

An Analysis of the Influential Factors of Demotivation in College English and Its Countermeasures -- Taking Applied Undergraduate Colleges as an Example

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ABSTRACT. *The purpose of this study is to investigate the demotivation of non-English majors in applied undergraduate colleges and universities in Chongqing. 513 questionnaires were collected to summarize the internal and external factors. At the same time, the author combined the demotivation phenomena and the analysis of the influential factors, formulated some corresponding intervention strategies. The results of the study confirm that these interventions are of great significance in reducing or eliminating the negative motivation of College English learning, and can provide reference for college English teachers in applied undergraduate colleges and universities, so as to improve the quality of College English teaching.*

KEYWORDS: *Applied undergraduate colleges and universities; College English; Demotivation; Influential factor; Intervention strategy*

1. Introduction

Learning motivation, as one of the factors affecting language learners' initiative, has attracted much attention from researchers. The motivation study of second language acquisition began in the 1950s, and its research methods, contents and means have been constantly enriched and improved. However, since the 1990s, foreign research on second language acquisition has become more multidimensional, gradually shifting from motivation enhancement and stimulation to exploring the negative factors that reduce or prevent learners' learning motivation, namely, negative motivation or demotivation.

Although the definition of demotivation is still controversial in academic circles, there is agreement on its influencing factors. Compared with foreign countries, domestic research on demotivation began at the beginning of this century, and mainly focused on the key veteran College English learners (Tang Wenli, 2012). According to the basic requirements of social development and social division of labor, the new applied undergraduate colleges and universities have become a type

of higher education based on research and higher vocational education, which aims at training applied talents (Sun Lili, Wang Zhengliang 2017). In this new type of undergraduate college, demotivation is quietly affecting college English learners' learning and teaching. Therefore, this study attempts to study the factors affecting the demotivation of learners with different personalities and English proficiency in Applied Undergraduate Colleges and universities and put forward corresponding countermeasures.

2. Research Background

In recent years, demotivation in English learning has become one of the hotspots in second language acquisition. Demotivation, also known as “motivation fading”, refers to “reducing or weakening some specific external factors of behavioral motivation” (Drnyei, 2005:143; Sun Yunmei, etc., 2013). In the research, such factors as learning environment, teaching resources, teachers' behavior or ability, bring negative effects on learners' learning attitude and behavior. It reduces the vitality of classroom participation and brings wide range of negative learning outcomes. Gorham and Christophel played a leading role in the research in 1992. Since then, demotivation research abroad has made great progress. Because of the negative impact of various external factors, internal factors appear negative, which ultimately leads to the decline or even elimination of motivation.

The research on demotivation in English learning in China started late, but developed rapidly. At present, the research on demotivation in China is mainly based on questionnaires, supplemented by qualitative means such as interviews and retrospective writing. Negative motivation refers to a process, that is, the process in which people's motivation subsides. In the field of language teaching, demotivation means that English learners lose their motivation for language learning for some reason, which has a negative impact on their language learning attitudes and behaviors. A survey of Chinese College English learners shows that the lack of effective learning strategies is the primary factor to induce demotivation and reveal their interest in learning. Lack of motivation is also the cause of learners' demotivation (Zhou Cibo, Wang Wenbin: 2012). The stronger the students' demotivation, the lower their self-esteem. Therefore, teachers should pay more attention to them and encourage them. In addition, the imperfection of teaching equipment can also make learners appear demotivation. Hu Weixing and Cai Jinting (2010) used interviews and questionnaires as tools to find six influencing factors: learning environment, validity, learning interest, learning purpose, anxiety and attribution, and constructed a causal model of motivation decline.

Generally speaking, there are fewer empirical studies on demotivation of College English learners, and the students of Applied Undergraduate Colleges and universities are seldom taken as the research objects. Based on the characteristics of students in these colleges and universities, this study will analyze the main influence of demotivation in College English learning by means of questionnaire, observation and empirical research. The factors include teachers' factors, learning materials, learning environment and students' own factors, and put forward corresponding

solutions.

