Sources of Demotivation among English Language Learners: Novice and Experienced Teachers' Beliefs

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Abstract

Motivation is a crucial factor in learning a foreign language. However, some learners may become demotivated during their experience of learning a language. Demotivation among learners has rarely been addressed from the teachers' perspectives. The purpose of the current study was to investigate novice and experienced English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' perceptions of sources of demotivation among language learners. Initially, through convenience sampling, different institute teachers were contacted. Thirty novice (n = 15) and experienced (n = 15) English language teachers volunteered to participate in face-to-face semi-structured interviews to investigate their beliefs about sources of learners' demotivation. Content analysis was run to extract relevant demotivation sources, and frequency analysis was used to summarize and report the data. The findings revealed that both novice and experienced teachers had largely similar perceptions of sources of demotivation. Both groups indicated that method of instruction, teacher personality, classmates' behaviors, anxiety, and physical environment of the language institutes have the potential to negatively affect motivation in learners. However, they differed in the degree of importance they attached to the factors falling within each of these demotivation sources. The findings suggest that teachers need to develop an awareness of the sources of demotivation among learners and the strategies to cope with them.

1. Introduction

The investigation of motivation in L2 learning dates back to many decades ago. Numerous researchers (e.g., Bravo, Intriago, Holguín, Garzon, & Arcia, 2017; Busari, 2018; Chen, Kuo, & Kao, 2016; Djaya, Imran, & Sahabuddin, 2018; Lila, 2016; Vodopivec & Bagon, 2016; Wijnen, Loyens, Wijnia, Smeets, Kroeze, & Van der Molen, 2018) believe that motivation is one of the major influential factors in an individual's success for learning a second or foreign language. Similarly, Ely (1986), Spolsky (1989), and Scarcella and Oxford (1992) maintain that motivation is a major factor for L2 learning given that it influences different dimensions of L2 learning. The findings of numerous studies (e.g., Bravo et al., 2017; Busari, 2018; Chen et al., 2016; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Falout, Elwood, & Hood, 2009; Kim, 2009) have resulted in the conclusion that motivating L2 learners to learn the target language is very important. These studies also describe motivation as a multi-faceted construct, which is very complex.

Additionally, it has also been found that L2 learners often experience many barriers on their path to learning English, resulting in a decrease in their motivation to learn (Ellis, 2009). It follows that L2 learners are likely to lose motivation while learning the language. Fortunately, a group of motivational strategies have been identified by scholars in the field, such as Dörnyei (2001), Cheng and Dörnyei (2007), and Ellis (2009), among others, aimed at paving the way for the learners' adoption of more positive attitudes toward L2 learning. Being aware of the sources of demotivation along with the possible demotivation-alleviating strategies can direct the EFL learners to take appropriate measures in solving the issue of demotivation (Christophel & Gorham, 1995). The findings of research indicate that most English language learners attribute their failure in learning ESL/EFL to demotivation (e.g., Badrkoohi, 2018; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Falout et al., 2009; Kim, 2009; Han & Mahzoun, 2017; Jafari, Mashhadi, Okati, & Movahed, 2017; Li, & Zhou, 2017; Sun, 2018).

Considering these features of motivation, the concept of demotivation has been the focus of many studies because research seemingly has characterized demotivation as a common issue in many ESL/EFL classrooms (Hamada, 2008; Han, & Mahzoun, 2017; Hu, 2011; Jafari et al., 2017; Jung, 2011; Kikuchi, 2009, 2011; Kim, 2009; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009). Moreover, research shows that demotivation influences ESL/EFL proficiency (e.g., Amin, Rahman, Azam, Sharipudin, Bakar, & Saifulnizam, 2016; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Falout et al., 2009; Ghafournia, & Farhadian, 2018; Ghanizadeh, & Erfanian, 2017; Hu, 2011; Kim, 2009). Despite these studies, the nature of demotivation is not known well yet as this phenomenon has not

been investigated sufficiently. In fact, demotivation is considered a largely new concept in second language (L2) motivation studies (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009).

