

## A Systematic Review on the Teachers' and Students' Demotivation in EFL Teaching and Learning Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizcenin Öğretimi ve Öğreniminde Öğretmen ve Öğrencilerin Motivasyon Kaybı Üzerine Sistematik Bir İnceleme

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### Makale Bilgileri

#### Geliş Tarihi (Received Date)

04.07.2024

#### Kabul Tarihi (Accepted Date)

11.04.2025

#### \*Sorumlu Yazar

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**Abstract:** This study aims to understand better the demotivation towards EFL teaching and learning and analyze and synthesize the research studies carried out between March 2017 and December 2022 to illustrate global demotivation. This study's design, which employs the qualitative approach and is based on a systematic, integrative literature review, is descriptive in nature. This study is conducted methodically to create more broadly relevant or generally applicable data on the topic under investigation. Therefore, 57 research articles were chosen for analysis. Document analysis was employed in this study to collect the data. It was found that most participants of these studies encountered demotivation in their English teaching-learning. Their demotivation was affected by the materials, tools, subjects, rules, and community. The results of this study present suggestions for pedagogical implications to impede demotivation among EFL learners. These results may be helpful for researchers to contribute to the existing literature and focus on the areas in which the current research fails to explain.

**Keywords:** Teachers' demotivation, students' demotivation, EFL teaching, EFL learning

**Öz:** Bu çalışma, İngilizce öğretme ve öğrenmeye yönelik motivasyon kaybını daha iyi anlamayı, küresel anlamda bu motivasyon kaybını göstermek için Mart 2017 ile Aralık 2022 arasında yürütülen araştırma çalışmalarını analiz etmeyi ve sentezlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Nitel yaklaşımın kullanıldığı ve sistematik, bütünlüştürücü bir literatür taramasına dayanan bu çalışmanın tasarımı, betimsel bir çalışmadır. Bu çalışma, araştırılan konuyla ilgili daha geniş kapsamlı veya genel olarak uygulanabilir veriler oluşturmak için metodik olarak yürütülmüştür. Bu nedenle analiz için 57 araştırma makalesi seçilmiştir. Bu çalışmada verilerin toplanmasında doküman analizinden yararlanılmıştır. Bu çalışma, bu çalışmalara katılanların çoğunun İngilizce öğretme-öğrenme süreçlerinde motivasyon kaybıyla karşılaştığını bulmuştur. Motivasyonları materyallerden, araçlardan, konulardan, kurallardan ve topluluktan etkilenmiştir. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrenciler arasında motivasyon kaybının engellenmesine yönelik pedagojik uygulamalar konusunda öneriler sunmaktadır. Bu sonuçlar, araştırmacıların mevcut literatürü tanıtmalarına ve mevcut araştırmalarının açıklamakta yetersiz kaldığı alanlara odaklanmalarına yardımcı olabilmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Öğretmenlerin motivasyon kaybı, öğrencilerin motivasyon kaybı, İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğretimi, İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğrenimi

Gürlüyer, M. & Atmaca, M. (2025). A systematic review on the teachers' and students' demotivation in efl teaching and learning. *Erzincan University Journal of Education Faculty*, 27(2), 343-354. <https://doi.org/10.17556/erziefd.1510185>

### Introduction

Teachers and students both benefit significantly from motivation. Motivation plays a significant role in EFL teaching and learning, as Gardner (1985) pointed out. Teacher and student motivation helps them achieve their goals. Conversely, demotivation is seen as the opposite of motivation and hinders or diminishes their efforts. Demotivation is described by Dörnyei (2001) as "a particular external influence that weakens or lessens the motivational foundation of a behavioral goal or an ongoing activity" (p. 143). For many EFL teaching and learning scholars, demotivation has been an interesting issue (Bernaus & Gardner, 2008; Ghonsooly et al., 2017).

Demotivation is a frequently seen reality in EFL language classrooms (Dörnyei, 2001). As a common symptom of depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues, demotivation can negatively impact English language teaching and learning. The main potential reasons for demotivation are attached to external factors such as teacher behaviors and internal factors such as experiences of failure (Kikuchi, 2013; Krishnan & Pathan, 2013). EFL demotivation implies low motivation in the target language teaching and learning (Dörnyei, 2001). Kikuchi (2015) listed six demotivators, including demotivating classroom characteristics, demotivating teacher behaviors, demotivating classroom

materials, a demotivating classroom environment, losing interest, and experience with failures. Research in an EFL context showed that demotivated students lose interest in tasks they previously engaged in and struggle to continue those activities (Yan, 2009). A study on EFL teacher demotivation revealed a striking gap between their initial expectations and actual teaching experiences (Kumazawa, 2013). From that aspect, English language teachers and learners should be aided in handling this phenomenon.

A comprehensive literature review on demotivation in EFL teaching and learning should address challenges, solutions, disadvantages, teaching practices, technological resources, and student- and teacher-related issues. Findings indicate that the top three causes of student demotivation are excessive lecturing, difficulty with homework, and unengaging learning activities. A broad literature review allows for more widely applicable research inferences. Thus, this review shedding light on the demotivation towards EFL teaching and learning may render critical insights into the pedagogical aspects, and this study aims to respond to the following research questions:

- 1- What are the commonalities of the demotivation studies related to their focus, participants, education segment, and country?
- 2- How does demotivation impact English language teaching and learning?

- 3- What is the role of teachers' and students' attitudes in demotivation?

