

Indonesian high school students' demotivating factors in learning English

A Thesis

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background study

Demotivation is a condition that occurs when a person begins to lose motivation or enthusiasm to do something and achieve certain goals. This demotivating condition can occur in various aspects of life, one of which is related to study. Dörnyei and Csizér (1980) stated that students with above-average abilities will not be able to continue their learning process if their motivation is low.

Wang and Littlewood (2021) conducted a study on the causes of demotivation among 40 advanced university students in Hongkong and provided suggestions for overcoming them. Their research revealed that demotivation occurred due to several factors. The negative attitude of teachers toward their students was the most common cause of demotivation. On the other hand, the thing that motivated students to learn English came from the character of the students themselves, such as how much they wanted to learn English. Their research showed that internal and external factors contributed greatly to the demotivation of students. Internal factors such as their anxiety to speak English, lack of self-confidence, and lack of intention to learn English. The external factors of demotivation were the teacher's negative attitude.

Akay (2017) also researched the demotivation factors of high school students in English classrooms. His research aimed to fill the gap from the previous study about the same topic and suggested how to re-motivate the EFL class students. He used an explanatory design to conduct his research, the participant consisted of

579 (five hundred seventy-nine) students. The results revealed that students lost their motivation to learn English from primary school to high school, mostly during high school. In addition, the 12th-grade students were the most demotivated students among the other high school students. Hence it can be interpreted that the learners lost their motivation as they progressed.

In the Indonesian context, Adara, Puspahaty, and Nuryadi (2021) investigated the demotivation factors of high school EFL students during the Covid-19 pandemic. Their findings show that inadequate school facilities as the most prominent demotivation factor for EFL high school learners. Their participants admitted that they were not given access to use school facilities during the English learning process even though their school has adequate facilities such as computers and wi-fi networks. Online learning is also a salient factor in demotivation. The interaction between teachers and students was felt to be lacking when doing online classes, making students bored and gradually demotivated.

There have been studies on demotivation in a high school context, but such research still needs to be conducted. Therefore, this study is aimed to investigate demotivation factors in Indonesian high school students.

1.2 Research questions

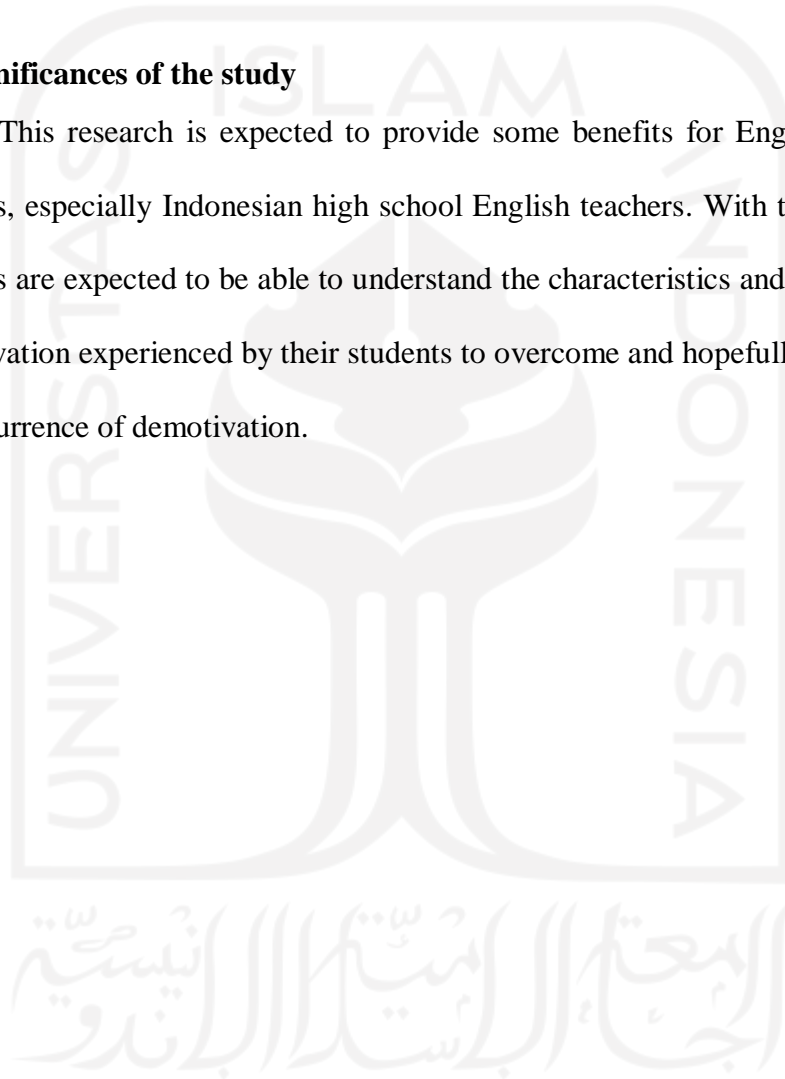
1. What are the demotivating factors to learning English among Indonesian high school EFL students?