Therefore, a review of recent studies on motivation (e.g., Bravo, et al., 2017; Busari, 2018; Chen et al., 2016; Djaya et al., 2018; Järvenoja, Järvelä, Törmänen, Näykki, Malmberg, Kurki, Mykkänen, & Isohätälä, 2018; Lila, 2016; Vodopivec & Bagon, 2016), demotivation (e.g., Han & Mahzoun, 2017; Jafari et al., 2017) and demotivation from learners' perspectives (e.g., Al-Khairy, 2013; Alavinia & Sehat, 2012; Jahedizadeh, Ghanizadeh, & Ghonsooly, 2016) shows that the sources of EFL learners' demotivation as perceived by novice and experienced teachers is still under-researched. This study aims to fill this gap.

2. Literature Review

Demotivation, which is related to changes in motivation, has been characterized as low motivation; this concept has no independent nature as a phenomenon in its own rights (Trang & Baldauf, 2007). Moreover, Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) state that demotivation should be described as the negative side of motivation, which is concerned with the particular external forces damaging or diminishing the motivational component of a behavioral intention or an ongoing action. A group of researchers, such as Sakai and Kikuchi (2009), oppose the definition given by Dörnyei and Ushioda. They claim that such a definition needs to be more inclusive to take account of both internal (e.g., low self-confidence, negative attitude, etc.) and external (e.g., classes, teachers, textbook, etc.) factors. According to Trang and Baldauf (2007), demotivation impacts learners negatively, depriving them of the stated learning outcomes. Given the results of previous investigations on motivation and demotivation (e.g., Badrkoohi, 2018; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Falout, et al., 2009; Kim, 2009; Han & Mahzoun, 2017; Jafari et al., 2017; Li, & Zhou, 2017; Sun, 2018), it seems that demotivation plays a major role in the learning process.

Following this trend, Song (2005) investigated motivation and demotivation and found that there are multiple reasons for demotivation. In particular, the role of teachers has proved to be very important in that process. Similarly, Chang and Cho (2003) examined the factors contributing to demotivation in English language learning among high school students in Taiwan. They found eight factors as the sources of demotivation, which included difficulties in learning, threats to self-worth, boring teaching, weak teacher-student relationship, punishments, general anxiety, language-specific anxiety, lack of self-determination, and weak classroom management.

Furthermore, Falout and Maruyama (2004) examined the demotivating factors concerning EFL learning as well as their relationship with the demotivating experiences. They found that the low proficiency level learners were less likely to exercise control over their affective states than high proficient ones, with the former not tolerating the demotivating experiences.

In another study, Kim, Kim, and Zhang (2014) examined motivational and demotivational features in EFL learners who participated in a long-term education institute in South Korea. They found a positive correlation between motivational and demotivational factors, with the ideal L2-self-perception having a strong correlation with demotivational factors. In Muhonen's (2004) investigation, the following factors were identified as causes of demotivation: (a) The teacher, (b) Learning material, (c) Learner characteristics, (d) Learning environment, and (e) Participants' attitude toward English. Contrary to previous studies, Sakai and Kikuchi's (2009) findings did not point to teachers as the most common demotivating factor. However, the results showed that "learning contents and materials", as well as test scores, were the main causes that led to demotivation among the Japanese learners (p. 299).

Similarly, Jafari et al. (2017) conducted a study to compare the possible differences between demotivated vs. motivated EFL learners' preferences toward teachers' oral error correction, including the necessity, frequency, timing, type, method, and delivering agent of error correction. They found that there were no significant differences between the two groups regardless of their demotivation level toward oral error correction. Sun (2018) examined English learning demotivators through a questionnaire survey of 560 minority high-school students in western China and interviews with 24 of them. He found that major demotivators were linguistic competence, learning strategy, textbooks, social factor, teachers' moral cultivation, language attitude, self-efficacy and teachers' professional knowledge and ability.

