

# The Impact of Esl Teachers' Use of Demotivational Language on Students' Learning: A Study of Esl Learners at Secondary Level in Pakistan

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**Abstract:** It is the need of the modern era to acquire English as a global language. Without learning it one cannot cope up with the rapidly developing world. For non-native, schools are the only places where one can fulfill the dream of learning any second language, especially English language. However, in non-native countries, the aspirants of English language learning face many factors that cause hindrances or make the dreams possible of acquiring it. In schools, ESL teachers are considered the key personalities who make English language learning possible or impossible for their students. If the ESL teachers will demotivate the under studies, then who will make the targeted language possible to learn for them. Obviously they will not learn with passion or quit the learning process. The main purpose of this work is to determine the impact of teachers' use of demotivational language on students' learning and behaviors, especially towards ESL learning. The researchers tried to investigate how much the use of the demotivational language of the ESL teachers affects the students' learning process. The quantitative design (descriptive) was adopted in which 190 students of 10<sup>th</sup> class from 20 high and higher secondary schools (for boys) of district Rahim Yar Khan were included. The questionnaire consisted of 15 MCQs having 05 options (Likert scale). After collecting the data, the researchers analyzed it in descriptive form. The findings revealed that the use of demotivational language kills the ongoing learning process and works as a barrier to the ways of success.

**Keywords:** Impact, ESL, Language, Learning

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## 1. Introduction

English as a second language (ESL) is related to English for non-native speakers is a special kind of approach to language rules set for those who have English as their second language [1]. Carrasquillo has discussed that English as a Second Language is the desired language of the other languages speakers who want to learn English for their specific purposes [2]. However, it is the desired language to meet the learner's goals and is designed in such a way that the learners can learn it easily by following the given instructions of the English language. Teaching ESL to non-native speakers is a defined process, probably all the

language learners are instructed in the same way and the teachers use the same strategies. The intuitions that conduct classes of ESL follow the designed instruction to teach the non-native speakers [3].

Demotivation is an adverse power that blocks any ongoing activity or action of the ESL learners all over the world [4, 5]. Al-Malki and other have discussed demotivation as a damaging factor that stops the continuous growth of any doing for foreign language learners. Demotivation works as a barrier in learning any second language. If a learner is learning the targeted language and suddenly is demotivated by the fellows and especially from the language teacher then the learning process will be reached to a very low level or it

may be stopped. Demotivation is a force and is linked to definite external factors that slash or minimizes the motivational grounds to the attentive attitude or progressive action [6, 7]. According to Dingake demotivation is directly related to the definite extraneous forces that minimize or demolish the boost up the moral or continuous progress. In language learning, the learners are mostly demotivated by the external factors that cause hindrances in their process. The progressiveness in the learning process starts to stop just because of motivation. Demotivation turns optimistic behavior into pessimistic behavior.

## 2. Literature Review

Demotivation is referred to as “specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioral intention or an ongoing action [8, 9]. Adara and Najmudin have argued that demotivation is such an external force that minimizes or stop the motivational support of the learners and block the continuing actions. Demotivation kills the learning process, even a good learner starts losing his/her competencies, and then they get demotivational remarks by their teachers and others about their studies [10]. He further has argued that this particular external force, lesser the learning process, if students are going well in their studies and at that point, they are demotivated by their teachers, they may lose their hope and become doubtful about their competencies. [11] Abraham have discussed that it has been observed that in a context like Pakistan, students feel unable to develop their proficiency in English languages they have less exposure to it and therefore find it difficult. Being a compulsory subject at school as well as college-level, there is a need to find a better way out of this problem. [12] According to Rubbani and Noreen demotivation is a big problem and hindrance in the second language learning process and teaching any language as a foreign language. This problem has caught the concentration of the researchers and they found it as a huge issue in the learning and teaching process especially learning and teaching of the second language. [13] Misbah, Mohamad, Yunus, and Ya'acob argued that in Pakistani settings, students face many problems while they are learning English as a second language, they do not have proficiency in the English language, they do not have any subjection or if they have then it is enough less than one cannot meet their needs. [14] According to Wang Pakistani students of second language learning feel uncomfortable while they are in classroom settings, they think, if they utter any word wrongly, other fellows will make fun of them. Therefore, they remain conscious and cannot learn the targeted language properly. In Pakistan, English is being taught as a compulsory subject with a less expert teaching community of English teaching as a second language, therefore, to cope with this condition, we need to come up with a suitable and applicable solution. Therefore, those students can learn the targeted language easily [15]. An investigation was carried out on 250 American students about their learning experiences. It