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objective of this study is to investigate what are the demotivation factors that cause decreasing motivation in English learning among Indonesian high school students.

1.4 Significances of the study

This research is expected to provide some benefits for English language teachers, especially Indonesian high school English teachers. With this paper, the teachers are expected to be able to understand the characteristics and symptoms of demotivation experienced by their students to overcome and hopefully can prevent the occurrence of demotivation.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Demotivation factors in EFL learning

Dörnyei & Csizér (1998) conducted research to find factors of motivation to motivate language learners. The research was conducted in Hungary, and various English language teaching institutes participated in this research. The research showed that there are top 10 motivational factors that can improve EFL learners' motivation in learning languages. First is setting a personal example for the students from the teacher's behavior. The second is creating a comforting, and relaxed classroom atmosphere. The third is presenting the material properly. Fourth is to maintain a good relationship with the students. The fifth is to increase the student's self-confidence in their linguistic skills. The sixth is to make the classes interesting. Seventh is promoting learner autonomy among students. The eighth is to personalize learning material so that material becomes relevant to the students' daily lives. The ninth is to increase students' motivation to achieve their goals. The tenth is to make students familiar with the target language.

On the other hand, various researchers conducted studies on what are the causes of demotivation in EFL students. Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) stated that students without enough motivation, even students with prominent capabilities cannot achieve the learning process in the long term. lack of motivation in students makes them less successful in their language learning process.

Trang and Baldauf (2007) also researched the demotivation factors in Vietnamese EFL students. Their research consists of three main focuses: demotivation reasons, influence in different degrees of demotivation, and how

students overcome their demotivation. Their findings of students' demotivation reasons show that demotivation is a common phenomenon among students, demotivation occurs when there is a long pause to learn English and causes students' motivation to decrease over time. It also showed that there are 14 categories of demotivation which are classified into two groups. First is the internal attributes, usually associated with students' self-confidence when learning English. The second group is external attributes, which be composed of students learning environment, factors from the teacher, and other external attributes.

There are two factors of demotivation among EFL learners, external and internal factors. According to Dörnyei (2001) demotivation is caused by several external factors such as teacher factors (teachers' teaching method, teachers' unfriendly behaviors, discouraging feedback from their teachers, etc.). Undesirable teaching environment (students feel uncomfortable in class due to their teaching environments like a desk, chairs, and class temperature). Decreasing confidence (students have their confidence in learning slowly decreased because some several factors such as discouraging feedback from their teachers and feeling insecure with their classmates whom they think have better English skills than them). Negative attitude towards the target language (students feel the English language is not important for them because in their daily life they use their mother tongue language or their native language). The target language is a compulsory subject (students feel forced to learn English because English is one of the compulsory subjects in school). Interference of another foreign language under learning (students learn English at the same time as learning other foreign languages so that the process of

learning English becomes disrupted). Negative attitudes towards the native country associated with the target language (students have a negative response: *annoyed, lazy, and angry* when learning English). Attitudes towards peers around (fellow students often ridicule their lack of English skills). Textbooks and teaching materials (students feel bored with the learning material given by the school).

