

FACTORS CAUSING DEMOTIVATION IN ENGLISH LEARNING AMONG THAI HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SAINT NICHOLAS SCHOOL-ENGLISH PROGRAMME

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DOI No. – 08.2020-25662434

Abstract

Learning method, textbook, teacher, student and classroom environment and learning facility are factors causing demotivation in learning English among G. 7 to 11 students in Saint Nicholas School – English Programme. This study aimed to determine the students' perceptions in terms of learning English and the factors in Thai context that demotivate students. This study will be beneficial for teachers to design learning that responds to students' perceptions and expectations. There were 27 respondents in this descriptive correlational study. The instrument used in gathering data was an adopted questionnaire with a total number of 24 survey questions from Polrak (2019). The survey questionnaires were self-administered through Google form to the respondents. The data were statistically analyzed using frequency and percentage distribution, mean, Kruskal Wallis test and Pearson correlation test. The results showed that the learning style was too much focused on reading from textbook rather than on speaking practices, there was an imbalance of skills taught from textbooks and the kinds of language practice the students take part in, the teachers often scold them when they made mistakes and that their explanations were not easy to understand and the students were having difficulty in memorizing words and phrases. The factors causing demotivation were similar among G.7 to G.11 male and female students. There is also a correlation among the factors causing demotivation in English learning.

Keywords: Factors, demotivation, learning method, textbook, teacher, student, classroom environment and learning facility

INTRODUCTION

Thailand's low English proficiency is due to the lack of motivation. The factors causing demotivation in learning English among G. 7 to G.11 students in Saint Nicholas School – English Programme are learning method, textbook, teacher, student and classroom environment and learning facility.

Learning Method

The learning method/style was too much focused on reading from textbook rather than on speaking practices.

Textbook

The students find the text books used were useful in English learning. However, there should be a balance of skills taught and the kinds of language practice the students take part in.

Teacher

The results implied that the factors causing demotivation in learning English in terms of teacher were the teachers often scold them when they made mistakes and that their explanations were not easy to understand.

Student

The factor causing demotivation in learning English in terms of student is having difficulty in memorizing words and phrases. The teacher should also impart to students that words and phrases are not to be memorized but rather, they should be familiarized and understood.

Classroom Environment and Learning Facility

The classroom environment and learning facility at Saint Nicholas School were reasonably conducive for English learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chaiyasat, C. (2016). Availability and functionality of well-equipped and sufficient classroom facilities and equipment play a vital role for success in learning and teaching practices in the higher educational context, which in turn affect the quality of education.

Ghadirzadeh, R., Hashtroudi, F. & Shokri, O. (2012). There were no significant difference between the two groups of more or less motivated students for English language learning considering the extrinsic factors of demotivation including Inappropriate Characteristics of Teachers' Teaching Methods and Course contents, Inadequate University Facilities and Focus on Difficult Grammar.

Han, T., Tulgar, A. & Aybirdi, N. (2018). There is no significant difference between the females and males in terms of the demotivation factors related to teachers, class environment, class materials, and lack of interest.

Hardan, A. (2013). Language learning strategies refer to processes, techniques, approaches and actions that students take to facilitate the learning and recall of both linguistic and content areas of information.

Jittiang, N., Namwong, S. & Yuso, P. (2021). Grammar-based teaching (M=3.23), (S.D.0.77), was the second most demotivating factor, most of the students attributed this to lessons which focused on memorization (M=3.23), (S.D.0.85) and heavy emphasis on grammar (M=3.20), (S.D.0.69). Course contents and teaching materials were reported as the fourth influential demotivating factor (M=3.17), (S.D.=0.95) and attributed the cause of demotivation to less emphasis on speaking skills (M=3.26), (S.D.=1.05), Work overload (M=3.19), (S.D.=1.08), Lengthy English lessons (M=3.15), (S.D.0.78), include Uninteresting textbooks (M=3.15), (S.D.=0.93) that demotivated students' enthusiasm to learn English. The teachers' behavior emerged as the fifth factor (M= 3.16), (S.D.= 1.1) as students stated that the teacher does not provide feedback to student's problems (M=3.29), (S.D.=1.14), misbehavior of teachers (M=3.10), (S.D.=1.20), and teachers carry out one man show or teacher-centered teaching (M=3.10), (S.D.=0.95) in class. These factors reduced their motivation to learn English language.

The lack of self-confidence (M= 3.59), (S.D.=1.12) was the most salient demotivating factor. The findings revealed fear of making mistakes (M=3.62), (S.D.1.06) and shyness (M=3.56), (S.D.1.19) as the reasons which demotivated students to learn English. Furthermore, the effects of low test scores was the third influential demotivating factor among non- English major students in learning English (M=3.22),

(S.D.0.98). According to students' responses, two key issues related to this factor were their unsuccessful attempt to achieve high marks (M.3.25), (S.D.1.02) and their friends scoring better marks (M=3.20), (S.D.0.93).

Classroom environment emerged as the sixth and the least demotivating factor (M=2.92), (S.D.= 0.97) as students stated that grouping of students by proficiency (M.=3.18), (S.D.=0.89), no Internet facility (M.=3.10), (S.D.=0.98), overcrowded classrooms (M.=3.04), (S.D.=1.02), and dislike classmates (M.=2.36), (S.D.=0.99) reduced their motivation to learn English language respectively.

