 1) learning contents, materials and facilities 2) attitude toward English speaking communities 3) the teacher 4) experience of failure 5) attitudes toward second language learning. Rastegar, Akbarzadeh, Heidari (2012) also stated that teacher‟s competence, behavior and teaching method can play an important role in demotivating students. Bahrami and Araghi (2013) extracted 7 demotivating categories: 1) teacher related factors 2) course-book related factors, 3) administration related factors, 4) personality related problems, 5) class environment–related factors, 6) finance related factors, and 7) other factors which included negative attitude of the society toward English language and not having access to language institutes in neighborhood. According to this study, teacher related factors which include: teacher‟s inactivity, teacher‟s incompetence, teacher‟s behavior, teacher‟s attitude toward weak students, error correction, teaching style, level adjustment, were the most frequent demotivating factors. Similarly, Alkaboody (2013) showed that teacher‟s behavior is implied to be the most demotivating factor in the classroom.

Studies carried out over the years and in different parts of the world have found demotives to be teachers and materials. This study has attempted to find out the most important demotivating factors for language learners in Iran. In order to do so the following questions were raised and then answered.

What are the sources and the main factors of demotivation in Iranian Engineering students?

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What are the sources and the main factors of demotivation in Iranian Humanities students?
Is there any difference between the sources of demotivation between these two groups of students?

Method Participants

The participants of this study were 300 B.A. students aged 18-25, 150 Engineering Students (majoring in Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Civil Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Agricultural Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering) and 150 Humanities students (majoring in Arabic Literature, Persian Literature, Criminal Law, Physical Education, Jurisprudence and Law, Philosophy, Accounting, and Industrial Management). They were selected from 7 different universities in Qom, Tehran, and Kaashaan (State University of Qom, Payamee Noor University of Qom, Pooyesh University in Qom, two branches of Elmi Karbourdi University of Qom, State University of Kaashaan, and Shahid Rajaee Teacher Training University in Tehran). The participants had passed at least one course of English at the university (either General English or ESP). Students from different universities were asked to participate in this study, because the focus of this study was on students‟ major, different contexts (universities) were chosen to avoid the effect of context on the students‟ demotivation. Non-English major students were asked to participate in this study because it was presumed that English students were motivated to learn English

Instrumentation

Sakai and Kikuchi‟s (2009) demotivation questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument of this study. This questionnaire was modified by Kaivanpanah and Ghasemi (2011) and consisted of 32, 5-point likert type questions about demotivation. The likert was from 1-5, 1: not true - 5: true. The Cronbach-alpha coefficient of the reliability was 0.87. The five measured demotivating factors are: „the teacher‟, „attitude toward second language learning‟, „learning contents, materials, and facilities‟, „experience of failure‟ and „attitude toward English speaking community”.

Procedure

The present study followed a descriptive one-shot case study design to attempt to find the effect of five demotivating factors on the demotivation of language learners in Iran. The questionnaire was piloted with 30 B.A. students (15 Humanities students, 15 engineering students) to ensure that the items were clear and comprehensible. These students were interviewed and asked about the clarity and comprehensibility of the questionnaire. As a result some minor changes were made in the wording of the items to make it more appropriate for university students, as the first questionnaire was developed for both high school students and university students. For the final administration, the researcher went to Humanities and Engineering faculties and then went to the classes or individuals on campus and distributed the questionnaires among demotivated students, which were found on interviewing and then they were asked to complete the questionnaire. The

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participants had about 15-20 minutes to complete the questionnaire and then returned the completed questionnaires to the researcher.

There were 308 completed questionnaires of which 8 were discarded, because they were incomplete or had insufficient data. As a result 300 questionnaires were included in the data analysis.

Results

In order to find the main demotivating factors, the participants‟ mean scores on each factor was calculated, Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for each demotivating factor for Engineering majors.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Demotivating Factors in Engineering Students

	Valid N	Missing	Mean	Range
Learning Contents	150	0	27.1667	7-35
The Teacher	150	0	25.9733	8-40
Attitude towards Language Learning	150	0	23.7200	9-45
Experience of Failure	150	0	16.1733	5-25
Attitude towards community	150	0	10.8267	3-15

According to this table, the mean scores of factors “Learning contents,
Materials and Facilities” and “ the Teacher” and “ Attitude towards Second Language Learning” are 27.16, 25.97, and 23.72 respectively which means these three demotivating factors are

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considered the most important demotivating factors among Engineering students and these three factors are stronger demotives than the other two; "Experience of Failure" and "Attitude towards English Speaking Community", with the mean scores of 16.17, and 10.82 respectively. To be more exact "Learning contents, Materials and Facilities" is considered the first and the most important demotivating factor among Engineering students, "The Teacher" is the second demotivating factor, "Attitude towards Second Language Learning" is the third, and "Experience of Failure", is the fourth and "Attitude towards English Speaking Community" is the last and the least demotivating factor among Engineering students.

