

## Demotivating Factors of Learning English in Classroom: A Case of University Students in Kurdistan Region of Iraq

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**Abstract:** Recently, demotivation has attracted researchers' attention in the field of second language (SL) and foreign language (FL) learning. Therefore, many studies from different educational contexts have been conducted to explore what factors influence ESL/EFL learners' demotivation. The present mixed-methods study aims to explore EFL learning demotivating factors, their major sources, and possible effect of gender on these factors. In so doing, quantitative and qualitative data were collected from Fifty-seven Kurdish learners of English (26 females and 31 male) through questionnaires and online written interviews. The results revealed some possible factors and their sources of the learners' demotivation and showed that gender difference was effective for one factor, but not for the others. Finally, some pedagogical implications and possible solutions were presented.

**Keywords:** Demotivation, Language Learning, EFL, Kurdistan Region of Iraq

### 1. Introduction

Studies on motivation in language learning have become a growing concern among researchers since the last decades. The results of previous studies have revealed that motivation is a decisive factor in developing second or foreign language learning successfully (Oxford, 1996; Dornyei, 2001a). However, learners may not maintain this motivation throughout their language learning process. In the last two decades, it has been reported that many learners have lost their motivation in studying and learning the second language, especially English, and their number is increasing (Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009; Meshkat & Hassani, 2012). Therefore, current studies on motivation have directed their attention to address why EFL/ESL learners lose their motivation for studying the target language. Consequently, demotivation, as opposite to motivation, has been coined to address this issue.

Since demotivation has recently attracted researchers' attention in the field of second language (L2) learning, they have been defining the notion of demotivation from two perspectives. For some researchers, such as Dornyei (1998 cited in Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011), Sakai and Kikuchi (2009), and Tuan (2011), demotivation has been regarded as a *distinctive* construct that is different from L2 learning motivation. In

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this regard, the focus of research on demotivation has not been on how L2 motivation types, like intrinsic/extrinsic and instrumental/integrative, change, but on factors that make L2 learners resist learning the target language (Kim & Kim, 2013). Therefore, research has attempted to explore the factors of demotivation in L2 learning without dealing with motivational constructs through using particular instruments such as interviews, questionnaires, and open-ended questions.

On the other hand, some other researchers (e.g. Hamada, 2008; Kim, 2011, 2012a) hold an opposite view believing that demotivation results from the negative decrease of motivation; that is demotivation is not a distinct construct of motivation, but a consequence of change and gradual loss in the motivation level. This notion has been mostly reflected in quasi-experimental, longitudinal studies and cross-grade surveys in which demotivation is represented where L2 learning motivation decreases.

Moreover, L2 demotivation can also result from both or either external and internal factors. Dörnyei (2001b) claims that demotivation encompasses particular external forces, such as teacher's behavior and classroom environment, which decrease or diminish learners' motivation. Additionally, Falout et al. (2009) believe that demotivation starts from a particular situation or environment as a demotivating trigger before it becomes an internalized process. Whereas, lack of self-confidence and negative attitude towards L2 or its community are considered as internal demotivators or factors of demotivation (Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Tsuchia, 2006a, 2006b).

Despite having different views on approaching demotivation in L2 learning, researchers have come to the consensus that demotivation is a barrier, which impedes second language learning, retards the learning process of second language learners, and brings about negative effects on the overall learning of L2 learners (Dörnyei, 2001b; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2010; Falout & Maruyama, 2004).

## **2. Literature Review**

Studies on demotivation, since the last two decades, have been conducted to investigate both external and internal factors of English learning demotivation through using quantitative (Falout et al., 2009; Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Tsuchiya, 2006a; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009; Meshkat & Hassani, 2012) qualitative (Afrough et al., 2014; Arai, 2004; Hamada, 2008; Kikuchi, 2009; Trang & Baldauf, 2007) , and mixed methods of data collection (Bahrami & Araghi, 2013; Hamada & Kito, 2008; Lee & Lee, 2011; Warrington & Jeffrey, 2005). As for the quantitative studies, Falout and Maruyama (2004) investigate 164 freshmen college students at a private science college in Japan. Through employing a 49-item questionnaire, they find both internal and external demotivation factors such as low self-confidence and negative attitude toward L2, and course contents and the teacher, respectively. Similarly, Falout et al. (2009) investigate 900 university EFL learners' demotivating factors in learning English through using a 52-item questionnaire, and the results show that teacher immediacy, the teaching method, and low self-confidence are the most common demotivating factors. Moreover, they conclude that less proficient learners do not often engage in enjoyment-seeking, and thus are likely to fall into demotivation. In another study, Tsuchiya (2006a) examines 129 low and high proficient first-year university students of English after administering 37-item questionnaire, and the results produce that external factors such as classes, teachers, negative group attitude, and the compulsory nature of English study are perceived to be more demotivating than internal factors for participants in the high-proficiency group.

Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) attempt to explore L2 demotivating factors among 656 Japanese high school students. They collect data through a 35-item questionnaire, and its analysis shows that test scores are demotivating factors for many Japanese high school students, especially for less motivated learners. Contrary to what previous studies suggested, the researchers claim that teachers' competence and teaching styles are not a very strong cause of demotivation compared to learning contents and materials. In addition, Meshkat and Hassani (2012) conduct a study to examine demotivating factors for learning English of 421 high school students in Iran. The results of the questionnaire analysis report that Iranian students considered external demotivation factors such as lack of school facilities, overemphasis on grammar, long passages and expectancy to use grammatically correct English in the classroom as strong sources of demotivation.

Concerning those studies employing qualitative research methods, Arai (2004) asks 33 university students, mostly majoring in English and highly proficient, to answer whether they had demotivating experiences in foreign language classrooms and to describe the experiences and their immediate reactions to those experiences. After collecting 105 comments, she groups them into four external demotivating factors, namely, teachers' behavior or personality, classes being boring or monotonous, class atmospheres, and others. Among these factors, factors relating to teacher are the most demotivating, whereas boring classes, class atmosphere and others are following in the descending order. Moreover, Trang and Baldauf (2007) investigate 100 Vietnamese university students' demotivation factors by asking them to write stimulated recall essays of their EFL learning experience. The essay concerns three major parts, namely, the existence of demotivation and its source, their ways of coping demotivation, and their perceptions on how to decrease demotivation. After analyzing the essays, the results report that "teachers", specifically their teaching methods, is the most influential external factor of demotivation. Additionally, it is reported that students' awareness of the importance of English is the often mentioned way that has helped them to overcome demotivation. Another study which employs qualitative research method is carried out by Kikuchi (2009), in which he interviewed five college students from two private universities and one public university to share their views about demotivation in their English classrooms. The results of the data analysis reveal five demotivating factors, which are individual teacher behavior in classroom, the grammar–translation method used in instruction, tests and university entrance examinations, the memorization nature of vocabulary learning, and textbook/reference book-related issues.

According to Kim and Kim (2013), what seems to be common limitations in many previous studies are that the researchers fail to address different process of demotivation for individual learners, and seem to claim that all individual learners perceive the extracted factors to be demotivating to similar extents. However, it should be considered that the learners' experience with different demotivating factors is different in terms of degree and quality, and the learning context. Therefore, since individual and contextual differences are likely to affect the way and degree of L2 learning demotivation, there must be fluctuation in perceiving the demotivating factors.

Thus, the previous studies on L2 learning demotivation, including both quantitative and qualitative methods, have basically dealt with determining what factors, external or internal, demotivate EFL/ESL learners, and most of the studies report similar results. It is worth mentioning, however, that in most of

these studies external factors, specifically factors relating to teachers, are the strongest demotivating factors for EFL/ESL learners.

Stemming from the results of the aforementioned studies, it can be demonstrated that the present research study is worth conducting for two major reasons. First, many previous studies have investigated EFL learners from many different countries; for example, China (Wang & Maldarez, 2006), Korea (Kim, 2012b), Vietnam (Trang & Baldauf, 2007), Iran (Afrough et al., 2014), Japan (Hamada, 2011; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009), Hungary (Dornyei, 1998), Germany and USA (Zhang, 2007), and North USA (Gorham & Millette, 1997). However, no research is found in the literature about Kurdish EFL learners' demotivating factors, specifically in Iraq and Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Second, throughout the teaching experience of the author, Kurdish EFL learners have become demotivated in learning English, especially in classrooms. One of the possible ways to solve this problem is to explore their demotivating factors, especially those occurring in classrooms. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature through exploring Kurdish EFL learners' demotivating factors in classrooms at one of the public universities in Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

### **3. Materials and Methods**

The current mixed-methods study aims to probe into Kurdish EFL learners' demotivating factors for learning English in classroom. The data were collected through a questionnaire and online written interviews, and analyzed to answer the following research questions:

1. What are demotivating factors of learning English in classroom?
2. What are the most frequent causes of the demotivating factors?
3. What is the effect of gender on the demotivating factors?