Hence, the above review of previous studies shows that the findings concerning the sources of demotivation from the perspectives of teachers with different experiences are scarce. In fact, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, there is no study in the literature studying the sources of demotivation as perceived by novice and experienced EFL teachers. Thus the main purpose of the current study was to find what the novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of the sources of demotivation among EFL learners are. To this aim, the following research question was formulated:

>   What are novice and experienced teachers' perceptions of the sources of demotivation among EFL learners?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants of the present study were 30 language teachers, including 12 female and 18 male teachers. The participants were selected from two language institutes in Tehran. At the time of research, each institute had about 3000 EFL learners in its different branches and in each one there were approximately 150 teachers. The learners aged between 18 and 50 and the teachers' age range was 22 to 51. The textbook used in these two language institutes was the *Touch Stone* series. The series comes in four volumes, each containing 12 lessons.

Out of the 30 teachers, 15 were novice and 15 were experienced. Teachers with lower than two years of teaching experience were considered novice, with an average teaching experience of 1.5 years. And teachers with more than eight years of experience were regarded as experienced teachers, with an average teaching experience of 10.5 years. The teachers were selected based on convenience sampling procedures.

3.2. Instrumentation

The instrument in the present study was a semi-structured interview to discover the perceptions of Iranian EFL teachers toward the sources of demotivation. Semi-structured interviews allow researchers to follow a tentative path based on previous literature and at the same time could give hints to interviewees in case they fell short of ideas to express themselves. To develop valid interview questions, the following steps, drawing on Auerbach and Silverstein (2003), were followed:

- The literature related to demotivation was reviewed in an effort to figure out any underlying components concerning this construct.
- The components identified were drawn on to develop the first draft of the interview questions.
- The first draft of this set of questions was administered to five teachers having the same characteristics as the participants of the current study to remove any ambiguities in the wording of the questions.
- The questions were revised after gaining the comments of the participants in step 3 and the final draft of the questions was developed.
- The questions were given to two groups of experts (two university professors in applied linguistics and two Ph.D. holders in applied linguistics) to comment on the content of the questions. After

collecting the experts' comments, the final revisions were made and were ready for interview sessions.

In addition, there were three questions tapping into the factors that make EFL learners less interested in learning English, the relationship between these factors and teachers, learners, textbooks, or others, and the factors which are more important in EFL learners' demotivation for learning English.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

Initially, through convenience sampling, different institute teachers were contacted. Thirty English language teachers were accepted our invitation to participate in the study. Through making proper arrangements and checking class hour schedule of the teachers, 15 novice and 15 experienced language teachers were interviewed. Interviews were semi-structured to both accelerate the data collocation process and better orient the teachers to express their ideas. Each interview lasted about 20 minutes and the interviews were conducted face-to-face. All data collected through semi-structured interviews were transcribed for content analysis. According to Auerbach and Silverstein (2003), content analysis is the most common form of analysis when dealing with qualitative data. They further enumerate six stages which the data analyst needs to go through to come up with established, meaningful patterns. These phases are namely: getting familiar with the data, coming up with initial codes, looking for themes among codes, reviewing the themes, defining and labeling the themes, and producing the final report. The six stages proposed above were taken into consideration to report the interview contents. Content analysis was run by the first author and an assistant for intercoding. The degree of agreement (r = .87) between the two coders determined the reliability of the procedure, and the conflicting areas were discussed and resolved among the coders. Moreover, frequency analysis was also used to summarize and report the data.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

This study sought to explore the novice and experienced EFL teachers' beliefs about the sources of demotivation among EFL learners. The raw data based on which this question was answered were the teachers' accounts of their experiences in the interview sessions. As it was described, content analysis was performed on the data, based on which five themes emerged depicting the overall structure of the sources of demotivation among Iranian EFL teachers. These five themes included Method of instruction,

Teachers' Personality, Peers' characteristics, Speaking anxiety, and Physical Environment (Table 1). The themes are described below.

Table 1

Demotivating Sources and Their Descriptions

Themes	Sub-themes	Description
Method of instruction	• Teachers' English language deficiency • Teachers' confidence to control the class • Teachers' frequent mistakes and flaws • Teacher inability to clearly convey ideas	Referring to the quality of teaching in classroom and students' perception of learning
Teachers' Personality	• Unfriendly teacher • Unsociable teacher • Teachers' lack of interest • Teachers' personality like humorousness, strictness, etc.	Referring to the personality characteristic of the teachers and the way students feel comfortable, intimate, or alien to teacher
Peers' characteristics	• Peer bullying • Peer's laughing • Peer's rudeness • Unfriendly peers • Competitiveness of peers	The behaviors of other students in the classroom affecting motivation
Speaking anxiety	• Fear of being negatively evaluated • Shyness • General anxiety of teachers	Referring to the feeling of stress, insecurity, and nervousness while being in the classroom.
Physical Environment	• Poor construction of building • Lack of facilities • Dark and poor ventilated rooms • No buffet	Referring to the all the physical characteristics of the institute, school, etc. including decoration, facilities, laboratory and so forth.