## Methodology

### Research Design

Understanding the demotivation towards EFL teaching and learning is the main goal of this study. This study was designed as a descriptive research project using a systematic integrative literature review and employing qualitative methods. An integrative literature review intends to generate new knowledge by taking a fresh look at, blending, evaluating, and creating novel rules, ideas, or beliefs benefiting from the literature on a specific topic (Torraco, 2005). This research follows a systematic approach to produce broadly applicable findings on the topic. In addition, document analysis was used to gather the data in this study. Bowen (2009) points out that document analysis is a plan of action to explore the possibility or intention of evaluating documents to clarify and extract the meaning to obtain an understanding and boost empirical knowledge. Also, Russell (2005) emphasized that an integrative literature review synthesizes existing findings, identifies research gaps, addresses emerging issues, and guides future research directions. This systematic process involved creating a review protocol, setting clear eligibility criteria, selecting search terms, mapping database searches in a flow diagram, extracting data into tables, and receiving feedback from an ELT professor. The data collection process and conclusions were lucidly presented and discussed, considering the earlier review studies to increase reliability and validity. Finally, the ELT professor and the researcher's two colleagues were consulted for input to ensure the correctness of the themes.

### Eligibility Criteria

In selecting the documents, the issued studies were investigated and handled grounded on some criteria. The online databases were searched from March 2017 to December 2022 to obtain the research documents. The studies based on demotivation in EFL language teaching-learning were first selected during this process. The research studies, under the scrutiny of the experts in the same field (peers), were used to ensure academic scientific quality in several journals of higher scientific quality. SSCI, Scopus, ESCI, and ERIC were primarily sought carefully and thoroughly while selecting the articles for this review.

The search for the analysis in this study was carried out online with the help of keyword combinations. In the process of discovering the documents "English teaching +

demotivation," "demotivation + English learning," "demotivation + English language," "demotivation + EFL," "demotivation + foreign language," "demotivation + second language," "demotivation + English" keyword combinations were put into use in a way that can be exchanged in each searching articles on SSCI, Scopus, ESCI, and ERIC databases. The research studies explored were meticulously checked in line with the exclusion-inclusion criteria. The ones issued in different languages apart from English, those that did not contain the related keywords in their concise summaries or titles, and the studies not grounded on research data, papers of book chapters, conference proceedings, and unpublished research (Master's and Doctoral Thesis studies) were excluded due to their disconnection with this study. Finally, 57 research studies conducted in several countries worldwide were the most suitable for analysis.

The selected research in Table 1 was examined methodically and in detail regarding teachers' and students' demotivation regarding EFL teaching and learning. While analyzing the data for which the research questions were expressed concisely, recurrent themes and sub-themes were identified and arranged in tabular form with the help of a six-step repetitive, attentive, and exploratory thematic analysis to build reliability with the help of a co-analyzer:

Step 1: gaining knowledge or understanding of data

Step 2: producing initial codes

Step 3: seeking carefully and thoroughly for themes

Step 4: inspecting themes

Step 5: naming themes

Step 6: writing up the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

In identifying, analyzing, and interpreting the themes' patterns, two analyzers put the documents into groups at the outset. In line with their findings, they were coded based on their focus. The analyzers separately generated their themes and categories. The recurring themes were grouped into categories and re-examined by a deep understanding and reading, as Bowen (2009) stated. In the event of a lack of consensus, the analyzers re-started to study the themes from the initial point while carefully choosing the recurrent themes and categories. They attempted to finally agree after negotiating the process of classifying the data. The conclusive themes of the analyzers were gathered, and after a perpetual consideration or estimate of the similarities or dissimilarities, the final version was arranged in tabular form. The processes used to get to the final digit are shown in Figure 1. To reduce the chance of bias and increase eligibility, PRISMA recommendations were considered.

**Table 1.** The selected studies for demotivation

Study Focus	Authors	N
Teachers' and Students' Demotivation in Terms of EFL Teaching and Learning (From March 2017 to December 2022)	(Adara & Najmudin, 2020; Adara, Puspahaty, Nuryadi & Utama, 2021; Adara, Nuryadia & Nasutiona, 2019; Afshari, Tajeddin & Abbasian, 2019; Akay, 2017; Ali & Pathan, 2017; Al-Khasawneh, 2017; Al-Malki, 2018; Alyousif & Alsuhaibani, 2021; Baba Khouya, 2018; Badrkoohi, 2018; Bahari, 2019; Budak & Mede, 2022; Çankaya, 2018; Chen, 2019; Evans & Tragant, 2020; Fathi, Torabi & Arashpour, 2019; Gao, Liu & Liu, 2022; García Gutiérrez & Durán Narváez, 2018; Ghaith, 2019; Ghanizadeh & Erfanian, 2017; Han & Mahzoun, 2017; Han, Takkaç-Tulgar & Aybirdi, 2019; Holbah & Sharma, 2021; Husniyah, 2019; Javed, 2021; Karaca & Inan, 2020; Khanal, Bidari & Nadif, 2021; Kim, Kim & Kim, 2018; Kim, Kim & Kim, 2018; Li & Qian, 2017; Li & Zhou, 2017; Li & Zhou, 2017; Li, 2021; Lı, Dou & Zhang, 2020; Liu, 2022; Hama, 2022; Mahmud, 2019; Minalla, 2022; Molavi, Biria & Chalak, 2018; Ölmezer Öztürk, 2021; Pathan, Ismail & Fatima, 2020; Pourtoussi, Ghanizadeh & Mousavi, 2018; Ren & Abhakorn, 2022; Sánchez-Hernández, Vez López & García-Barríos, 2021; Shagdarsuren, Batchuluun & Lang, 2020; Song & Kim 2017; Tang & Hu, 2022; Taqi, Taqi & Akbar, 2017; Vakilifard, Ebadi, Zamani & Sadeghi, 2020; Volodymyrivna, Vasylivna & Anatoliivna, 2021; Wang & Littlewood, 2021; Wang & Pan, 2022; Wu, Yang, Scott Chen Hsieh & Yamamoto, 2020; Yan, 2022; Yip & Tsang, 2020; Zeng, Zhang & Sun, 2018)	57