#### **3.1 The Instructional Setting and Participants**

The study was conducted at the University of Raparin located in Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). The instructional setting is the fourth-year class in English department, which is a part of College of Education of the university. The participants are fifty-seven (Male = 31 and Female = 26) Kurdish fourth-year students majoring in English, and their age range is 22 – 28 years. The reason for choosing these particular students is that although they have been studying English for years and will become English teachers in the near future, from my own experience as a teacher at the department, most of them have become demotivated for learning and studying English. Therefore, through this study, factors of their demotivation, particularly in English classroom, are going to be explored.

#### **3.2 Data Collection Tools**

Two main instruments were used as means of data collection. The first instrument was a questionnaire designed by Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) and adapted by the researcher for the purpose of collecting the quantitative data. The questionnaire consisted of 35 items categorized under six different constructs, represented by particular items. The constructs were related to teachers (items 10-15), characteristics of classes (items 1-6 and 26), experience of failure (items 7-9, 27, and 30), class environment (items 21-25, 28, and 29), class materials (items 16-20, and 35), and lack of interest (items 31-35). Furthermore, one

open-ended question was added to the questionnaire for the purpose of collecting qualitative data about any other possible demotivating factors that the participants might have in addition to what has been given in the questionnaire items. All items, except from the open-ended one, were presented in a five-point Likert scale (1: strongly agree – 5: strongly disagree), and for each item, the participants were required to circle the most appropriate point. It is worth mentioning that the questionnaire was piloted with a group of third-year students to check its reliability. The completed questionnaires were statistically analyzed and the results showed that the average Cronbach's Alpha of the questionnaire was 0.79. This shows that the questionnaire was reliable for data collection since Hudson (1991 cited in Krysik and Finn, 2013) claims that the Cronbach Alpha of any research scale in order to be reliable must be at least 0.60.

The second instrument, used for qualitative data collection, was online written interviews in which the participants answered some questions. In this process, the researcher requested the participants to voluntarily participate in online interviews through the Facebook© page of the participants. It is worth mentioning that this page was created by the participants to share ideas, news, and other academic issues throughout the academic year. The reason for choosing the written interviews was that the participants refused to participate in face-to-face online interviews due to some personal and cultural issues.

#### 4. Results

##### 4.1 The Results of the Quantitative Data

The quantitative data achieved from the questionnaires were statistically analyzed to answer the research questions. To answer the first research question, the data were analyzed to explore the EFL learners' demotivating factors of learning English. The analysis yielded the following results.

Table 1: Demotivating factors reported by the participants

Demotivating Factors	Percentages			Mean	Std.
	SA & A	N	SD & D		
1. Teachers	42	51	7	3.0	.65
2. Characteristics of Classes	79	2	19	2.5	.57
3. Experiences of Failure	54	33	13	2.9	.71
4. Classroom Environment	23	61	16	3.3	.63
5. Class Materials	56	44	0	2.8	.61
6. Lack of Interest	47	40	13	2.9	.84

Note: SA=Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, M=Mean Score, Std.=Standard Deviation

It can be inferred from Table 1 that there are many factors causing their demotivation for learning English. First, Characteristics of Classes (%=79, M=2.5) is the most influential factor causing demotivation for learning English among the learners, followed by Experiences of Failure (56%, M=2.9), Class Materials (56%, M=2.8), and Lack of Interest (47%, M=2.9) as other effective factors of demotivation. Moreover, the analysis also reported that most of the participants seem to be neutral about both Classroom Environment (61%, M =3.3) and Teachers (51%, M =3) as other demotivating factors of learning English.

Therefore, it is not clear whether these factors cause demotivation for learning English among the learners or not.

Concerning the second research question, which was about the sources of the demotivating factors, the items representing each factor were analyzed. It is found in Table 1 that there were four demotivating factors of learning English among the participants. Therefore, to uncover what causes each factor, the items representing the factor in the questionnaire were investigated (see Table 2).