3. Designs of the Study

3.1 Research Objectives

This study combines domestic and foreign literatures and the actual situation of College English students in Applied Undergraduate Colleges and universities, and comprehensively understands the demotivation process of College English learning through questionnaires. The purpose of this study is to answer the following questions:

- (1) What are the demotivation phenomenon of College English learners in applied universities?
- (2) What factors lead to demotivation in College English learning?
- (3) What strategies can teachers adopt to weaken or eliminate negative learning motivation?

3.2 Research Methods

(1) Observation: The author has observed that the demotivation of College English learners is becoming more and more serious in many years' teaching work. After communicating with colleagues and other college English teachers, it is found that the demotivation of College English learners is becoming more and more obvious from 1980s. Therefore, this view is purposeful, planned and systematic.

(2) Questionnaire survey: In order to fully understand the demotivation of College English learning, the author conducts a survey of College English learners in Chongqing Applied Undergraduate Colleges and universities through online questionnaires. The design is directly related to the success or failure of the questionnaire, so the designer pays special attention to its integrity, scientificity and rationality.

(3) Literature Research: By consulting relevant books and information on the Internet, drawing on the latest research results and research trends of reference research field at home and abroad, the theoretical value of this study is enhanced.

3.3 Research Subjects

The subjects of this study are students of five applied undergraduate colleges in Chongqing (i.e. Chongqing University of Science and Technology, Chongqing University of Arts and Sciences, Chongqing Engineering College, Chongqing Medical University and Chongqing University of Business and Industry). Through the online questionnaire survey, 513 students participated in the survey. From the

data analysis of Table 1, the subjects of the survey are as follows: Reasonable distribution can better reflect the influencing factors of demotivation of College English learning in applied undergraduate colleges.

Table 1 Relevant Information of Research Subjects

	Male	Female	Freshmen	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Under ET-4	CET-4	CET-6
Number ratio	221(43.08)	292(56.92)	276(53.80)	137(26.71)	99(19.30)	11(0.19)	485(94.54)	21(4.10)	7(1.36)
Remarks: Three of them do not allow freshmen take CET-4.									

3.4 Results and Analysis of the Survey

In this study, Table 2 is used as the statistical results of the influencing factors. The descriptive statistical results can be obtained by scoring 1, 2, 3 and 4 points for each option in the question. The greater the influence of demotivation, the greater the mean value is. As can be seen from the table, the first three items with the largest mean are 11 (mean 3.014), 16 (mean 2.844) and 22 (mean 2.776). It can be seen that self-factors (S) account for 2/3 of the first three items and are the most important factors, i.e. the internal factors mentioned below; the first three items with the smallest mean are 17 (mean 1.797) and 3 (mean 2.776). (Mean 1,692) and 13 (mean 1.550) questions show that environmental impact factors (E) account for 2/3 of the last three items, and learning environment is the most secondary factor, that is, the external factors mentioned below. Learning environment is only an objective thing, which only affects students' learning attitude, which is just the reflection of students' own factors. At the same time, it can be seen that the demotivation factors concerned by the subjects are textbooks, students themselves, teachers and learning environment in turn. Of course, the teachers' factor can not be ignored, and the survey results also bring great inspiration to educators. In the process of teaching, we should not only emphasize students' learning methods, but also pay attention to our own teaching methods. As long as we achieve the harmonious development of teaching and learning, we can really improve the quality of teaching.