4.1.1. Method of Instruction

With regard to the method of instruction, novice teachers mainly focused on the language ability of the teachers and how fluently they can speak in the classroom. They thought that a teacher who can speak flawlessly and fluently can increase motivation in learners, as opposed to a teacher who is not fluent, making mistakes. Novice teachers also argued that having a large vocabulary size can have positive influence on the learners' motivation level. Another source of demotivation, as indicated by the novice teachers, was related to teachers' inability to control the class. The teachers mainly pointed out that a lower level of teachers' confidence contributed to less ability to control the class, which would result in learners' demotivation. They believed that teachers with less previous success are less confident in themselves compared to experienced teachers. A novice teacher's response is as follows:

> *I think that a teacher who is not a good English speaker causes demotivation in learners.*
> *Teachers should be strong. They should look confident and be able to control their class. Otherwise, leaners will not take the class seriously and this leads to demotivation.*
> *I suppose if a teacher does not have enough confidence to present the materials, this lack of confidence decreases learners' confidence leads to demotivation. (T13)*

Based on Teacher 13's view, looking confident is a determining factor that leads to motivation or demotivation of learners. In other words, this teacher believes that the more confident the teacher looks, the more motivated the learners will be.

In the interview sessions, both novice and experienced teachers responded that students lose their hope and are discharged of energy when their teacher cannot keep them satisfied with their learning. Like novice teachers, experienced teachers believed that lack of a good command of language and fluency leads to demotivation in learners. In addition, experienced teachers thought that teachers' competence in instructing learners to learn effectively is another factor affecting motivation in learners. One of the statements of experienced teachers is as follow:

> *Students do not like teachers with poor English knowledge and teaching ability. Students are so evaluative of their teachers and any flaws are considered a big mistake on the part of teachers. When students feel that they cannot learn satisfactorily due to teachers' lack of teaching ability, they may not follow their studies seriously. (T21)*

In Teacher 21's point of view, command of English is an important factor leading to demotivation. This teacher believes that any kind of shortcoming on the part of the teachers may lead them not to take the second language seriously.

Table 2 shows the percentage of novice and experienced teachers' quotes on each subtheme of method of instruction. As Table 2 indicates, teachers' English language deficiency, teachers' confidence to control the class, teachers' frequent mistakes and flaws, and teachers' inability to clearly convey ideas have been mentioned by 95%, 84%, 90%, and 52% of the novice teachers, respectively. The respective percentages for experienced teachers were 91%, 73%, 83%, and 80%.

Table 2

Percentages of Novice and Experienced Teachers' Beliefs about Each Subtheme of Method of Instruction

Subtheme	Novice Teachers	Number Novice	Experienced Teachers	Number Experienced
Teachers' English language deficiency	95%	14	91%	14
Teachers' confidence to control the class	84%	13	73%	11
Teachers' frequent mistakes and flaws	90%	14	83%	12
Teacher inability to clearly convey ideas	52%	8	80%	12

4.1.2. Teachers' Personality

Another source of demotivation, as indicated by the teacher participants, was teachers' relationship with students. Novice teachers believed that when teachers have good relationship with their students, learners are more motivated to study English. On the other hand, when teachers do not respect students and treat them like clients rather than learners, learners may gradually become demotivated. They believed that when teachers are lively and energetic, learners may show more interest to follow their English studies. Two of the novice teachers' responses are as follows:

> *Students like nice and friendly teachers. If they like their teachers, they are interested to have more English courses with their teachers. (T5)*

I think that personality of teachers matters. A sociable and outgoing teachers can encourage the English learners to take more English courses. (T30)

Teacher 5 and Teacher 30 believe that teachers' personality, whether they are outgoing and friendly or not, may cause demotivation among learners. In fact, they posit that it matters how teachers behave in the class and establish rapport with their students.