Table 2: Major sources of the first demotivating factor – characteristics of classes

Items Representing “Characteristics of Classes”	Percentages			Mean	Std.
	SA & A	N	SD & D		
I seldom have chances to communicate in English.	65	21	14	2.3	1.00
Most of the lessons focus on translation.	23	21	56	3.3	1.17
Most of the lessons focus on grammar.	46	28	26	2.8	1.17
Most of the lessons are examination oriented.	67	17	16	2.0	1.27
I am expected to use (or speak and write) grammatically correct English.	54	28	18	2.5	1.20
I am forced to memorize the sentences in the textbooks too often.	50	24	26	2.6	1.28
26. The number of students in classes is large.	63	21	16	2.3	1.23

Note: SA=Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, M=Mean Score, Std.=Standard Deviation

It can be inferred from Table 2 that one of the main sources of this demotivating factor is related to the feature of the lessons, which are exam-oriented (%=67, M=2.0) and the students have little chances to communicate in English (%=65, M=2.3). Moreover, the participants also perceived that the large number of students in the classroom (%=63, M=2.3) is another source of their demotivation for learning English. Finally, the participants also perceived that they were expected to use grammatically correct sentences (%=54, M=2.5) and memorize the sentences in the textbooks (%=50, M=2.6), which both caused their demotivation for learning English.

To explore the possible sources causing the second demotivating factor (i.e., class materials), the relevant items in the questionnaire were analyzed and yielded the following results.

Table 3: Major sources of the second demotivating factor – class materials

Items Representing “Class Materials”	Percentages			Mean	Std .
	SA & A	N	SD & D		
16. Topics of the learning materials used in lessons are not interesting.	47	3 3	20	2.7	1.0 5
17. English passages in the textbooks are too long.	35	3 1	34	3.0	1.0 8
18. English sentences in the lessons are difficult to interpret.	19	5 0	31	3.1	1.0 1
19. A great number of textbooks and supplementary materials are assigned.	49	3 1	20	2.5	1.1 3
20. Topics of the learning materials used in lessons are old.	47	2 5	28	2.7	1.2 1
35. The questions in the materials do not have clear answers.	30	3 9	31	3.0	1.0 7

Note: SA=Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, M=Mean Score, Std.=Standard Deviation

It is shown in Table 3 that one of the major sources of this demotivating factor is the assignment of a great number of textbooks and supplementary materials (%=49, M=2.5). In addition, another influential sources were perceived to be topics of the learning materials used in the lessons are not interesting (%=47, M=2.7) and old (%=47, M=2.7).

Regarding the possible sources of the third demotivating factor (i.e., experiences of failure), the analysis of the related items produced the following results.

Table 4: Major sources of the third demotivating factor – experiences of failure

Items Representing “Experiences of Failure”	Percentages			Mean	Std.
	SA & A	N	SD & D		
I have difficulty memorizing words and phrases.	47	30	23	2.7	1.3
I get low marks in tests (such as mid-term and final examinations).	33	47	20	2.9	1.0
I get lost in how to self-study for English lessons.	33	37	30	3.0	1.1
27. I am not as good as my friends, especially in tests.	39	24	37	3.0	1.1
30. I am often compared with my classmates.	44	23	33	2.8	1.1

Note: SA=Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, M=Mean Score, Std.=Standard Deviation

According to Table 4, the main source of this demotivating factor is the students’ difficulty in memorizing words and phrases (%=47, M=2.7). Moreover, the students also reported that they are often compared

with their classmates (%=44, M=2.8) and get low marks in the examinations (%=33, M=2.9). Concerning the last demotivating factor, which is lack of interest, the related items are analyzed and the following results are revealed.

Table 5: Major sources of the fourth demotivating factor – lack of interest

Items Representing “Lack of Interest”	Percentages			Mean	Std.
	SA & A	N	SD & D		
31. English is a compulsory subject.	31	39	30	3.0	1.10
32. I lost my understanding of the purpose of studying English.	37	25	38	2.9	1.33
33. I lost my interest in English.	40	32	28	2.7	1.27
34. I lost my goal to be a speaker of English.	39	19	42	3.0	1.25

Note: SA=Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, M=Mean Score, Std.=Standard Deviation

According to the mean scores obtained from Table 5, the students’ lack of interest in learning English can be related to losing both interest in English (%=40, M=2.7), and understanding of the purpose of studying English (%=37, M=2.9).