Furthermore, Falout (2009) research on demotivation internal factors showed that Low self-esteem (lack of confidence from the students has a great impact on his/her learning process), the gap in English proficiency among the learners (students feel there is a huge difference in English skills between the student and his/her friends), lack of confidence and interest (students lacking interest in learning English), Failure experiences during the learning process (students often experience failure when learning English, thus making them lose interest in learning English).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Dörnyei (2001) describes demotivation as external factors influenced by negative effects on students' language learning motivation and eventually extinguishing learners' ambition to take a part in the language learning activities process. However, Dörnyei's theory does not mention any internal factors in demotivating students. Later, Falout (2009) interpreted demotivation as a decrease in motivation to learn due to internal or external factors that influence negative effects on students. This study applied the internal and external factors of demotivation.

Dörnyei (2001)

demotivation is external factors influenced by negative effects on student's language learning motivation and extinguish learner's ambition to take a part in language learning activities process.

Falout (2009)

demotivation as a decrease in motivation to learn due to internal or external factors that influence negative effect on students.

Demotivation Factors

External Factors

Teacher factors

Undesirable teaching environment

Decreasing confidence

Negative attitude towards the target language

The target language as a compulsory subject

Interference of another foreign language under learning

Negative attitudes towards the native country associated with the target language

Attitudes towards peers around

Textbooks and teaching materials

Internal Factors

Low self-esteem

The gap in English proficiency among the learners

Lack of confidence and interest

Failure experiences during the learning process

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This research was designed as a descriptive qualitative study. A descriptive qualitative study is a type of research that describes a phenomenon, population, or situation being researched. A descriptive study focuses on answering the what, when, where, and who questions of the research problem. Kim, Sefcik, and Bradway (2017).

3.2 Data Preparation

The consent form is one of the ethical considerations for giving relevant information to the participants. Participants were informed about the research to be conducted and felt assured to participate without being coerced and irrational. The researcher obtained approval by having him or her sign a consent form for the interview

3.3 Setting and Participant

In this study, there were two participants. Both are male high school students who are experiencing demotivation based on their studies progress told by their teacher from an interview. Both participants are from 11th Junior high school in Yogyakarta. They had English learning experiences from elementary to high school, and as time goes by, they have been demotivated while learning English in the classroom. When first learning English they have no problem learning the target language. However, as their learning level increases, their learning motivation decreases as a result of several factors affecting them. The researcher first

interviewed the English teacher at the school about the students in her class whom she thought had demotivating factors (lack of confidence, lack of interest, and annoyance when learning English). After getting the names of the two students suspected of being demotivated, the researcher immediately met them after school hours ended and determined an interview schedule for each student. The researcher also asked for each student's WhatsApp number to make it easier to contact them. students who are selected as participants are students who meet the criteria for demotivating factors from Dörnyei (2001) and Falout (2009) theory.

3.4 Source of data

This study used an interview instrument to obtain the data by interviewing informants or direct sources. First, the researcher interviewed the English teacher at school to know the data of the students that she thinks according to Dörnyei and Falout theory had demotivation factors. The researcher has given two students' names that the teacher said had several demotivation factors according to Dörnyei (2001) and Falout (2009) demotivation theory, the two students she mentioned during the interview had low motivation when studying English, it can be seen from their behavior which lacked enthusiasm while studying. The interview lasts for about sixty minutes at school. After the interview with the teacher, the researcher continued to contact the two students who had been given their names.