Experienced teachers, albeit from slightly different angle, also stated that teachers' personality is a source of motivation. They believed that when a teacher cannot establish rapport, students might lose their motivation. In other words, experienced teachers thought how teachers' caring personality reduces the demotivation level of language learners. Therefore, they considered professionalism in their accounts of teachers' personality. Two teachers' statements in this regard are as follows:

I feel that my students want me to be more friendly and intimate when in the classroom.
When I give students courage and positive comments they are more willing to study and progress. (T15)
Students love those teachers who are eager and enthusiastic. They like humorous teachers. (T7)

From the point of view of Teacher 15 and Teacher 7, teachers' positive comments and friendly interaction with students are determining factors that contribute to more motivation and enthusiasm for learning English.

Table 3 shows the percentages of subthemes falling under teachers' personality. As Table 3 demonstrates, unfriendly teacher, unsociable teacher, teachers' lack of interest, teachers' personality features like humorousness and strictness, and teachers' kind and caring personality were mentioned by 75%, 81%, 62%, 59%, and 65% of novice teachers, respectively. The respective percentages for experienced teachers were 78%, 79%, 74%, 61%, and 82%, respectively.

4.1.3. Peers' Characteristics

With regard to the effect of peers on each other, novice teachers mainly focused on the interactions and relationships between peers. Novice teachers expressed that when peers have good relationships with each other, they are more motivated to continue learning English. On the other hand, when there are conflicts between learners, it demotivates learners. Two of the novice teachers' statements are as follows:

In some classes, peers make fun of other classmates and use bullying. Such behaviors make the learners feel bad and demotivated. (T1)

In classes that classmates laugh at each other and do not respect each other there is less interest and motivation. (T11)

How students interact with each other is another factor that Teacher 1 and Teacher 11 note. They argue that learners' lack of respect toward each other and harassment may kill motivation in some learners.

Table 3

Percentages of Novice and Experienced Teachers' Beliefs about Each Subtheme of Teacher Personality

Subtheme	Novice Teachers	Number Novice	Experienced Teachers	Number Experienced
Unfriendly teacher	75%	11	78%	12
Unsociable teacher	81%	12	79%	12
Teachers' lack of interest	62%	9	74%	11
Teachers' personality like humorousness, strictness, etc.	59%	9	61%	9
Kind and caring personality	65%	10	82%	12

Experienced teachers also thought that peer relationships might motivate or demotivate learners. As opposed to novice teachers, experienced teachers included competitiveness of peers as a demotivating factor too. Classmates' behavior, including their mood, friendliness, and eagerness to learn, was another factor affecting students' motivation level. For instance, positive and friendly peers help learners feel more comfortable for engagement. Three of the experienced teachers' responses are as follows:

I can see that when a student is laughed at, s/he stops participating freely. (T21)

Sometimes classroom is split while some students are quiet and some others naughty. In this situation, some students may not like the class atmosphere and wish for another class. (T24)

Some students are rude that affect the friendly atmosphere of the classroom. This situation is detrimental to the willingness of the language learners. (T22)

According to the experienced teachers, rudeness and mockery are significant factors that make learners demotivated. Teacher 21, Teacher 24,

and Teacher 22 argue that the better the class atmosphere is, the more motivated learners will be to learn English.

Table 4 shows the percentages of novice and experienced teachers' beliefs about each subtheme of peers' characteristics. As Table 4 depicts, peers' bullying, peers' laughing, peers' rudeness, unfriendly peers, and competitiveness of peers were specified by 32%, 72%, 56%, 61%, and 15% of novice teachers, respectively. The respective percentages for experienced teachers were 39%, 70%, 48%, 75%, and 52%.