To answer the third research question, which aimed at exploring the impact of gender on the demotivating factors, parametric t-test is used. The reason for using the t-test is that the data was normally distributed. The results (see Table 6) of the data analysis yield that although the mean scores of both male and female participants are significantly different only for “Class Materials” ( $p = .038 < .05$ ), whereas, no significant differences are found between the mean scores of the other demotivating factors (e.g. Characteristics of Classes:  $t = 1.98, p = .052 > .05$ ; Lack of Interest:  $t = 1.85, p = .070 > .05$ ).

Table 6: The effect of gender on the demotivating factors

Demotivating Factors	Gender	No.	Mean	SD	<i>t-test</i> Sig (2-tailed)
Characteristics of Classes	Male	31	2.7	.60	.052
	Female	26	2.4	.49	
Experience of Failure	Male	31	2.8	.76	.89
	Female	26	2.6	.72	
Class Materials	Male	31	3.0	.53	.038
	Female	26	2.7	.65	
Lack of Interest	Male	31	3.1	.88	.07
	Female	26	2.7	.75	

Sig. < 0.05

Thus, it can be concluded from the analyses related to the third research question that among the reported demotivating factors, gender has significant effect only on class materials; whereas for the others factors, no significant effect is found.

#### 4.2 The Results of the Qualitative Data

Qualitative data were collected from both the open-ended question and online-written interviews. The open-ended question which was given in the questionnaire and was about whether the participants show any other factor (in addition to those given in the questionnaire) that has demotivated them for learning English in classroom. Among 57 participants, only nine (six males and three females) answered the question. Moreover, only four students showed consent to participate in the online-written interviews. Their answers were analyzed, coded and categorized under the emerging themes.

One of the themes emerged from the analyses of the responses was teachers. In other words, most of the participants reported that they have become demotivated due to their “teachers”. For example, one of the respondents wrote:

The main reason for why I lost my motivation in learning English in the classroom is because of some of my teachers; they are inexperienced and do not change their styles of teaching. They just repeat the same way every day. (S3)

In support of this theme, another participant reflected as:

I think that I and many of my classmates lost their motivation in the classroom because of some teachers. For example, some teachers do not pay enough attention to the less proficient students and do not care about the students’ needs. They just explain the lesson and go out. (S6)

This was also confirmed in the responses given in the online interviews. All students (i.e., four students) showed that the main reason for their demotivation is their teachers. For instance, one of the interviews (identified as ‘i’) reported:

Some reasons that make me demotivated are related to the scientific level of some teachers is low, and they do not have enthusiasm to their classes. Also they do not encourage and compliment their students when getting high marks. (i3)

Another theme emerged from the analysis of the responses of both the open-ended question and online interviews was related to no employment. The responses of two of the participants (identified as ‘S’) to the open-ended question stressed that they lost their motivation in learning English mostly because they will not be employed in the region. For instance, one of them showed:

When I see many graduates from the past years and they are still looking for a job, I lose my motivation for studying and learning English. The government do not employ these graduates and there is no job in other places. Sometimes I ask this question to myself, why am I studying? (S5)

This reason was also mentioned by two of the interviewees who reported that ‘not finding a job’ after graduation is one of the main reasons for losing their motivation in learning English, in particular, and studying in the university, in general. For example, an interviewee responded as:

We all study at the university and learn English to get a job after graduation. But I see that the government do not employ the graduates, and it is also difficult to find a job in private schools. That is why I often become demotivated and even sometimes I think I should quit studying. (i1)

Thus, it can be inferred from the results of the qualitative data that the students were demotivated for learning English basically due to their teachers and not finding a job after graduation.

## **5. Discussion and Conclusion**

It can be stemmed from the findings that the participants are demotivated for learning English due to some factors. The results of data analysis show that “characteristics of classes” is the most influential demotivating factor. This supports what Tsuchiya (2006a), Arai (2004), and Afrough (2014) found while investigating university students’ demotivating factors for learning English. In addition, this demotivating factor is resulted from three major sources, namely, examination-oriented classes, having seldom chances to communicate, and having big number of students in classrooms. Afrough (2014), similarly, concludes that one of the sources of demotivating factors in learning English is not having speaking practices in classrooms. Furthermore, based on my experience as a university English teacher, English language learners are mostly prepared for midterm and final examinations, and most language learning materials are tailored for these purposes. Furthermore, English language classrooms in almost all universities in Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) are big in a way that reach more than 40 students which hardly create opportunities for the learners to practice speaking and communicate with each other.