In order to find the demotivating factors for Humanities students, the participants" mean scores on each factor were calculated. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for the demotivating factor for Humanities major.

According to this table, the mean scores of factors "Learning contents, Materials and Facilities", and "Attitude towards Second Language Learning", and " The Teacher" are 26.3, 25.7, 25.3 respectively which shows these three demotivating factors were considered the most important demotivating factors among Humanities students and these three factors were more demotivating than the other two, "Experience of Failure", and "Attitude towards English Speaking Community" with the mean scores of 17.12, and 9.64 respectively. To be more exact "Learning contents, Materials and Facilities", was considered the first demotivating factor in Humanities students, "Attitude towards Second Language Learning", the second demotivating factor, "The Teacher" the third one, "Experience of Failure", the fourth one, and "Attitude towards English Speaking Community" is the last and least demotivating factor.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Demotivating Factors in Humanities Students

	Valid N	**Missing**	**Mean**	**Range**
Learning Contents	150	0	26.3000	7-35
Attitudes towards Language Learning	150	0	25.7067	9-45
The Teacher	150	0	25.3933	8-40
Experience of Failure	150	0	17.1200	5-25

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	150	0	9.6467	3-15
Attitude towards community				

Table 3 illustrates the descriptive statistics of demotivating factors for both Engineering and Humanities students.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics on Demotivating factors by Major

	Major	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**N**
The Teacher	Humanities	25.3933	8.64117	150
	Engineering	25.9733	6.08767	150
	Total	25.6833	7.46741	300
Attitude towards L2 Learning	Humanities	25.7067	6.43767	150
	Engineering	23.7200	6.48190	150
	Total	24.7133	6.52532	300
Learning Contents	Humanities	26.3000	4.22640	150
	Engineering	27.1667	3.71360	150
	Total	26.7333	3.99526	300

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Experience of Failure	Humanities	17.1200	4.39634	150
	Engineering	16.1733	4.29882	150
	Total	16.6467	4.36639	300
Attitudes toward community	Humanities	9.6467	3.60115	150
	Engineering	10.8267	3.033613	150
	Total	10.2367	3.37718	300

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The results showed that Engineering students reported higher means in three demotivating factors, “Learning contents, Materials and Facilities”, and “ The Teacher”, and “Attitude towards Second Language Learning”, (means 27.16, 25,97, 10.82) than the Humanities students (means: 26, 30, 25, 39, 9, 64). That is the Engineering students were more demotivated in these regards than Humanities students. According to these results, “Learning contents, Materials and Facilities” was the first, and the most important demotivating factor in both majors, but “The Teacher” was the second factor in Engineering students while this factor was the third demotivating factor in Humanities students, that means Engineering students are more demotivated with regard to “The Teacher” factor. Both Engineering and Humanities groups reported the “Attitude towards English Speaking Community” as the least demotivating factor, but as it was mentioned before, the mean of this factor is higher in Engineering students (mean: 10.82) than Humanities students (mean: 9.64) which means that Engineering students are more demotivated in this respect in comparison with Humanities students. Therefore, Humanities students reported higher means in two demotivating factors “Attitude towards Second Language Learning”, and “Experience of Failure” (means: 26.30, 17.12) than Engineering students (means: 23.72, 16.17). That is the Humanities students are more demotivated in these regards than Engineering students.

The next step was to find out if these differences were significant. In order to answer this question a one-way MANOVA was run and the results are presented in Table 4. The preliminary assumption testing was conducted to check for normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and multicollinearity, with no serious violations.