Table 4

Percentages of Subthemes Related to Peers' Characteristics

Subtheme	Novice Teachers	Number Novice	Experienced Teachers	Number Experienced
Peer bullying	32%	5	39%	6
Peer's laughing	72%	11	70%	10
Peer's rudeness	56%	8	48%	7
Unfriendly peers	61%	9	75%	11
Competitiveness of peers	15%	2	52%	8

4.1.4. Anxiety

Anxiety, as a source of demotivation, was the least frequent factor pointed out by novice teachers. Most of the novice teachers focused on students who were afraid of talking, or those shy ones who were reluctant to speak in classes. According to them, some students have fear of speaking or participating in discussion although their English is not poor at all. Such fears can gradually prevent them from active participation in class activities and consequently hinder their learning. Two of the novice teachers' statements are as follows:

> *Some shy learners may not continue learning English because they are not comfortable in classroom. They do not voluntarily participate in classroom discussion and when they are asked to give their opinions, they are usually frightened and have shaky voice. (T14)*

> *In some classes, some students do not like talking or discussing. It seems that they are reluctant to speak and have some sort of fear to do any class activities. Such students usually give up learning English sooner or later. (T19)*

As maintained by Teacher 14 and Teacher 19, some students who are shy and do not participate in class or group discussions are more prone to abandon learning English eventually as a result of demotivation.

Like novice teachers, experienced teachers also pointed to anxiety as a source of demotivation. Experienced teachers stated that anxiety would give learners a feeling of insecurity and tension. Three of teachers' statements were as follows:

When students are in a state of fear and anxiety they avoid participating. (T2)
Some students are nervous and shy which makes them avoid speaking in discussion situations. (T17)
Anxiety can be good particularly when you need the students to take the class seriously. However, anxiety during oral activities make the situation unpleasant to some students. (T12)

Like the novice teachers, the more experienced ones believed that anxiety can play a significant role in learners' demotivation. They foregrounded nervousness and shyness as two determining factors that reduce motivation among learners.

Table 5 shows the percentages of novice and experienced teachers' beliefs about each subtheme of Anxiety. As the table illustrates, speaking anxiety, fear of being negatively evaluated, shyness, and general anxiety of learners were mentioned by 61%, 75%, 71%, and 51% of novice teachers, respectively. The respective percentages for experienced teachers were 50%, 85%, 59%, and 96%, respectively.

Table 5

Percentages of Novice and Experienced Teachers' Beliefs about Each Subtheme of Anxiety

Subtheme	Novice Teachers	Number Novice	Experienced Teachers	Number Experienced
Speaking anxiety	61%	9	50%	8
Fear of being negatively evaluated	75%	11	85%	13
Shyness	71%	10	59%	9
General anxiety of learners	51%	8	96%	14

4.1.5. Physical Environment

As to the physical environment of language institutes, novice teachers believed that various aspects of physical properties of the language institutes could have impressions on learners. Institutes with beautiful decoration, nice

staff, and good facilities can have good impressions on learners. This gives learners a sense of professionalism of teachers and administrators. In addition to the physical properties of the language institutes, some other equipment of the institutes like projectors, TVs, and video players were also brought about as important factors affecting the motivation level of language learners. Two of the novice teachers' statements are as follows:

> *I personally like to work in an institute that is clean, beautiful and organized. It gives me a good a feeling and a sense of working in a professional place. Therefore, I think that learners also care about the physical properties of the language institutes. (T15)*

> *I am sure that properties of the language institute affect the motivation of the language learners. Everybody likes to study somewhere clean and well-equipped. (T22)*

Regarding physical environment, Teacher 15 and Teacher 22 believe that the cleaner the learning environment is, the more motivated the learners will be.

Experienced teachers also considered the physical environment of the language school and classroom as a factor affecting the motivation level of learners. For instance, some teachers talked about students' complaints about the poor physical conditions of the classrooms, as well as the language institute. Some others pointed that lack of facilities like laboratory and audio-visual equipment was demotivating to some students. Three of the teachers' statements are as follows:

> *Students are sensitive to the physical qualities of their institute. They feel that an institute with better physical condition would offer better quality instruction. (T8)*

> *Students prefer to see the latest technologies in their classroom. For instance, they expect to see LCDs, laptops, and other Audi-visual equipment in their classroom. (T18)*

> *When students see low quality chairs, dark walls, poor decorations, they feel disappointed. (T29)*

Teacher 8, Teacher 18, and Teacher 29 maintained that the learning environment and the equipment that the institute uses can have significant effects on the quality of teaching.