Table 2 a Questionnaire Survey on the Influencing Factors of Demotivation in College English and Its Result

NO.	Questions	Findings (Percentage)				Descriptive Statistics		
		A	B	C	D	mean value	standard deviation	deviation
1	There are too many new words in English textbooks, so it is difficult to learn by myself. (B)	15.01	27.49	27.29	30.21	2.844	1.044	-0.283
2	I have no plans for future career in	35.48	23.39	22.61	18.52	3.014	0.986	-0.573

	foreign languages. (S)							
3	My parents put pressure on my English study (E)	40.16	30.8	19.88	9.16	2.123	0.989	0.743
4	English class is full of written exercises, and there are few other forms of activities. (E)	26.12	33.33	25.34	15.2	1.550	1.053	1.570
5	I'm afraid to make a fool of myself in English class and leave a bad impression on others. (S)	27.88	28.46	25.34	18.32	2.086	1.085	0.786
6	English course needs to recite many words, grammar, sentence patterns and so on. It's boring. (B)	22.03	30.8	23.98	23.2	2.306	1.041	0.442
7	Frequently criticized by English teachers (E)	32.55	27.49	23	16.96	2.606	1.031	0.026
8	I feel that my English is hard to hear. The more I learn, the less I feel confident to comment on it. (S)	29.82	29.29	22.81	20.08	2.690	1.052	-0.110
9	The main purpose of learning English is to cope with the English exam. (E)	24.56	39.18	22.42	13.84	1.692	1.026	1.342
10	English teachers teach only by themselves and seldom interact with students in class. (T)	29.82	29.24	23.39	17.54	2.361	1.153	0.393
11	I work hard, but my English is not very good every time. (S)	8.19	24.76	27.68	39.38	2.150	1.009	0.695
12	English teachers lack passion in class (T)	15.2	31.38	27.1	26.32	2.031	1.105	0.849
13	Neither of my classmates likes learning English (E)	45.85	28.27	16.57	9.36	2.148	1.029	0.666
14	Schools pay attention to professional skills and do not require too much English ability of students. (E)	29.82	30.6	22.22	17.35	2.175	1.086	0.626
15	My foundation is poor. I can't help playing with my cell phone and dozing off in English class. (S)	25.54	25.93	21.25	27.29	2.101	1.090	0.750
16	English teachers only want speed but don't talk about effect in class (T)	11.31	29.43	22.81	36.45	2.327	1.045	0.380
17	English teachers lack personal charm (T)	38.4	30.40	17.15	14.04	2.306	1.099	0.437
18	The form of English teacher's lecture is fixed and there is no novelty. (T)	25.54	31.77	25.34	17.35	2.203	1.052	0.592
19	The English teacher did not correct	22.61	29.63	28.85	18.91	2.146	1.121	0.690

	his homework carefully. (T)							
20	I'm afraid to speak English in many occasions. (S)	25.15	27.1	25.93	21.83	1.797	1.090	1.241
21	I seldom guess the meaning of a word by combining context with context when I understand the text. (S)	19.49	30.8	23.2	26.51	2.776	1.076	-0.221
22	I don't know how to learn English well. (S)	29.82	29.24	23.39	17.54	2.485	1.084	0.219
23	The task of learning English is too heavy, which makes people feel too nervous. (S)	24.76	37.04	23.2	15.01	2.000	1.151	0.888
24	English teachers only teach textbook content, rarely involving content other than textbook. (T)	22.42	32.36	26.32	18.91	2.376	1.081	0.365
Remarks: 1) The above factors are: A. unimportant B. more important C. important D. extremely important 2) B represents books; E represents learning environment; S represents students' own factors; T represents teachers' factors								

4. Conclusion of the Research

4.1 Through the Analysis of the Survey Results, the Author Concludes the Following Demotivation Factors

(1) Internal Factors

The results of this survey show that the main internal factors of demotivation of College English learners are self-factors (average value of Question 11 is 3.014). The internal factors are related to learners. Such as lack of interest, effective learning strategies, self-confidence and good learning habits in this study, students' unclear learning objectives, and low learning ability in words, grammar, listening, spoken English, etc. induce demotivation of English learning.

(2) External Factors

External factors are related to objective factors, including teachers, textbooks and learning environment. Teachers lack of personal charm, inadequate teaching ability, rigid teaching style, outdated textbooks, no update of learning content, curriculum design does not fully meet the needs of students, negative effects of performance, poor learning environment, imperfect teaching facilities, rigid management and peer negative atmosphere. The lack of internal motivation aggravates students' demotivation.