As Table 4 illustrates, the Wilks‟ Lambda is .001 which is less than .05 (the alpha level), The Pillai‟s Trace is also .001, which is also less than .05 that means there is a significant difference between Humanities and Engineering students. Here another question remains: did these two groups differ in all demotivating factors? To answer this question the “Tests of Between-subject Effects” was investigated (Table 5). As in the current study there were five dependent variables (five demotivating factors), the Bonferroni adjustment was carried out. Therefore, .05 was divided by 5, obtaining a new alpha level of .01. As Table 5 illustrates the significance level of the two dependent variables “Attitude towards Second Language Learning”, and “Attitude towards English Speaking Community” were less than .01, that is .008 and .002 respectively. This means that the significant differences between Humanities and Engineering

Table 4

Multivariate Tests for Humanities and Engineering Students

Effect	**Value**	**F**	**Hypothesis df**	**Error df**	**Sig.**	**Partial Eta Squared**
Intercept						
Pillai's Trace	.938		5.000			
Wilks'Lambda	.017	3336.709 3336.709	5.000	294.000 294.000	.000 .000	.983 .983
Hotelling'sTrace	56.747	3336.709 3336.709	5.000	294.000 294.000	.000 .000	.983 .983
Roy'sLargestRoot	56.747		5.000			

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Major							
Pillai's Trace	.070	4.394	5.000	294.000	.001	.070	.070
Wilks'Lambda	.930	4.394	5.000	294.000	.001	.070	.070
Hotelling'sTrace	.075	4.394	5.000	294.000	.001	.070	.070
Roy'sLargestRoot	.075	4.394	5.000	294.000	.001	.070	.070

students were related to their "Attitude towards Second Language Learning", and "Attitude towards English Speaking Community".

Table 5
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects of Demotivating Factors

Source	**Dependent Variable**	**Type III sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig**	**Partial Eta Squared**
Major							
	T	25.230	1	25.230	.452	.502	.002
	ASLL	296.013	1	296.013	7.094	.008	.023
	LC	56.333	1	56.333	3.559	.060	.012
	EF	67.213	1	67.213	3.556	.060	.012
	AESC	104.430	1	104.430	9.414	.002	.031
Error	T	16647.68	29	55.865			
	ASLL	12435.33	29	41.729			
	LC	4716.333	29	15.827			
	EF	5633.333	29	18.904			
	AESC	3305.767	29	11.093			

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Total	T	214563.0	300
	ASLL	195956.0	300
	LC	219174.0	300
	EF	88834.00	300
	AESC	34847.00	300

Note.

T=Teacher; ASLL=Attitude towards second language learning; LC=Learning Contents; EF=Experience of failure, AESC=Attitudes toward English speaking community.

To know which major had the higher scores in these two demotivationg factors, the output table provided in the section "Estimated Marginal Means" (Table 6) was checked.

Table 6

Statistics by major

Dependent Variable	Major	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
The Teacher	Humanities	25.393	.610	24.192	25.594
	Engineering	25.973	.610	24.772	27.174
Attitudes towards Language Learning	Humanities	25.707	.527	24.669	26.745
	Engineering	23.720	.527	22.682	24.758

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Learning Contents	Humanities	26.300	.325	25.661	26.939
	Engineering	27.167	.325	26.527	27.806
Experience of Failure	Humanities	17.12	.355	16.421	17.819
	Engineering	16.173	.355	15.475	16.872
Attitude towards Community	Humanities	9.647		9.111	10.182
	Engineering	10.827	.272 .272	10.291	11.362

According to this table, the mean score of "Attitude towards Second Language Learning", was higher (25.76) than Engineering students (23.72), which means that Humanities students were more demotivated in this factor than Engineering students, while the mean score of "Attitude towards English Speaking Community" was higher in Engineering students (meanscore: 10.82) than Humanities students (mean score:9.64), which means that in this factor Engineering students were more demotivated than Humanities students.

Discussion

The finding of this study showed the three demotivating factors "Learning contents, Materials Facilities", "The Teacher", and "Attitude towards Second Language Learning" were the most important demoting factors in both Engineering and Humanities students. "Learning contents, Materials Facilities" was the first and the most important one, which might be due to the old materials and text books, or to uninteresting topics which are not related to students" life or major. The reason may also be the grammar-translation method used, which makes English boring for students. In most English classes at universities, due to the shortage of time and lack of learning/teaching aids, grammar based instruction is used, as it does not dependent on technology and it does not need learning/teaching aids, but is nevertheless boring.

