



LINELT 2013

Foreign Language Learning Demotivation: A Construct Validation Study

Tahereh Afrough^{a*}, Ali Rahimi^b, Mehrdad Zarafshan^c

^a Islamic Azad University, Science and Research Branch, Hormozgan, Iran

^b Bangkok University, Bangkok, Thailand

^c Department of English, Bandar-Lengeh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar-Lengeh

Abstract

Demotivation is an issue, which has been recently the focus of attention in the field of second language (L2) learning and teaching [8] (Muhonen, 2004). Since the present researchers failed to find any studies conducted in this area in Iran, this study was carried out to investigate Iranian high school teachers' and students' ideas about demotivating factors with regard to practicing the speaking skill. To achieve this goal, 312 high school students and 92 high school teachers of English were interviewed. Then the interviews were thematically analysed. The findings along with the researchers' reviews of the related literature were used to develop a questionnaire to explore Iranian L2 students' and teachers' perceptions of the factors which decrease students' motivation to improve their L2 speaking ability. This questionnaire was administered to 150 Iranian male and 150 female EFL learners and 40 male and 40 female teachers. To analyse the data, the researchers employed principal components analysis with varimax rotation. The factors which emerged were negative attitude toward learning L2, teacher's inadequate competence and performance, lack of technological facilities in classroom, lack of adequate teaching materials, unfavourable classroom environment, and insufficient opportunities for speaking practice. The interpretable factor structure, the high loadings of items on the abovementioned factors, and the relatively high amount of variance accounted for by this factor structure show that the questionnaire is a valid instrument to be used in similar studies. Also, the internal consistency estimates of the factors show that they enjoy high reliability.

© 2014 Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license

(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>).

Selection and peer-review under responsibility of the Organizing Committee of LINELT 2013.

Keywords: Demotivation, speaking skill, EFL learners' perceptions, EFL teachers' perceptions;

* Corresponding author: Tahereh Afrough. Tel.: +09179026911

E-mail address: t.afrogh@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

Motivation plays an important role in the process of language learning and teaching. It is usually defined as “an internal state that arouses, directs, and maintains behaviour. We all know how it feels to be motivated, and to move energetically toward a goal. We also know that it is something like working hard, even if we are not fascinated by the task. Also motivation directs our behaviour [11] “(Woolfolk, Winne, & Perry, 2003, p.354). Students who have higher motivation are more successful and efficient in their learning [4] (Ely, 1986). There are certain factors which reduce motivation or, in other words, cause demotivation. [2] Dornyei (2001) has defined demotivation as "specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivation basis of a behaviour intention or an ongoing action" (p.143).

Demotivation can happen with respect to the learning of different language skills. One of the skills that learners might feel unable to develop is speaking, especially in contexts like Iran where speaking practice does not happen much. Most teachers tend to use Grammar Translation method in their classes in the official system of education in Iran, which clearly ignores the oral skills of speaking and listening in the golden age of communicative approach in language education. Also, they tend to use the mother tongue in order to explain repetition and question answer drills. Consequently, students feel few opportunities exist inside or outside the classroom for genuine spoken communication. Moreover, learners spend seven years of studying English (three years in junior of high school, three years in high school and 1 year in pre-university level), the majority of learners who graduate in this environment are incapable of utilizing the taught materials for speaking in real- life situations. Speaking is often considered as a neglected skill in foreign language education and is regarded as the most complex and difficult skill to acquire [10] (Ur, 1996).

A consequence of this educational atmosphere is students' loss of motivation for improvement of their oral skills. This is a major concern in ELT because motivation plays an important role in the learning process and the related literature shows that those students who have higher motivation are more successful and efficient in their learning [4] (e. g., Ely, 1986). Many researchers [1][2][9] (e.g. Crookes& Schmidt, 1991; Dornyei, 2001; Oxford, 1994) have investigated how students can be motivated. Hence, it is taken for granted that motivation and demotivation as well as speaking is very important factors in the process of language learning.

Considering the picture presented above in regard with the current condition in language education in Iranian schools, it is necessary to conduct a study, which helps to enhance the speaking skill. Furthermore, many theories have been proposed to explain why students want to learn something or what motivates them. Nevertheless, few studies focus on the reasons why students are not motivated to learn a second language. The only study the researchers could identify as remotely related to this topic conducted in Iran was [6] Heidari and Riahipour (2012). The main aims of this study were to explore the perspectives of language teachers and learners on the factors, which may negatively affect the speaking performance of language learners, and the similarities and differences between the students' and teachers' attitudes. The main findings of the study are: first, speaking skill as an active, dynamic language skill, may be strongly affected by demotivating factors such as teachers, peers, materials, etc. The second finding of the study was that on the basis of teachers' ideas, the most demotivating factors on speaking ability are factors related to teachers, time and classroom. Besides, based on the students' perspectives the most demotivating factors were related to teachers, equipment and class utility.

Despite the importance of demotivating factors and severity of the problem of speaking instruction, few insightful profound studies have been carried out on this issue in the context of Iran. Hence, this study makes a deliberate effort to partly fill the existing gap through investigating Iranian high school teachers' and learners' idea about demotivating factors with regard to practicing the speaking skill to carry out a construct validation of an instrument.

2. Method

The present study was conducted in two phases; the first phase, which was the exploratory one, was carried out to investigate Iranian high school teachers' and learners' idea about demotivating factors involved in practicing the speaking skill. The second phase was devoted to the confirmatory construct validation of the instrument developed during the first phase of the study.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1113518>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1113518>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)