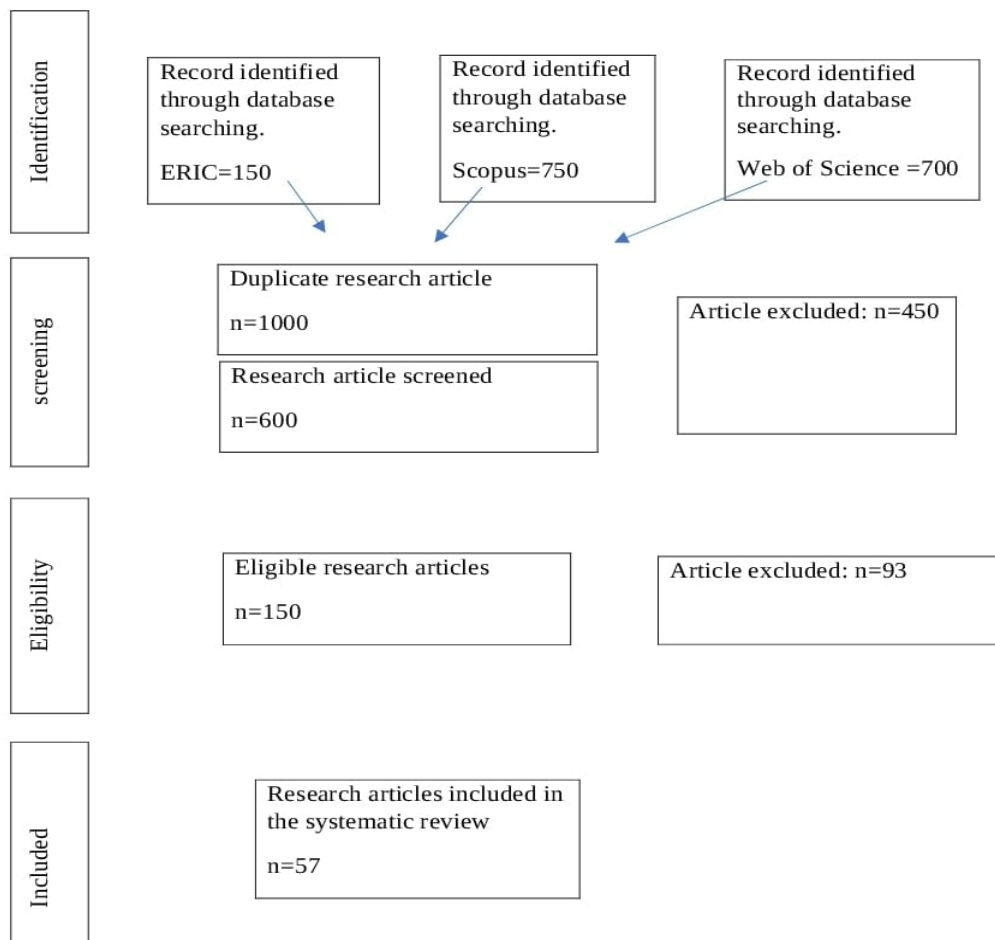


Figure 1. Flowchart diagram of the database search based on PRISMA recommendations

### Data Extraction

The three databases comprising this systematic review—Web of Science, Scopus, and ERIC—were searched on 05/12/2022, and 1600 records were returned. Each criterion's purpose is presented to lessen the risk of bias further. The main aim of this systematic review is to determine the extent of demotivation that exists now in EFL language learning and teaching as a major source of data collection methods.

### Findings of the First Research Question

Analysis of the research papers showed that the focus of the studies was grouped under one central theme along with their sub-themes (sub-factors). The utmost priority of the studies regarded the factors causing demotivation in the teachers and students in terms of EFL teaching and learning, which included different sub-themes, as seen in Table 2. Moreover, the second focus was on teachers' and students' perceptions and attitudes toward demotivation. Given the participants of the studies, findings manifested that the data were gathered from the different segments of education (school, n=20), (institution, n=3), (university, n=34). Most studies were conducted with students from the university level. Moreover, the research was carried out in various countries across the world, including Turkey, Mexico, Taiwan, Kuwait, China, Iran, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Colombia, Korea, Morocco, Mongolia, Nepal, Beirut, Lebanon, Hong Kong, Pakistan, Iraq, Spain, Ukraine, and Malaysia. This study meaningfully mirrors teachers' and students' demotivation regarding EFL teaching and learning from a global perspective.

### Findings About the Second Research Question

Researchers that have recently started to focus on demotivation have carried out several studies on this issue in English language teaching and learning. Research shows that certain factors, identified as themes in this study, can demotivate students and discourage their participation in learning a foreign language, causing emotions like anger, anxiety, or sadness. For example, demotivation can stem from teachers' ineffective strategies, students' struggles to learn and use the language or negative past experiences. Old-fashioned textbooks are the main cause of the learners' demotivation in learning English in various contexts.

Building on these general themes, various studies have explored how different factors uniquely contribute to learners' demotivation. Sánchez-Hernández et al. (2021) indicated that some learners seemed to consider participation as a task that they are responsible for while learning; others believed that they could keep silent as participation was demotivating for them. Moreover, in terms of anxiety causing demotivation while learning a foreign language, learners may feel stress due to their fear of making mistakes. These negative reflections might demotivate language learners and make them less likely to participate and interact. (Minallah, 2022). A study by Bahari (2019) showed that psychological reactance and anxiety toward the target language are the themes of dynamic demotivation affecting the learners. Fathi et al. (2019) indicated that anxiety and peer behaviors were the two themes regarding the causes of demotivation. Yan (2022) and Kim et al. (2019) showed that demotivation stemmed from the learners' lack of self-efficacy, resistance to innovation, insufficient learning capabilities, and self-regulation issues (Liu, 2022).