Definition	Components	Interview Questions
External Factors	Teacher factors	1. Tell me about how your teacher teaches in class?
Dörnyei (2001) external factors influenced by negative effects on student's language learning motivation and extinguish learner's	Undesirable teaching environment	2. How is the teaching and learning atmosphere in your class? What makes

ambition to take a part in the language learning activities process.		you uncomfortable studying in class?
	Decreasing confidence	3. What causes you to lose your enthusiasm for learning English?
	Negative attitude toward the target language	4. What is your attitude towards English?
	The target language as a compulsory subject	5. What do you think about English as a compulsory subject?
	Interference of another foreign language under learning	6. When you are learning English, you are also learning another foreign language? If so, what did you do when you learned these two languages?
	Negative attitudes towards the native country associated with the target language	7. Have you ever received negative comments while studying English?
	Attitudes toward peers around	8. How do you feel about your classmates who are better at speaking English than you?
	Textbooks and teaching materials	9. What do you think about the learning materials provided by your school? Such as textbooks, teacher materials, etc
Internal factors	Low self-esteem	Same with number 8
Falout (2009) Decrease in motivation to learn due to internal or external factors that influence negative effect on students.	The gap in English proficiency among the learners	Same with number 8
	Lack of confidence and interest	Same with number 4
	Failure experiences during the learning process	10. How do you feel when you fail an English exam, and how do you react to it?

Table 1. Interview questions.

3.5 Data Collection

In this study, the researcher used the data-collection technique of offline interviews (profound, structured, and overt). The interview session was conducted using Indonesian language. There were two sessions for the interview. The first session interview is about the external demotivation factors, and the second session interview is about the internal factors of demotivation. Both participants were interviewed at the same time after school hours end so as not to interfere with their learning process.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis used Braun & Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis to identify, analyze, organize, describe, and report the themes that were found within the data. The themes are Putra and Putri's demotivation factors throughout the English learning process in their class. After the data was transcribed, the researcher showed the data to Reza and Ilham to ensure the data was valid.

Samples of coding system:

Codes	Meaning
TF/001/Reza	The excerpt was taken from the data of Reza interview transcript, line 001, coding Teacher Factors
ATPA/006/Ilham	The excerpt was taken from the data of Ilham interview transcript, line 006, coding Attitudes Towards Peers around
LCI/003/Ilham	The excerpt was taken from the data of Ilham interview transcript, line 003, coding Lack of confidence and interest
NA/004/Reza	The excerpt was taken from the data of Reza interview transcript, line 004, coding Negative attitude towards the target language

LS/001/Reza	The excerpt was taken from the data of Reza interview transcript, line 001, coding Low self-esteem
NANC/004/Ilham	The excerpt was taken from the data of Ilham Interview transcript, line 004, coding Negative attitudes towards the native country associated with the target language
TLC/005/Reza	The excerpt was taken from the data of Reza interview transcript, line 005, coding the target language as a compulsory subject
TT/008/Reza	The excerpt was taken from the data of Reza interview transcript, line 008, coding Textbooks and teaching materials

Figure 2. Interview coding system.

3.7 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a step to reduce errors in the process of obtaining research data which of course affects the validity of the final results of a study. This trustworthiness is carried out by the researcher aiming to produce data that can be justified and trusted scientifically and meet a high level of credibility.

CHAPTER IV RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Research Findings

Based on data analysis, it was found that two factors influence student demotivation, external and internal factors. External factors include teacher factors, attitudes towards peers around, negative attitudes towards the target language and everything related to the target language, the target language as a compulsory

subject, and textbooks and teaching materials. As for internal factors, there is low self-esteem and a lack of self-confidence and interest. The finding was illustrated in figure 3.

Prominent Themes	Tally
Teacher Factors	6
Attitudes Towards Peers Around	5
Lack of Confidences and Interest	4
Negative Attitude towards the Target Language	4
Low Self-Esteem	2
Negative Attitudes Towards the Native Country Associated with the Target Language	2
The Target Language as a Compulsory Subject	1
Textbooks and Teaching Materials	1

Figure 3. Prominent themes and tally.

Based on the data obtained, the most prominent demotivating factor is the teacher factor. Two participants, Ilham and Reza, mentioned that the teacher always used English when teaching and they did not understand what the teacher was explaining. This can be seen from the excerpt interview as follows:

The teacher always used English when she teaches in the class, and I can't understand the material at all (TF/001/Reza)

The teacher is cool but also annoying because he always uses English in class and likes to make me stand up to read texts in English (TF/001/Ilham)

The teacher factor was most mentioned in the interview process, followed by negative responses from fellow students, lack of confidence and interest, negative responses to the target language, low self-esteem, negative responses to

the target language related to student's native language, the target language as a compulsory subject, the last is textbooks and teaching materials.