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"The Teacher" was found to be the other important demotivating factor in both Engineering (the second factor) and Humanities students. This could be because of how English Teachers treat students and also the way in which they present the materials and are not well-organized. That means teachers may choose material which is higher than students‟ English levels, or they might give students lots of translation as their assignments which takes a lot time, but since students do not know the purpose of all these assignments they become demotivated. The other important demotivating factor was, "Attitude towards Second Language Learning", (the second one in Humanities and the third one in Engineering students). This could be demotivating due to the compulsory nature of English courses for students. These three demotivating factors are related to each other, and their effects are woven together. That means if teachers are able to connect with students, they can find their interests and goals, and based on this information choose the text books or materials or even compile a text book based on students‟ objectives. They also can make students aware of the importance of English and by using technology and learning/teaching aids interest students in learning English. If they become more patient and flexible and treat students well, they can motivate them, so as a result the students‟ attitude towards English will change. Therefore, teachers can influence and overcome the other two demotivating factors by changing their method of teaching and presenting materials and in how they treat the students.

"Learning contents, Materials and Facilities" was the first demotivating factor in both Engineering and Humanities students which could be due to grammar based instruction, the topics of learning materials and learning facilities including computer, internet, audio-visual materials etc. This means that uninteresting and boring topics of the materials and the learning contents, not using facilities by teachers and grammar-based contents were demotivating in learning English in these two groups of non-English students.

The demotivating effect of "Learning contents, Material and Facilities" has also been found by Moiinvaziri and Razmjoo (2014) who showed the setbacks in the system of education and unsuitable class environment including text books, were the most demotivating factor among Iranian University non-English students. Krishnan and Abdul Aziz, and Pathan (2013) findings indicated the teaching method, lack of facilities and course content were known as the most frequently mentioned demotivating factors by undergraduates in Pakistan. Bahrami and Araghi (2013) showed course book-related factors including dull, boring texts and subjects, were considered the second demotivating factor among English students. Al-Khairy (2013) demonstrated that text books and insufficient use

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of modern teaching aids, difficult English vocabulary and grammar (content and material) and lack of teaching aids are important demotivating factors among Saudi University undergraduates. Alavinia and Sehat (2012) also found that the learning environment including improper class programming and lack of teaching aids and equipment in teaching was found to be the most important demotivating factor among Iranian EFL high school learners. Ghadirzade, Pourabolfathe Hashtroodi and Shokri (2012) found inadequate university facilities and focus on difficult grammar were considered demotivating factors among Iranian university students. Kaivanpanah and Ghasemi (2011), Hasani (2011), Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) and Chambers (1993) found that "Learning contents and materials" were demotivating factors for high school students. On the other hand, it has also been found that ICT tools (Young, 2003) can motivate learners and university students have positive feelings (Alum, 2002) and a preference for CALL (Debski, 2000). However, Sakaii and Kikuchi (2009) and Kikuchi and Sakaii (2009) found that their participants did not consider inadequate school facilities as a demotivating factor.

"The Teacher" was the other important demotivating factor for both Engineering and Humanities students (the second factor in Engineering and the third one in Humanities students). This factor included teachers‟ teaching methods and techniques, their presentation of the course contents, evaluating students‟ performance as well as their behavior in class.

The findings of the present study are in agreement with Bahrami and Araghi (2013) who found that teacher-related factors ranked as the highest among demotivating factors. Alkaboody (2013) showed the importance and significance of teachers‟ role in increasing, or decreasing students‟ motivation, and that teachers could demotivate learners, if teachers are not aware of their actions and behaviors in the classroom. Al- Khairy (2013) illustrated teacher-related factors including teachers‟ personality, their incompetence, intolerance, lack of interest in students, boring teaching method, lack of use of audio-visual aids, ineffective teaching methodologies, criticizing, and shouting at the students were among the main demotivating factors in Saudi university undergraduates. Yadov and BaniAta (2013) revealed that although the teacher was not the most demotivating factor for learning English in Saudi universities, a considerable number of students still viewed "The Teacher" as a demotivator, (including teachers‟ style, i.e. the way they thought and presented the material to students, and personality traits, i.e. the way they treat students). Ghadirzade et al. (2012) found that inappropriate characteristics of teachers‟ teaching methods and course contents are one of the five demotivating factors extracted from Iranian university students.

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Rastegar, Akbarzadeh and Heidari (2012) also found teachers‟ competence, behavior and teaching method could play an important role in demotivating students. Hirvonen (2010) found the teacher as the most influential demotive in the learning experience of English by the immigrant pupils in Finland. Sakaii and Kikuchi (2009) extracted five demotivating factors among Japanese high school students with teachers‟ competence and teaching styles‟ factor as one of the five main demotivating factors. Trang and Baldauf Jr. (2007) and Gorham and Christophel (1992) found teacher behavior and teacher-related factors an important reason for Vietnamese students demotivation.