**Table 2.** Summary of thematic analysis for studies related to demotivation in EFL teaching and learning

Themes	Sub-themes	n
The Factors Causing Demotivation on Teachers and Students in terms of EFL Teaching and Learning	<p><b>For learners:</b> participation, anxiety, psychological reactance, peer behaviors, classmates, teachers, fear of apprehension about others' evaluations, fear of giving a speech or presentation in public, teachers speaking rapidly, teachers' spoken communication, art of teachers' teaching, teachers' methodology, payment to teachers, teachers' time limitations, learners' lack of attention, unsuitable school management of officials, teachers' inconsistent ongoing professional improvement, learners' evil actions, unexpected and uncontrollable job events, teachers' non-communicative teaching mode, teachers' lack of intrinsic interest, negative peer influence, undesirable teaching conditions, physical conditions of learning, insufficiency of valuable language-learning equipment, learners' individual problems, learners' lack of self-confidence, learners' shyness, classroom environment, classroom learning materials, characteristics of classes, grasping English grammar, retarding and internalizing pronunciation, spelling of English vocabulary, learners' actual positioning and that of required positioning for target language learning, learners' underestimating target language learning, target language's being far away from learners' needs in their minds, education system, teaching methods, teachers' competence, syllabi, teachers' ineptitude and teaching styles, insufficient intrinsic motivation, and inadequate school facilities, learners' lack of self-efficacy, resistance to innovation, learners' insufficient learning capabilities, learners' self-regulation insufficient, inadequate intercultural communication, learning contents, learning materials, learning facilities, learners' misbehaving, learners' talking all the time, learners business with their smartphones during class hours, learners being without their books, learners' low academic achievement, teachers' staff meetings, teachers' paperwork, learners having no enjoyment towards English as a language (Li &amp; Qian, 2018), learners' reluctance, learners' being opposed to responding during lessons, learners' making a non-mutual flow of connection, learners' negative reactions to textbook,</p> <p><b>and for teachers:</b> teachers' use of English language to teach, teachers' insufficient knowledge of English, vocabulary, grammar, teachers' ineffective language skills, learners' lack of interest in English, teacher's unclear way of pronouncing words, teacher's utilizing high-level vocabulary, teacher's teaching at a fast pace, teacher's intentionally disregarding learners' interests, teachers' demoralizing attitudes, teacher's choice of instructional way, teachers' lack of precise delivery for elementary school students, excessive after-school learning programs at private institutes, hagwon for junior high school students, impractical English lessons focusing on grammar and unrealistic verbal exchange for high school students, pressure to memorize vocabulary and grammar, confusion over material selection, time management mistakes, excessive use of smartphones, lack of exposure, living conditions, students' internal sense of being good enough and worthy, past experiences, form of education, teachers' assessment literacy, subject-based, community-based, labor-of-division-based, and tool-based factors</p>	57

Classmates were another theme leading to demotivation, according to the study's findings by Han et al. (2019). When competition emerged among the learners, this situation brought about stress. Classmates made them feel inferior when they tried speaking in class, leading to feelings of depression and discouragement (Boonchuayrod & Getkham, 2019; Liu, 2022; Shagdarsuren et al. 2020). Also, teachers were regarded as a first-hand account of their lack of interest and enthusiasm, as in the studies by Husniya (2019) and Boonchuayrod and Getkham (2019). Since teachers did not address the relevant main subject during lessons, learners lost motivation. Moreover, in the case of learners making mistakes/errors, teachers, from time to time, responded negatively towards them. Because of this, students constantly worried about others' opinions and feared giving speeches, anxious about getting bad grades or being mocked. The researchers also showed that learners felt demotivated due to several individual problems, such as a lack of self-confidence (Al-Khasawneh, 2017) and shyness. Hence, they needed to trust their abilities and qualities to utilize the target language willingly.

A study by Al-Malki (2018) revealed that teachers' speaking rapidly caused difficulty in the learners' perception and grasping. Also, the study of García Gutiérrez and Durán Narváez (2018) pointed out that the teachers' spoken communication, the art of teaching, and methodology (Song & Kim, 2017) made the learners feel demotivated in terms of utilizing the target language. Another factor contributing to

learner demotivation was the physical conditions of the learning environment. In overcrowded classrooms, students struggled to focus on the lesson or follow the teacher closely (Khouya, 2018). Crowded classrooms and classroom atmosphere were also demotivating, according to the results of the studies by Khouya (2018) and Akay (2017). Furthermore, the insufficiency of valuable language-learning equipment in classrooms affected student demotivation. Classroom environment (Çankaya, 2018; Hama, 2022; Wang & Littlewood, 2021), classroom learning materials (Al-Khasawneh, 2017; Hama, 2022), and characteristics of classes were other factors that influenced the English language learning demotivation (Li & Zhou, 2017; Pathan et al., 2020).

The learners' experiencing difficulty in grasping English grammar and retarding and internalizing pronunciation and spelling of English vocabulary was shown as other demotivation themes in the studies by Husniya (2019) and Al-Malki (2018). Ren and Abhakorn (2022) highlighted that there were three fundamental components for demotivation in learning English, a) the massive gap between the learners' actual positioning and that of required positioning for target language learning, b) the learners' underestimating target language learning and c) target language is being far away from their needs in their minds.