The negative responses from fellow students that can cause demotivation becomes the second most prominent theme. The excerpt interview also can be seen as follows:

When the teacher asked me to read some English text in class, my classmates often mocked and laughed at me when I misspelled some word (ATPA/006/Ilham)

I don't like speaking or writing in English in front of the class because my friend always laughs at me (ATPA/002/Reza)

The third prominent themes that can be seen from the table 3 is the lack of confidence and interest on students. The excerpt from the interview can be seen as follows:

I can't speak English, and because of that I don't understand the lesson. it's boring (LCI/003/Ilham)

English is difficult to understand, especially when I am asked to read texts in English which I cannot read and it makes me lazy to learn English (LCI/001/Reza)

The fourth prominent is the negative attitudes towards the target language. The two participants have similar problem about English words. They have the same thought about English words is hardly to understand. It can be seen from the excerpt bellow:

English words are messy, and it's very difficult to understand them (NA/004/Reza)

I once stopped studying for remedial English because when I saw the text my motivation to study immediately disappeared, the structure of English language is so hard to understand. (NA/009/Ilham)

The fifth is student's low self-esteem. From the results of the interview, it is known that both participants have low self-esteem. Reza is afraid to say words in English. On the other hand, Ilham is afraid that he will be asked questions in English. The results of the interview can be seen in the excerpt below:

I don't like it when the teacher asks me to read sentences in English because I'm afraid I pronounce them wrong (LS/001/Reza)

When I met foreigners, I immediately walked away because I was afraid of being asked questions in English (LS/005/Ilham)

4.2 Discussions

Teachers' factors play significant roles in students' demotivation. Students who feel inconvenient in learning may be caused by varied reasons such as teacher factors. In an educational or learning process, the teacher is one of the most important components because they are considered capable of understanding, exploring, implementing, and ultimately achieving educational goals. As Ahmad (2021) proposed the teacher's attitude is one that most influences the learning process, that teachers who always lecturing too much is the number one demotivating factors among the students. The teacher always dependent on the textbooks also play a significant role in demotivation factors, the students feel bored and not engaged during the learning activity because they only listen to their teacher speak in front of the class. In addition, Harmer (2010) proposed that classified the

teacher into several roles. The roles of the teacher are: controller (the teacher is in charge of the class, organize students, tell things to students, etc.), organizer (organize the student and various activities in the classroom), and assessor (the teacher provide feedback, correction, and grading students). Teachers become the second parents for their students at school. They have the duty to make their students well-educated. Attitudes, traits, knowledge, and how the teacher teaches will determine the success of their students. Therefore, the teacher becomes a part that greatly influences the learning process in the classroom. The influence of the teacher in the learning process in the classroom is closely related to the professionalism of the teacher itself. Professional teachers are supported by three things, namely: expertise, commitment, and skills. In addition to the three things about teacher professionalism, things that will affect the learning process include the teacher's attitude, teaching technique, and how the teacher organizes the class.

Demotivation related to peer factors. Students' motivation on learning English decreased over time because they were frightened by the derision response of their classmates. Interview results showed that their classmates always laughed at them for the wrong word spoken or the wrong writing in English. In a similar study conducted by Han, Tulgar, and Aybirdi (2019) two factors of demotivation by their peers during the learning process. Firstly, the sense of competition among their peers leads them to feel discouraged and stressed. The second is they always get humiliated by their friends when they try to speak English in front of the class. Lamb (2004) affirmed that peers can influence students' motivation through social

comparison, they will compare themselves with their peers. Students more often compare themselves with others who are most similar to them in age, abilities, and interests. Students who are often accepted by their peers who have good social skills especially have positive academic achievement motivation. Conversely, students who are rejected are at risk of having achievement problems, including getting low grades and dropping out of school. Peers can be a good influence, can also be a bad influence. For example, peers who are a good influence are friends who encourage good qualities such as honesty, fairness, cooperation, and life clean from negativity such as drugs and alcohol. Conversely, peers who are a bad influence will encourage their friends to engage in criminal behavior, aggression, and other anti-social traits.