Table 6 displays the subthemes emerging from the percentages of novice and experienced teachers' beliefs about physical environment. As the table shows, poor construction of building, lack of facilities, dark and poorly ventilated rooms, and no buffet were highlighted by 81%, 69%, 72%, and

51% of novice teachers, respectively. The respective percentages for experienced teachers were 69%, 88%, 61%, and 41%, respectively.

Table 6

Percentages of Novice Teachers Beliefs about Each Subtheme of physical Environment

Subtheme	Novice Teachers	Number Novice	Experienced Teachers	Number Experienced
Poor construction of building	81%	12	69%	10
Lack of facilities	69%	10	88%	13
Dark and poor ventilated rooms	72%	11	61%	9
No buffet	51%	8	41%	6

4.2. Discussion

Based on the qualitative analysis of teachers' responses to the interview questions, sources of demotivation included: method of instruction, teachers' personality, peers' characteristics, anxiety, and physical environment. This finding is in line with some previous studies, such as that of Song (2005). Song concluded that the reasons for demotivating some students are multidimensional and teachers were shown to play a significant role in that process. From another point, similar factors have been proposed by previous researchers as demotivating factors. Generally, the demotivating factors identified in the current study are in congruence with those identified by Han and Mahzoun (2017), Jafari et al. (2017), Sun (2018), Chang and Cho (2003), Falout and Maruyama (2004), Muhonen (2004), Sakai and Kikuchi (2009), and Qashoa (2006). For instance, Sun's (2018) findings indicated that the major demotivators for EFL learners were linguistic competence, learning strategy, textbooks, social factor, teachers' moral cultivation, language attitude, self-efficacy, and teachers' professional knowledge and ability. In addition, Han and Mahzoun (2017) found that that the main causes of demotivation were parents, administration, students, and working conditions.

Moreover, the findings of the present study showed that the sources of demotivation included method of instruction, teachers' personality, peers' characteristics, anxiety, and physical environment. Chang and Cho (2003) explored the factors involved in demotivating English language learning among high school students in Taiwan. Based on learners' accounts, they identified eight factors including (a) difficulties in learning, (b) threats to self-worth, (c) boring teaching, (d) weak teacher-student relationship, (e) punishments, (f) student anxiety, both general and language-specific, (g) lack of self-determination, and (h) weak classroom management.

In the current study, the method of instruction was one of the sources of demotivation, which accords with the findings reported by Arai (2004), Kikuchi and Sakai (2007), Tsuchiya (2006), and Zhang (2007). It is not far from expectation that quality of instruction is a demotivating factor. Most of the language schools in Iran are private schools, which means that the enrolment is not free and learners need to pay for the education service. Accordingly, it is sensible that any problem in the quality of teaching and instruction would be demotivating.

Furthermore, the second demotivating factor was characteristics related to teachers' behaviors like teachers' friendliness, caring personality, and eagerness. The previous studies have also indicated that teachers' personality and behaviors are among the factors contributing to demotivation (Christophel & Gorham, 1995; Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Kojima, 2004). Dönyei (1998) listed nine demotivating factors the first of which included teacher personality. Based on the commonsense, it is quite acceptable that students like to spend time with a nice and caring teacher rather than an aggressive and too strict person. Ikeno (2002) conducted a similar study and arrived at 13 categories among which one pointed to the character of teachers.

The third factor was students' characteristics. It was related to students' behaviors in the classroom. For instance, when students laugh at their classmate because of mistakes or when students feel that their classmates are performing better than they are, they may get demotivated and refrain from serious attempts for learning. Previous studies have also pointed to peer behavior as a source of demotivation (Kikuchi & Sakai, 2007; Kojima, 2004). Dörnyei (1998) and Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) have pointed that the attitudes of learning group members affect the motivation of language learners and any misbehavior or embarrassing action may negatively affect the language learner's motivation level.