In addition to individual and classroom-related challenges, systemic issues within the educational framework can also contribute to demotivation. When courses lack excitement and

interest and are mostly teacher-focused, students do not enjoy learning English. In addition, the teaching methods and teachers' competence (Adara et al., 2021; Wang & Littlewood, 2021) lead to demotivation. Therefore, the learners are unable to utilize the target language productively. Lastly, the syllabi were regarded as demotivators due to their need to be more practical. The study by Adara et al. (2019) showed that the learners were mainly demotivated by the teachers' ineptitude and teaching styles (Al-Khasawneh, 2017; Gao et al., 2022; Mahmud, 2019), insufficient intrinsic motivation and inadequate school facilities (Adara & Najmudin, 2020).

The learners' demotivation was related to inadequate intercultural communication (Wang & Pan, 2022). A similar study pointed out that intercultural communication competence led to demotivation for the learners. These learners believed that a negative perspective emerged between the ability to communicate influentially and appropriately in various cultural contexts and demotivation (Badrkoochi, 2018).

Holbach and Sharma (2021) reflected different perspectives by stating that the learners were shy, reluctant, and opposed to responding during the lessons, making a non-mutual flow of connection and teacher-focused. In the same study, the learners' adverse reactions to the textbook (Khouya, 2018; Mahmud, 2019), the use of the English language to teach, insufficient knowledge of English vocabulary, grammar, ineffective language skills, lack of interest in English (Akay, 2017) can be regarded as the themes of demotivation.

On the other hand, living conditions were a crucial demotivational factor in a study by Shagdarsuren et al. (2020). At that point, it might be observed that many students live in shared housing, rent with peers, or stay with relatives during their university years, which can affect their motivation. Given this study, some students felt uncomfortable living with relatives, which hindered their success in learning the language and led to demotivation.

Ghaith (2019) examined the interplay between demotivation and success regarding EFL critical reading and writing. The finding showed positive correlations between threats to the internal sense of being good enough and worthy and experiencing problems in a learning context for critical reading and writing. In a different study, Budak and Mede (2022) indicated that personal reasons, past experiences, and the form of education were the significant causes of demotivation. Based on their research into the causes of demotivation in learners' lives, Volodymyrivna et al. (2021) presented some intriguing and startling findings. These included low self-esteem, frustration, fear of failure, the effects of quarantine measures and conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, a lack of face-to-face interaction, stress related to the pandemic, and depression. Other demotivating themes include learning contents, materials, and facilities (Adara & Najmudin, 2020; Ali & Pathan, 2017; Alyousif & Alsuhaibani, 2021; Gao et al., 2022; Husniya, 2019; Vakilifard et al., 2020; Zeng et al., 2018).

As for the teacher-leading themes causing demotivation in this study, the teacher's unclear way of pronouncing words, utilizing high-level vocabulary, teaching quickly, and intentionally disregarding the learners' interests were demotivating for the learners. Moreover, the teachers' demoralizing attitudes and instructional methods (Adara & Najmudin, 2020) were also identified as sources of demotivation in the study conducted by Tang and Hu (2022). Kim et al. (2018) noted that other important issues to think

about included teachers' lack of precise instruction for elementary school students, the abundance of after-school learning opportunities at private institutions or hagwon for junior high school students, and impractical English lessons emphasizing grammar and unrealistic verbal exchange for high school students. Furthermore, one constant demotivating factor across all school classes was the need to learn vocabulary and grammar. Javed (2021) showed in his study that lack of exposure to English, poor time management, excessive smartphone usage, and misunderstanding over the choice of content were all causes of demotivation. In a separate study, Molavi et al. (2018) found that varying degrees of demotivation significantly impacted the caliber of request and rejection speech actions performed by students in their English lessons.

While much research has focused on student demotivation, it is equally important to consider how teachers themselves experience demotivation, which can, in turn, impact students' learning. Ghanizadeh and Erfanian (2017) reflected different aspects about the demotivation of the teachers in a further study. It was shown that most teachers were discontented with the payment and time limitations, the learners' lack of attention, and the unsuitable school management of the officials. A similar reflection was found in the research by Khanal et al. (2021). The study showed that EFL teachers had extrinsic and intrinsic demotivation in private schools. These teachers stated that they had minimum-paid wages, inconsistent ongoing professional improvement, the learners' evil actions, and unexpected and uncontrollable job events (Khanal et al., 2021). According to Li et al. (2020), issues relating to the instructor, a non-communicative teaching style, a lack of intrinsic interest (Javed, 2021), negative peer pressure, and unfavorable teaching settings are the significant causes of demotivation toward learning English. In a study by Pourtoussi et al. (2018), physical and professional teaching environments decreased the teachers' motivation and effective teaching. Also, novice and experienced teachers put forward that teaching methods and characteristics of the teacher had the possibility of causing demotivation in learners (Afshari et al., 2019; Alyousif & Alsuhaibani, 2021; Mahmud, 2019; Wang & Littlewood, 2021).

In a different study (Taqi et al., 2017) focusing on teachers, the findings showed that when the learners misbehaved and spent class time talking all the time, the teachers became demotivated. Also, they pointed out that it was demotivating when the learners were busy with their smartphones during class hours. The teachers mostly felt demotivated when the learners came without their books. Most of them declared that it was demotivating when the learners had low academic achievement, as indicated in a study by Boonchuayrod and Getkham (2019). They reflected that it was highly demotivating when the management required them to attend many staff meetings and complete much paperwork. Also, the teachers said they become highly demotivated when the learners show no enjoyment towards English as a language (Li & Qian, 2018).

A study by Elcin Olmezer (2021) revealed that teachers were demotivated in assessment literacy, primarily due to perceiving language assessment as an additional burden, a source of uneasiness, or a cause of tension. Similarly, Li's (2021) study highlighted that subject-based, community-based, division-of-labor-based, and tool-based factors contributed to target language demotivation among teachers.