Negative attitudes toward the target language and its association also have connections with the demotivated students. They usually use English only during the learning process in the classroom. Getie (2020) showed that they are reluctant to learn English because their mother tongue is not their target language, it also there is no good model English in their school, or probably the students have low self-confidence. Abidin et al. (2012) mention that the ability of students to master a second language is not only influenced by mental abilities or language skills, but also by students' attitudes and perceptions of the target language. They also recommend that the concept of attitude can improve the language learning process, influencing the behavioral traits and beliefs of students towards other languages, cultures, and societies, and this will identify their propensity to acquire the target language. If a learner has no interest and inclination to acquire the target language

to communicate with other people, the learner will have a negative attitude and will not be motivated and enthusiastic in learning the target language. Therefore, the student's attitude can be included in language learning because it can affect their performance in acquiring the target language. The attitude of students towards the target language must be considered by the teacher because students' attitudes have a great influence on their language learning process.

Low confidence and low self-esteem are two factors that also have a big role in demotivation cases experienced by students. One of the main causes that make students feel insecure or even unwilling to learn English because students may not have sufficient knowledge or have not mastered the material they are going to learn. Students who have low self-esteem tend to think negatively about other people's opinions about their English skills Ushioda (2009). According to Jabor, Ghani, and Abdulhussain (2017), self-confidence is considered one of the significant factors of demotivation. The learners who lack confidence or low self-esteem were generally timid and fearful during the lesson. They were unable to complete a sentence or express their opinions in class. Therefore, self-confidence in English learning is very important for many reasons. It can encourage a student to try new activities and learn, and students with enough self-confidence rarely give up. As a result, students with this ability are expected to succeed in their English classes. Schmidt (1990) confirmed that lack of confidence is caused by anxiety within the student, the anxious students are more likely preferred to teacher-centered learning compared to student-centered learning. The reason why they preferred teacher-

centered learning is that the anxious students feel “safe”. Anxiety more often occurred at ground-level students. On the other hand, advanced-level students were less anxious, and they can follow the class more comfortably. In other words, teachers need to make new innovations in the learning process to increase students' motivation to learn, low confidence cannot be considered a trivial problem by teachers because of its large impact on demotivation cases experienced by students.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

This study aims to investigate the demotivating factors of learning English in Indonesian high school students. Two Yogyakarta high school students were the participants in this study. The results of this study revealed that the teacher factor is the most prominent in student learning motivation. Where the teacher factor is very often mentioned in the interview process. Both participants admitted that their learning process was not enjoyable because of their teacher, the teacher always uses English when she teaches the class and always picks Ilham and Reza to read English text in front of the class. The second is negative responses by peer students, their classmates often laughed at them when they try to speak or write in English during the learning process. The third is the lack of self-confidence and interest from both

participants. Fourth is students' negative attitude towards the target language, Ilham and Reza feel that the English language is not so important because they do not use it in their daily lives. There are also several other factors such as low self-esteem, students' negative attitudes towards the target language related to their native country, English as a subject that must be studied at school, and textbooks and teaching materials.

5.2 Suggestions

This research has several limitations that should be noted. First, there were only two participants who participated in this study, and was only conducted in one high school in Indonesia. Future research needs to have more participants and school settings to broaden the scope of the data. Second is that the method used is only using interviews and data on students who experience demotivation are only obtained from English teachers who teach in class. The researcher suggests adding the observation method to future research so that future researchers can see and examine directly which students experience demotivation when learning English in class. Future studies should improve the questionnaire used in this research to get more diverse data. The time for conducting the research also needs to be increased because this research was only conducted within one month. By increasing the research time, it is hoped that the data that will be obtained will be richer, presentable, and meet the expectations of the researcher. Hence, future research should use these limitations to explore the demotivation factors of EFL students.

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