Khusyabaroh, L., Widiati, U. & Anugerahwati, M. (2018). The first demotivating factor in learning English for ninth grade students was students' characteristics. It was caused by difficulty in memorizing, low English score, not priority lesson, shyness, no opportunities to practice, forbidden to use cellphone, dislike English, and no reason to learn English.

Meshkat, M. & Hassani, M. (2012). 30.89% of 421 participants scored high and 42.29% scored medium on factor 1. It showed that one third of the participants accepted "Learning Contents and Materials" as a high demotivating factor and more than one third of the participants reported it as an intermediate demotivating factor. Uninteresting textbooks (M=3.15), (S.D.=0.93) demotivated students enthusiasm to learn English.

"Most of the lessons focused on the grammars", 2: "English passages in the textbooks were too long" and item 5; "I was expected to use (or speak and write) grammatically correct English" had means higher than 3. Their means were 3.38, 3.03 and 3.55 in order. Thus, Meshkat et al (2012) said that among the items related to factor 1 these three single items were perceived to be demotivating.

Nomnian, S. (2013). Textbooks are commonly used as a basis and supplement for English language teaching by most teachers who can be reassured that they have ready-made materials along with detailed teacher's guides that provide suggestions, activities, and resources.

Noom-ura, S. (2013). The most important factor in student learning progress is the teachers, and teacher quality outweighs other factors such as motivation, funding, and class sizes. Qualified teachers can create the best environment for learning.

Olivier, G. (2017). Students' attitudes toward learning English through e-learning at a Thai university. It is a well-documented fact that, in general, Thai students lack skills in English and according to the English First Proficiency Index of 2015, Thailand falls in the 'very low proficiency' category.

It was reported that some of the more serious problems were, students not having enough practice in English on their own, lacking opportunities for English exposure outside class, students' insufficient knowledge and skills of English, students thinking in Thai before translating to English, and problems with listening and pronunciation.

Polrak, M. (2019). 54.7% of the subjects strongly agree that the highest demotivating factor was item 4 'Most of the lessons were exam oriented' with highest mean of 4.42. Item 3 'Most of the lessons are focused on grammar' and item 5 'Learning style wasn't focus on speaking practices' were also perceived as highly demotivating factor with high mean score of 4.16 and 4.28 respectively. Hence, it can be said that among item related to factor 1 these three single items were deemed to be very demotivating.

Tang, Y., and Hu, J. (2022). The teacher's discouraging attitude has a positive and significant impact on student demotivation ($\beta = 0.256$; $p < 0.001$). Similarly, discouraging teaching approaches also significantly and positively impact student demotivation ($\beta = 0.220$; $p < 0.001$).

55.58% of participants scored high and reflected "Inadequate School Facilities" to be demotivating. 30.18% of 421 participants scored high on factor 4 and 37.14% of participants scored high on factor 5.

Vakilifard et al (2020) Vakilifard, A., Ebadi, S., Zamani, M. & Sadeghi, B. (2020). The one-way ANOVA results point to statistically significant differences between males and females with regard to the factors of The Teacher ($p < .000$), Experience of Failure ($p < .000$), and Attitude towards Foreign Language Learning ($p < .000$). The findings imply that male learners were more demotivated than female learners with respect to the factors of the Teacher and Attitude towards Foreign Language Learning while female learners were more demotivated in Experience of Failure. No significant differences were found between the two groups in terms of "Learning Contents, Materials, and Facilities" and "Attitude towards Persian Community". However, there were significant differences observed between learners at different levels of education with regard to some other demotivating factors.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADMINSTRATORS, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Further study may be administered to another group of student respondents with different profiles to determine the factors causing demotivation in English learning.

Administrators

The school administrators may conduct continuing professional development (CPD) trainings, seminars and workshops from third party service providers for teachers.

In order to diminish the factors causing demotivation in English learning, the administrators may work closely with the teachers to make sure that the learning method are integrated fully with the textbook, teacher's attitude and teaching style, student's attitude towards learning English and classroom environment and learning facility.

Teachers and Students

The teachers are encouraged 1) to effectively implement learning methods in English, 2) to balance the skills taught from textbooks and the kinds of language practice the students take part in, 3) to be more considerate to students when they make mistakes in learning English and make their explanations easier for students to understand and 4) to incorporate activities well as the strategies obtained from CPD trainings that help students increase their vocabularies and use them in their everyday lives.

Classroom Environment and Learning Facility

The classroom environment and learning facility should be maintained and kept suitable for learning.

CONCLUSION

Majority of the respondents had different profiles in terms of sex and grade level.

The factors causing demotivation in English learning among students were learning style was too much focused on reading from textbook rather than on speaking practices, there was an imbalance of skills taught from textbooks and the kinds of language practice the students take part in, the teachers often scold them when they made mistakes and that their explanations were not easy to understand, the students were having difficulty in memorizing words and phrases.

The factors causing demotivation in English learning namely learning method, textbook, teacher, student, classroom environment and learning facility are similar among male and female students from G. 7 to G.11.

The factors causing demotivation namely learning method, textbook, teacher, student, classroom environment and learning facility are correlated in English learning.

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