### Findings About the Third Research Question

Studies on the attitudes of students and teachers toward demotivation revealed that they had the propensity to focus on inevitable distractions during ongoing learning processes as a result of several context-related elements in the classroom and other context-related factors outside the school (Minella, 2022).

The attitudes of the students are a significant factor in their demotivation. Given the mode of demotivation, students' attitudes can either encourage or discourage them from staying on track, completing tasks, focusing on the subject, and deepening their understanding. However, when students have negative attitudes, they struggle to follow the lessons and participate effectively in class (Wang & Pan, 2022). In addition, both new and experienced teachers agreed that demotivation comes from teaching quality, the personalities and skills of teachers and students, classroom environment, school facilities, and feelings of anxiety (Afshari et al., 2019; Al-Khasawneh, 2017). Negative attitudes toward English could hinder learners' engagement and enjoyment in extensive reading programs (Yip & Tsang, 2020). According to a different study, Turkish EFL students were demotivated to varied degrees by certain attitudes. (Karaca & Inan, 2020). In a different study, Li (2021) found that students' limited exposure to English where they live, its lack of relevance to future jobs, and unsupportive family backgrounds all contribute to demotivation and poor learning. Similarly, demotivated students highlighted how a mismatch between course content and their long-term goals hurt their motivation (Evans & Tragant, 2020).

On the other hand, research by Akay (2017) and Li and Zhou (2017) demonstrated that teachers' attitudes and behaviors contributed to learners' demotivation. Therefore, these students couldn't enjoy lessons and started to feel stuck in a hopeless situation. This affected their prospective English education and caused alienation for these learners. In Olmezer Ozturk's (2021) study with teachers, negative attitudes toward language assessment made it feel optional rather than essential. This led teachers to ignore it, causing their own demotivation.

### Discussion

Several elements that demotivate EFL students and EFL teachers were examined in this study. This study was based on a detailed review of existing research and aimed to describe findings. Fifty-seven articles were reviewed during the process. According to the research findings, one factor that students perceived as demotivating was their level of involvement in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. This indicates that the learners, being listeners, may refrain from speaking in the classroom setting while engaging in the instructional part of the lesson or activities as they think they gain more knowledge by listening (Mustapha et al., 2010). Lack of self-confidence (Tatar, 2005) and negative emotional states or reactions and personal fears related to previous negative experiences may cause the learners to keep themselves from participating (Allwright et al., 1991).

From that perspective, the teacher should show the learners that their contributions and suggestions are significant for learning and teaching, which may boost their participation (Peterson, 2001). The learners may regard the teacher as the most crucial interaction component in the formal learning setting to create a good learning process (Fritschner, 2000). Also, Al'Omairi et al. (2015) suggested that concentrating on

learners contributes to learning by promoting the acquisition, recording, organization, and retrieval of information and affecting the learners' participation.

Beyond individual learner factors, social dynamics within the classroom also play a significant role in shaping motivation. In this study, classmates were identified as a factor influencing demotivation. To overcome this barrier, learners employed self-reliance and problem-solving strategies (Falout, 2012). Also, they may disregard humiliating classmates, a feeling that is not constructive, cooperative, or optimistic, and think positively to handle demotivation (Han et al., 2019). Another theme is the teacher's insufficient clarity. Quick explanation lowers the learners' motivation (Daif-Allah & Alsamani, 2014). Regarding using native and foreign languages in the classroom, the researchers admit the promising effect of utilizing the native tongue to convey the content. Accordingly, Levine (2011) suggested that the native language is crucial in a formal learning setting studying a foreign language.

Institutional factors such as management practices and working conditions also play a crucial role in shaping motivation. Factors such as inappropriate treatment by school management, low salaries, and time constraints significantly contribute to teacher demotivation (Ghanizadeh & Erfanian, 2017). These themes align with Fattash et al.'s (2013) and Falout's (2010) results. Ghanizadeh and Erfanian (2017) suggested that demotivating factors can be removed by showing high teacher respect. Also, these researchers claimed that governments and their associated ministries, departments, institutions, and agencies should supply schools with technological facilities and financial bonuses for teachers. Accordingly, Khanal et al. (2021) underlined that the institutional EFL teachers' demotivation should be decreased with the help of satisfactory payment, generating and arranging various professional events, and holding them in high esteem.

On the other hand, another key theme was the characteristics of teachers. This is in line with Falout and Maruyama (2004). It may be justifiable that the students are prone to take classes from a kind and caring teacher rather than a confrontational and too authoritarian person. Regarding the theme of the learning environment, Chambers' (1993) study reported similar findings, as students criticized the large class size, describing the crowded classroom as a demotivating factor. Therefore, good English classrooms are necessary for students to participate and communicate. This may be fulfilled by building enough schools and training more teachers.

Some of the reviewed studies in the current research showed grasping English grammar and retarding and internalizing pronunciation and spelling of English vocabulary as other demotivating themes. DeKeyser (2005) reported that these are considered form-related problems that foreign language learners encounter. The students need correct morphemes and allomorphs to transmit their intended meaning and organize them in the proper order. On the other hand, Meshkat and Hassani (2012) showed that the learners regarded paying particular attention to grammar as a demotivator. Thus, learning English via technology and written and verbal tools that decrease students' demotivation may be an effective teacher strategy (Yamauchi, 2009). For instance, Chen and Chen (2009) suggested that English songs may increase students' motivation because songs and music generate a counseling environment and ameliorate their pronunciation.