Another demotivating factor reported by the participants is their experience of failure in learning English. This is mostly resulted from two major sources, namely, the participants’ difficulty in memorizing words and being compared with other, specifically more proficient, learners in classroom. It can be inferred from these sources that most of the participants are required to memorize the given content as means of passing examinations and learning English language. Therefore, most of the participants are demotivated because they have experienced many failures due to taking such exams. All of these are apparent indications of traditional methods of language teaching and learning, which are still used in many KRI universities. These results are also found in the studies conducted by Sakai & Kukuchi (2009), Kojima (2004) and Tsuchiya (2006a) while investigating English language learners in universities and high schools.

The results of data analysis in this study also reveal that class materials are another demotivating factor among Kurdish EFL learners. This factor, moreover, has mainly resulted from the participants’ exposure to old and uninteresting topics of English passages and assigning many textbooks and materials. It is worth noting that in KRI universities most English language learning textbooks, especially reading books, are old and contain outdated information, which is not compatible with the current real-world issues. This, thus, might have affected the participants’ demotivation while learning English in classroom. Furthermore, these results are in-line with what Arai (2004), Falout and Maruyama (2004), Kikuchi and Sakai (2007), and Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) reported in their studies when investigating English language learners’ demotivating factors.

To add more, most of the learners seem have a lack of interest in learning English in classroom basically because they will not be employed after graduation. This seems to be a new source of demotivation,

because previous studies, such as Falout and Maruyama (2004), Kojima (2004), and Tsuchiya (2006a), conclude that English learners' lack of interest is resulted from their little admiration toward English speaking people, but they have not mentioned future unemployment as a source of this demotivation factor. It is worth mentioning, moreover, that this source of demotivation found in the current study is mostly related to the current conditions in KRI, where the government is unable to employ these students in governmental institutions after graduation due to a severe economic crisis and some contextual political issues.

Finally, those participants who responded to the open-ended and interview questions reported that they have become demotivated in learning and studying English mostly because of their "teachers". From my professional experience, this can be associated with the fact that many teachers are still employing traditional styles of teaching and are unaware of the modern teaching techniques of language teaching as the government has stopped the professional development training courses for teachers in KRI since the last ten years. To support this, Dornyei (1998) and Oxford (1998 cited in Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011), and many studies (e.g., Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009; Arai, 2004; Trag & Baldauf, 2007; Afrough, 2014) have concluded that teachers' attitudes and behaviors are a potent source of demotivation among English language learners.

To help students decrease the feeling of demotivation, teacher educators should take some pedagogical steps. It is believed that demotivation is not a permanent aspect in language learning; and it can be increased and decreased in response to a wide variety of influences (Dornyei, 2001). Therefore, it is possible to decrease the students' demotivation through providing effective strategies and activities in classrooms. In this case, Dornyei's (2001) taxonomy of language learning motivation can help, in part, to remotivate Kurdish EFL learners. Dornyei (2001) claims that motivation in the learning process can be investigated in three different phases. The first phase is generating initial motivation, which is done before the students take any action to learn the language and involves getting learners excited about what they are about to learn. This can be done through providing strategies such as promoting integrative motivation and raising students' awareness of the instrumental value of the language. The second phase is maintaining and protecting the motivation, which takes place during the students' learning process and can be achieved by giving strategies such as using goal setting methods and providing students with regular experiences of success (Bankier & Wright, 2012). Finally, after taking some actions in the learning process, positive self-reflection can be implemented through offering rewards in a motivational manner, such as finishing class early when students work hard, and promoting effort attributions in students. This seems to be highly correlated to what the participants of this study reported in the online written interviews, as they blame their teachers for not offering rewards and not giving compliments.

When considering the demotivating factors found in the current study, further pedagogical steps can be taken. First, the characteristics of the English classes should be improved through enhancing communicative environment and providing learning activities that enhance learning rather than preparing the students for examinations. Second, classroom materials should be chosen in a way that reflects the students' needs, interests and real-world issues. Finally, and most importantly, teachers should be trained continuously to improve their profession; to do so, professional development training courses need to be

restarted by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in KRI to help the teachers improve their instructional techniques.

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