Although the demotivation of College English learning of applied undergraduate students is the result of both internal and external factors, it can be seen from the results of this study that students' own factors (S), i.e. internal factors, are the primary influencing factors.

4.2 According to the Analysis of the Influencing Factors, the Author Concludes the Following Countermeasures.

Based on the above findings, this study proposes the following points on how to overcome demotivation in the process of English learning in applied undergraduate colleges and universities:

(1) Rebuilding Learning Interest and Self-confidence

The results of this study show that the main internal factors of demotivation of College English learners are their own factors, such as lack of interest in learning and effective learning methods, poor foundation, lack of learning ability and self-control, etc. Teachers are well aware that “teaching fishing is better than teaching fish”. Therefore, teachers should teach students effective learning strategies. For example, by watching English songs, English movies, sitcoms and even English online games that students love, students are encouraged to interact in class, stimulate their active participation, and re-shape their interest and self-confidence in learning English.

(2) Scientific Selection of Teaching Materials

Textbooks, as one of the external factors of demotivation, should be investigated and studied by teachers from students, disciplines and society. After comprehensive judgment, teaching materials can be scientifically compiled or selected, and teaching materials suitable for applied undergraduate colleges and universities can also be selected through online competitions. At the same time, in the process of teaching, teachers should adjust teaching methods and contents flexibly, extend, supplement or update teaching contents, and stimulate students' learning motivation through novel and interesting teaching contents such as videos and pictures. In addition, teachers can also learn from excellent teaching cases at home and abroad, so that students can experience a variety of classroom models, restrain the generation of demotivation.

(3) Changing of Teachers' Ideas

The survey results show that among the top three influencing factors, the teacher factor (T) accounts for 1/3 (mean 2.844 of 16 questions), which undoubtedly brings the following enlightenments to college English teachers:

1) Enhancing Teaching Ability

Teachers' teaching ability is the precondition to complete teaching tasks. Teachers are classroom guiders rather than controllers. Students are the main body of learning. Therefore, teachers should consciously stimulate students' learning motivation, so as to make them become the dominant and participants in learning, and avoid the generation of demotivation. At the same time, for those students with poor English foundation, inadequate learning ability and poor self-control, teachers can reduce learning goals, appropriate praise or reward, which can play a positive and strengthening role in creating a successful opportunity, thus stimulating students to learn actively and eliminating negative motivation.

2) Improving Teaching Style

Teaching style refers to the way of thinking, behavior habits and spiritual outlook gradually formed by teachers in teaching practice (Li Rumi, 2002). Teaching style includes teachers' teaching idea, personality charm, teaching skills, knowledge cultivation, etc. Teachers' teaching style influences students' learning style. Therefore, teachers should learn new teaching ideas at home and abroad, enrich teaching skills, improve knowledge cultivation and enhance classroom appeal, so as to promote the completion of students' learning style. Good, avoid demotivation.

(4) Creating a Good Learning Environment

This study shows that learning environment is an external factor that generates demotivation. Students attributed their demotivation to learning environment, such as parents' pressure, teachers' single teaching activities, students' negative influence, the settling of teaching equipment, etc. Students believed that only with a good environment, can they immerse in and cultivate English language learning. Therefore, schools should update English teaching facilities and equipment, teachers should create more English learning environment for students to speak English and break the "dumb English". Abundant teaching environment can enrich students' interest in learning and ultimately overcome demotivation.

5. Conclusion

By observing the students' demotivation in College English, this study investigates the students in five Applied Undergraduate Colleges and universities in Chongqing through questionnaires, explores the causes of demotivation, and puts forward strategies to reduce or restrain it. Therefore, this study enriches the current literature on demotivation, and the conclusions provide new data and information for further understanding the demotivation of College English learning in applied undergraduate colleges and universities. It is hoped that this study will provide new ideas and suggestions for a wide range of college English teachers in applied undergraduate colleges and universities and play an important role in the reform of College English teaching. Enlightenment.

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