The teachers' competence and teaching style are the other important themes. The students, for instance, feel demotivated when their teachers center excessively on grammar. Also, insufficient teaching practices that feed their English skills may demotivate the students. A rigorous environment for the students to share or exchange information, news, or ideas in the target language is created by the instructors' employment of the grammar-translation technique, according to Kikuchi (2009), which demotivates the students. According to some theories, teachers may help students feel more motivated by engaging them in learning activities that pique their interest or arouse their curiosity. More communicative activities, such as language games and real-life dialogues, might boost learners' motivation. The students choose classes emphasizing contact and conversation rather than grammar or tests. To motivate students to achieve more communicative goals, social activities, and role plays should be incorporated into the curriculum design more than before.

Using technology in ELT classes may benefit the students since it can boost their motivation, lessen their fear, and provide more possibilities for interaction and meaning-making (Brinton, 2001; Syndorenko, 2010). Adopting learner-focused practices such as role-play might help maintain students' attention and engagement when they have unfavorable views about traditional teacher-led or authority-based instruction techniques (Littlewood, 2001). To bridge the gap between studying English and having a genuine discussion, creating content directly related to the students and allowing them to use English in real-life situations is essential. Both internal and external variables can help remotivate students and offer workable solutions for demotivation.

Sun and Lei (2013) claimed that the teacher-related themes are the most remarkable. Li and Ruan (2015) put forward that teachers should nurture their students' attitudes toward the advantages of participating in English activities. Li and Zhou (2017) suggested that their teacher might influence the students' attentiveness to English learning. English instructors should also strengthen their pedagogical expertise to enhance their teaching abilities. Additionally, teachers must update their teaching philosophies from a communicative viewpoint and add to their repertoire of instructional techniques. Further, they are advised to assist EFL students in becoming more aware of the variations between themselves and their peers (Dörnyei, 2001). Developing pupils' enthusiasm for studying English is another recommendation made to teachers (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). In addition, a communicative strategy is advised for EFL sessions to enhance students' perceptions of their satisfaction and ability to communicate effectively (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Psychological therapy may also be essential to assist students in coping with difficulties in social interaction and disappointments in EFL study. Also, increasing the degree of stability among EFL students is a successful strategy for fending off demotivation, especially considering resilience's crucial role in helping students sustain mental fortitude when faced with challenges (Luthar et al., 2000). EFL teachers must thus think about how to enhance stability in their instruction.

Lack of self-efficacy, resistance to innovation, insufficient learning capabilities, and self-regulation are other themes of the current study. Teng et al. (2018) revealed that in foreign language learning, reading/writing ability, capacity to use information and communication technologies, understanding how to evaluate information, and being conscious of preconceptions or biases, the ability to come up with unique,

original solutions, individual and social potentials are asked for effective learning and goals fulfillment. Sun and Wang (2020) showed that low self-efficacy undesirably influences the improvement of students' learning capabilities. On the other hand, Guan et al. (2020) claimed that several skills and abilities are stimulated by innovations such as utilizing information and communications technologies. McLelland (2018) indicated that in the presence of the disinclination to accept innovative learning, students might not maintain to generate the dynamic capabilities significant for learning a foreign language. At that point, students must remove low self-efficacy and the barriers of disinclination to accept innovation to improve their learning capabilities efficiently.

Inadequate intercultural communication is another issue to consider. Yunus (2018) showed that communication between people from two different cultures promotes the students' information and creates a state of wanting to know or learn about one's and others' cultures. Chen (2018) argued that given that the students do not benefit from intercultural communication, they find it challenging to gain knowledge of one another's living styles. Thus, poor intercultural communication causes students' demotivation. Gong et al. (2018) claimed that when individuals have no interconnected communication system with others who are members of other cultures, they gain less knowledge about the members of different cultures. This may enhance the demotivation in the students. Thus, policies by the relevant authorities must be prepared methodically to promote intercultural communication (Wang & Pan, 2022).

Learning contents, materials, and facilities were other issues in this review that caused demotivation. According to research by Meshkat and Hassani (2012) and Sakai and Kikuchi (2009), even high-quality educational resources and facilities can demotivate students. If educational resources are not built and prepared to be convenient for students' requirements and wants, a lack of facilities, learning content, and materials might cause students to lose motivation. Providing engaging and inspiring school environments, curricula, and learning resources is essential to fulfill students' needs and wants while increasing their attention. This will also help students feel more engaged in class. Learners should seek a tool to adapt their responses to the presented content and how it is being taught. English teachers should remain authentic and utilize activities both in lessons at school or pursued in addition to the normal course of study to stimulate students' interests. For English instructors to incorporate new technology into their lesson plans and make the classes more engaging for students, schools should ensure that they have access to modern equipment and technology.

On the other hand, learners' misbehaving, talking all the time, being busy with their smartphones, coming without their books, having low academic achievement, and showing no enjoyment towards English were essential themes in terms of the demotivational factors for the teachers. Johnson (2000) showed that demotivation emerges from students' negative attitudes toward foreign language learning. Freeman and Freeman (1994) argued that different types of students might negatively affect the teacher. Thus, lack of interest, inattentiveness, and insufficient language abilities may demotivate the teachers. Also, if the students do not enjoy English as a language, as Gao (2014) reflected, the teachers become demotivated.

In the case of the students' being shy, reluctant, and opposed to responding during the lessons, the teachers should



examine their thoughts or feelings and think carefully about their teaching techniques and other factors that may influence students' attentiveness and curiosity in foreign language learning (Kikuchi, 2010; Keblawi, 2005). Sharma (2018) stated that foreign language teachers might reduce students' demotivation by employing well-founded motivational strategies. On the other hand, it may be an incentive to take on different approaches to reinforce students' EFL learning motivation. Dörnyei et al. (2016) provide helpful instructional directions for foreign language learners to experience invariably low levels of demotivation for long periods, thus finally enabling them to succeed in getting high degrees of skills in the target language proficiency.