Nevertheless, Alavinia and Sehat (2012) revealed that the teacher was not the dominant demotivating factor and most respondents had positive perceptions of their teachers‟ personality and teaching method. In addition, Flout, Elwood, Hood (2009) found that Japanese university EFL learners had positive perceptions of their past teachers, suggesting that poor teacher behavior was not a substantial problem for the university EFL learners in Japan.

This study found “Attitude towards Second Language Learning” as a demotivating factor in both Humanities and Engineering students (the second factor in Humanities and the third one in Engineering students). This factor was related to students‟ attitudes towards the compulsory nature of language learning and the purpose of language learning. That is the compulsory nature of English courses for non-English students are highly demotivating.

Yadav and Bani Ata (2013) suggested that students‟ negative beliefs about aspects of the language might be challenged by improving the traditional methods and the content of the text book. Hirvonen (2010) revealed that one of the three internal demotivational themes emerging from his study was “Attitude towards English”. However, Kaivanpanah and Ghasemi (2011) illustrated that “Attitude towards Second Language Learning” was the last source of demotivation in Iranian students (high school and university students) and was not a powerful demotive. Trang and Baldauf Jr. (2007) found that students‟ awareness of the importance of English was the most frequent motive that helped them overcome demotivation and increase their interest in learning.

In addition “Experience of Failure” was the fourth source of students demotivation in both Engineering and Humanity students. This demotive included items related to the students‟ low or disappointing score in examinations and their inability to memorize expressions and vocabulary. The present study identified that this factor was not such an influential demotive in Engineering and

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Humanity students. Kaivanpanah and Ghasemi (2011) also rated this factor as the fourth demotivating factor in Iranian students.

Yet, difficult English vocabulary and grammar (Al-Khairy, 2013; Yadav and Bani Ata, 2012; Keblawi, 2005), spelling, listening and structure difficulties (Yadav and Bani Ata, 2012) were found to be the most demotivating factors. Trang and Baldauf Jr. (2007) showed that the experience of failure or lack of success was the most salient internal demotive.

Finally, "Attitude towards English Speaking Community" was the last source of demotivation for both Humanities and Engineering students. This factor was related to the learners" attitude towards the country, people and culture of the target language. The findings of the present study showed that this factor does not have an influential effect on students" demotivation. It could be that due to globalization and technology and using internet, students may have become familiar with different countries, their cultures and their language.

Nevertheless, Kaivanpanah and Ghasemi (2011) found that "Attitude towards English Speaking Community" was the second source of demotivation. Dornyei (1998) and Falout and Maruyama (2004) have indicated that negative attitude towards L2 community was an influential demotive in learning the target language.

The current study also found significant differences between Engineering and Humanities students in demotivating factors. "Attitude towards Second Language Learning" and "Attitude towards English Speaking Community" were the two factors in which these two groups differed. The findings showed that "Attitude towards Second Language Learning" demotivated Humanities students and Engineering students. This could be due to the fact that Engineering students learn English because it is very helpful in their jobs and can help them succeed whereas students of Humanities do not see this window of opportunity opening for them and therefore, they have a different attitude which is not very helpful in learning English.

Conclusions

The findings of the present study indicated that the three factors "learning contents, materials facilities", and "the teacher", and "attitude towards second language learning" were the most important demotivating factors in both Engineering and Humanities students. The "learning contents, materials facilities" was the first demotivating factor in both groups, "the teacher" was the second

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one for Engineering students and the third one for Humanities students and "attitude towards second language learning" was the second demotivating factor for Humanities students and the third one for Engineering students. It also revealed that "experience of failure" and "attitude towards English speaking community" were the fourth and fifth ones respectively in both groups. Furthermore, it was found that Engineering students were more demotivated by

"attitude towards English speaking community" while Humanities students were more demotivated by "attitude towards second language learning" than Engineering students. These are factors that demotivate students based on the questionnaire used in this study. The next step to be taken is to help demotivated learners find their way back to motivation.

At this juncture, in order to improve the achievement of English in Iran it is possible to enhance the learning materials, further train the teachers to motivate the students and to improve the attitude of learners by explaining the advantages of learning English and how it can help them succeed in their lives.

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