The fourth factor was labeled as anxiety, which was related to the students' state of uneasiness and anxiety. This anxiety could be language performance anxiety or general anxiety of the learners as part of their personality. Language anxiety has also been found as a demotivating factor by researchers (Aida, 1994; Brown, Robson, & Rosenkjar, 2001; Gardner, Day, & MacIntyre, 1992). This finding also indicates that learners may not be willing to be involved in unpleasant and stressful situations.

The last factor was classroom environment, which demotivated Iranian EFL learners. This finding is consistent with studies by Arai (2004), Christophel and Gorham (1995), Falout and Maruyama (2004), and Gorham and Millette (1997). In this factor, certain aspects of physical environment of

classroom seem to negatively affect the learners' motivation level. In the study by Gorham and Christophel (1992), the physical classroom environment like the size of class, poor equipment, and unattractive rooms was considered a source of demotivation. In their study, 36% of the learners attributed demotivation to structure/format factor which were indirectly related to physical classroom environment. Furthermore, the institute's facilities like computer equipment, visual materials, and the Internet fell under this category. Similar studies in the past have also found that school facilities affect the motivation of learners (Ikeno, 2002; Kojima, 2004; Zhang, 2007). In the study by Sakai and Kikuchi (2009), they found six demotivating factors affecting the Japanese language learners with inadequate school facilities as one of the main factors.

Based on the findings of the study, both novice and experienced teachers pointed to similar factors as sources of demotivation. However, this finding does indicate that there were no differences between novice and experienced teachers in their beliefs about sources of demotivation. Overall, novice and experienced teachers had similar ideas regarding the categories (themes) constituting demotivation. The point is how novice and experienced teachers unanimously stated that quality of teaching, teachers' characteristics, classroom environment, institute's facilities, anxiety, and students' characteristics were the sources of demotivation. One explanation could be that both novice and experienced teachers were asked to give their ideas about learners' sources of demotivation. It follows that they were all targeting the same goal, i.e. learners' demotivation, rather than teachers' demotivation sources. Consequently, regardless of teaching experience, their beliefs converged in many respects. Another reason for such similar beliefs regarding demotivation factors is that teachers were once students. Therefore, as Brown (2002) asserted that teachers' theory of learning and teaching is influenced by their previous language learning experiences, what they think of sources of demotivation in EFL learners could be influenced by their own experience of learning English.

5. Conclusion and Implications

Results of the current study revealed that both novice and experienced teachers had similar perceptions of sources of demotivation. Both groups indicated that method of instruction, teacher personality, classmates' behaviors, anxiety, and physical environment of the language institutes have the potential to negatively affect motivation in learners. This conclusion could be further supported by the previous empirical studies and also theoretical discussion of demotivation in foreign language learners. Such similar attitudes held by novice and experienced teachers are likely to lead to

integrated preventive measures for the aim of lowering the occurrence of demotivation in learners. Nevertheless, there would be convergence between what novice and experienced teachers perceive as effective methods for the reduction of demotivation.

As to pedagogical contribution to the literature on motivation and demotivation and their sources, the findings from the current study have a number of implications. The first implication relates to the contribution the results of the study make to the literature on demotivation in second language acquisition. The results of the present study confirmed previous theoretical and empirical studies depicting different sources of demotivation. Additionally, the results of the study were in line with previous studies in that demotivation in second language learning is a multi-dimensional construct consisting of different aspects. As for pedagogical implications, teachers can develop an awareness regarding students' perceptions of demotivation factors and can consequently provide learners with better learning opportunities. Without this awareness, asking teachers to be sensitive to demotivation and employ appropriate measures to boost motivation may not be fruitful. Thus, teacher educators may use the results of the current study to help teachers develop a better understanding of how to keep their classes free from demotivation for more efficient and effective learning and teaching.

Nonetheless, the current study had a few limitations, such as no randomized sampling for the purpose of more manageability. Future studies can select a more randomized sample for more external validity. Furthermore, the researchers were not able to use observation as a data collection method due to some institutional restrictions; therefore, future studies with observational data are recommended. In addition, the recognition of different dimensions of demotivation highlighted in this study was delimited to language institutes in the Iranian language teaching context since the factors that give rise to demotivation may, to a certain degree, be different across various settings and contexts. Thus, investigations in state schools with the same focus of the current study are encouraged.

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