showed that the classroom in which students felt uncomfortable, the learning process was very slow and the students were demotivated because of the classroom environment [16]. Pack presented the result of an investigation study that was conducted on 250 students of an American university about their learning involvement. During the study, the learners were supposed to remark on many topics, as the students talked about the situation in which they had conflicts with their teachers and the environment of the classroom, where they sensed the state of being annoying. During the investigation; four elements were disclosed: (a) the connection of the teacher with their students, (b) the attitude of the teacher towards the teaching material and the course, (c) clashes on teaching methods between the teacher and the students, (d) the environment of the classroom, where the students perform their activities. Khouya [17] has said that teacher's behavior towards their students, how a teacher takes the course and teaching material, clashes between teacher and the students on the teaching method and classroom setting, cause the demotivation for the learners. If the teacher's attitude is good, the relationship is friendly, take the course according to student's needs, use AV aids in classroom settings, struggle to improve the teaching style, and make the classroom environment peaceful for the learners then the learners will be motivated otherwise, they will be just demotivated [18].

The L2 domain is most often characterized by learning failure, in the sense that merely everyone has failed in the study of at least one foreign language. So, language learning failure is directly related to demotivation [19]. They have discussed that learning any second/foreign language is mostly described by learning deficiency; it is considered that every learner fails at least in one second/foreign language. The main cause of acquiring a second/foreign language is precisely associated with demotivation. So, one can acknowledge that, if there will be no motivation during learning any second language, there will be no learning. Motivation is a must to learn foreign languages and the main source of motivation is the teacher. A good teacher can lead the students to learn the targeted language easily. To learn a second language without motivation is just a dream because the language learners do not have exposure to the language, so they need motivation from their teachers, parents, and other fellows.

The behaviors of English teachers; the pressure of class fellows; the way of teaching, minimum use of current teaching aids, problematic English vocabulary and, grammar, etc work as barriers in the learning process [20, 21]. According to Rintaningrum has discussed that the attitude of ESL teachers' pressure from the class fellows, the teaching methods, improper use of latest teaching aids, tough English vocabulary that causes problems for the language learners and learning grammar of the second language create difficulties for the learners. Demotivation can negatively influence the learner's attitudes and behaviors, degrade classroom groups and result in long-term and widespread negative learning outcomes. Demotivation has very negative

impacts on learners' behaviors and sentiments. To degrade students in classroom settings ensured indelible boundless adverse learning results demotivation has very negative impacts on learners' behaviors and sentiments [22]. Demotivation reduces the learning passion of the students and makes them dull especially to demotivate the students in classroom settings impacts negatively on their psychology and these negative impacts remain for a long period and can ruin one's life [23]. De-motivational and negative use of language can sabotage the development of students' mental competencies and techniques [24]. The frequent use of bad or foul language weakens the improvements, of the students in learning, intellectual, capabilities, and their expertise [25]. Being demotivated is arguably one of the worst feelings in the world. You feel as you have no direction and you feel no seriousness. Demotivation creates blocks in an ongoing activity or action [26, 27]. According to Butler, Gossner, Barham, Hansen-Bethea, & Crawford, have claimed that in the world to feel demotivated is affably very bad feelings. If you are demotivated then obviously, you will feel that you have a vision or goal; you feel that you have an expedition to

change your fate, life, and living condition.

### 3. Research Methodology

Quantitative approach was used in this study that included collecting and analyzing the research data. Questionnaire for the participants was the basic source for the collection of data. The population of the study was 20 government boys' secondary and higher secondary schools of District Rahim Yar Khan, Province Punjab, Pakistan. 190 participants were as the samples of the research. SPSS software was used to analyze the outcomes of the study. The researchers conducted a descriptive (quantitative) study and collected data through a questionnaire that was comprised of 15 questions. The researchers used random sampling criteria.

### 4. Results

Descriptive and statistical analysis of ESL teachers' use of de-motivational language on students' learning.