According to Ghaith (2019), how well a teacher connects with their students affects how they view learning difficulties and how threatened they feel. From this angle, the teachers must provide the required one-on-one and academic assistance to create a dynamic EFL learning atmosphere that promotes learning and success. They give importance to the role of the methods that promote each learner's optimal development and learning practices and the utilization of the materials that are easy to learn, use, understand, or deal with and arouse curiosity or interest. The likelihood that students will be motivated to study a language is higher when they feel safe in the classroom. They could understand the value of English, see it as a universal language, a necessary ability for educated people, an approachable language, and make EFL students more enthusiastic and interested. They underlined communicative activities and more valuable and authentic opportunities for students to use English in class.

The community-based and labor-of-division-based factors are the other themes. Dörnyei (2001) and Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) argued that traditional teacher-centered and exam-based teaching methods cannot consider the traits or other characteristics by which the learners may be distinguished from one another. Therefore, they are far from meeting their needs and demands in terms of learning English (Li, 2016). When learners show negative attitudes toward learning English, their demotivation is influenced to a high degree (Kim, 2011). With demotivation, learners' self-confidence and intrinsic interest decrease, leading to failure in English learning for them. Also, in the case of criticism from their teachers, the learners become inefficient in handling the pressures and are prone to be easily discouraged in their foreign language learning. From this perspective, Zeynali et al. (2019) pointed out that teacher development programs should include reinforced strategies against demotivation for EFL teachers. Students should be guided to have a logical understanding of studying English. The teachers may assist the learners in taking active steps to achieve their desired outcomes (Hamada, 2014) and direct them to encourage good attitudes in foreign language learning. Furthermore, to create a good perception of themselves in light of the peer effect on demotivation, foreign language learners may be advised to engage with their peers (Tanaka, 2017).

## Conclusion

This study aims to review the investigations in the demotivational research area in the global context of EFL teaching and learning between the years 2017 and 2022 to manifest the factors, find out which demotivational reflections were included, and discover the general tendency in demotivation research regarding EFL teaching and learning. Given the results, this review study provides different

implications and suggestions for teachers and learners. Moreover, foreign language teachers and instructors may use the results to better understand foreign language learners' experiences of demotivation. The results may be helpful for researchers to contribute to the existing literature and focus on the areas that the current research fails to explain. An analysis of the educational contexts and study participants reveals that recent research on demotivation in EFL teaching has mostly focused on university settings. Few studies have examined other educational institutions and their students.

This study found that most participants encountered demotivation in their English teaching-learning. Their demotivation was affected by the materials, tools, subjects, rules, and community. The results of this study present suggestions for pedagogical implications to impede demotivation among EFL learners. Teaching methods can be improved to make learning more engaging and collaborative. Contents and materials attached to the lives of the learners and focusing on each language skill need to be supported and arranged. Also, virtual classrooms should be developed via the Internet to boost skills beyond classroom borders. The learners can be remotivated through performance assignments and tasks to allow them to keep themselves away from the negative impacts of demotivation in English lessons. EFL learners should receive tailored guidance to help them find the most effective learning methods. These learners should be encouraged to visualize their future goals for using English. Thanks to recognizing the importance of the necessity to devote time and attention to gaining knowledge of English, more favorable perceptions may be developed. EFL textbooks and curriculum specialists should attempt to present a proper and moderate quantitative measure of learning activities based on learners' educational segment. Motivating learners can reduce stress and enhance their learning experiences and achievements.

According to research, a collaborative and encouraging learning environment is essential for reducing teachers' emotions of loneliness and burnout (Afshari et al., 2019). In order to exchange problems, answers, and resources, educators are urged to participate in peer support groups or professional learning communities. Building a network of coworkers could promote a feeling of community and lessen work-related stress. Moreover, by addressing particular instructional issues, regular participation in focused professional development programs can improve teaching efficacy and lower demotivation (Daif-Allah & Alsamani, 2014). Workshops on cutting-edge teaching techniques, classroom management, or digital language learning resources can offer fresh approaches to energizing students and bringing teaching methods back to life.

Research shows that when students show signs of disengagement or lack of progress, teachers frequently become discouraged (Baba Khouya, 2018; Gao et al., 2022). Increased student participation can boost teachers' motivation when learner-centered strategies are used, such as integrating students' interests and objectives into lesson design. It has been demonstrated that using digital tools, such as AI-based platforms and gamified learning applications, can increase student engagement and lessen the boredom of instruction (Chen, 2018). To create dynamic and interactive learning environments, educators should try integrating technology into their classes.

Also, teachers can critically assess their approaches, pinpoint development opportunities, and re-establish a



connection with their professional objectives by implementing reflective teaching practices (Falout et al., 2009). Teachers can stay motivated and deal with difficulties head-on by keeping a reflective notebook or taking part in mentorship programs. Demotivation is often linked to external factors such as excessive administrative work, lack of institutional support, and limited autonomy (Fattash, 2013; Ghanizadeh & Erfanian, 2017). Teachers should advocate for equitable workloads and seek opportunities to participate in institutional decision-making. Sustaining long-term motivation requires building resilience and placing a high priority on mental health. Research highlights the value of stress-reduction strategies, self-care, and mindfulness in avoiding burnout (Kim et al., 2018; Khanal et al., 2021). Institutions can help with this by making counseling services and health programs accessible.

### Author Contributions

All authors were equally involved in all processes of the article. All authors read and approved the final version of the study.

### Ethical Declaration

The authors declare that their study is not subject to ethics committee permission and that the rules determined by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) were followed throughout the entire process of the study.

### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest with any institution or person within the scope of the study.

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