*Table 1. Questionnaire and data.*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Q1. Do you see your learning objectives possible to achieve when your ESL teacher demotivates/discourages you?	190	4.2947	.84043
2. Do you give sufficient time to study English if your ESL teacher demotivates/ discourages you?	190	4.2947	.84043
3. Do you say or write new English words several times though your ESL teacher demotivates/discourages you?	190	4.2158	.70581
4. Do you try to find patterns (of grammar) in English when your ESL teacher says that you cannot learn grammar?	190	4.2895	.73851
5. Do you ask questions in English if your ESL teacher uses discouraging remarks about you in the classroom?	190	4.3421	.71552
6. Do you feel comfortable in the classroom through your ESL teacher uses demotivational language?	190	4.2211	.81232
7. Do your other class fellows pass insulting remarks if your ESL teacher says, English is impossible to learn for you?	190	4.3526	.78131
8. Does your anxiety increase when your ESL teacher discourages/demotivates you about your learning?	190	4.3053	.69881
9. Do you lose your confidence when you get demotivational remarks from your ESL teacher?	190	4.3053	.72846
10. Do you think your ESL teacher is a good teacher if he/she uses demotivational language in the classroom?	190	4.2579	.85562
11. Do you learn with passion when your English teacher uses demotivational language in the classroom?	190	4.2632	.74480
12. Do you work hard, whenever you do not perform well and your English teacher insults you?	190	4.3105	.81869
13. Do you think that the learning process is easy when your English teacher uses demotivational language in the classroom?	190	4.2947	.73999
14. Do you try to improve yourself, when your English teacher says that you cannot pass the exam?	190	4.3895	.57817
15. Does your ESL teacher's demotivation/discouragement make you able to summarize information that we hear or read in English?	190	4.3211	.66434

*Table 2. Brief summary of data analysis.*

Impacts of ESL teachers' use of demotivational language on students learning.	
	91.7%
	95.4%
	94.3%
	93.8%
	92.8%
	92.8%
	92.8%
	93.3%
	93.9%
	93.8%
	93.3%
	93.3%
	92.8%
	94.3%
	92.2%
Total=	1,400.5/15
Cumulative%	93.3%

93.3% of ESL learners disagreed to achieve the learning objectives if their ESL teachers discourage or demotivate them. They are unable to achieve even a single learning objective if ESL teachers use demotivational language in the classroom setting.

### 5. Discussion and Conclusion

91.7% of students see their learning objectives impossible to learn when their ESL teacher discourages/demotivates them. 95.4% do not give sufficient time to study English if their ESL teacher demotivates/discourages them. 94.3% of students do not say or write new English words several-times if their ESL teacher discourages them. 93.8% of students do not try to learn English grammar if their ESL teacher says that you cannot learn grammar. 92.8% of students do not ask questions in English if their ESL teacher

uses discouraging remarks about them. 92.8% of students do not feel comfortable in the classroom if their ESL teacher uses demotivational language. 92.8% say that whenever their ESL teacher says that learning English is impossible for you then their other fellows pass insulting remarks about them. 93.3% of students say whenever their ESL teacher discourages them than their anxiety increases. 93.9% of students lose their confidence when they hear demotivational remarks from ESL teachers. 93.8% of students think that their ESL teacher is not good whenever he uses demotivational language in the classroom. 93.3% of students do not learn with passion when their ESL teacher uses demotivational language in the classroom. 93.3% students quit working hard whenever they do not perform well and receive insulting remarks from their ESL teacher. 92.8% of students that the learning process is very difficult when their ESL teacher discourages them. 94.3% of students do not try to improve themselves when their ESL teacher says you cannot pass the exam. 92.2% of students say that they cannot summarize the information that they hear or read in English if their ESL teacher discourages them.

ESL teachers' use of demotivational language in the classroom settings causes a striking barrier in ESL learning. The students lose their confidence and become conscious that English is very difficult to learn and lose their learning passion that dreamt the learners to achieve the targeted language with little effort.

## 6. Recommendations

The researchers would like to recommend the future researchers to conduct studies on teachers' educational backgrounds, behaviors, and also on their income. To investigate the non-cooperative behavior of the ESL teachers', many studies can be conducted and all the studies would help the teachers to improve their personalities and teaching methods. It is hoped that future researchers will conduct researches to further investigate the factors that cause the demotivation of students, especially of ESL learners.

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