



From the State of Motivated to Demotivated: Iranian Military EFL Learners' Motivation Change

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Second language learning motivation has always been considered to be one of the most influential factors in language learning due to its undeniably substantial impacts. In comparison with research conducted in other areas of L2 motivation, there has been a paucity of research on L2 motivation change, especially in the Iranian language learning context. This study aimed at investigating motivation change among Iranian military EFL learners in an intensive English course. The participants included 61 Iranian military staff aged 23-35, who took part in an intensive English course at the military university's foreign language center. The data collection was conducted using a background information questionnaire, a contextualized and translated version of the mini-AMTB (Attitude Motivation Test Battery) and an interview with the selected participants. Quantitative descriptive analysis showed that the participants were highly motivated, with relatively low anxiety and high integrative motivation. Furthermore, a qualitative content analysis showed that situation-specific factors including management problems both at macro and micro levels, class timing, lesson planning, organizational interventions, teacher-related factors, and facilities were all motivational factors that played a significant role in motivating or demotivating learners. The results also showed that the learners moved from a state of high motivation to low motivation due to context-specific demotivational factors.

Keywords: L2 Motivation, L2 Motivation Change, L2 Motivational Factors, Iranian EFL Learners, language learning in a military context

Introduction

Motivation has always been considered to be one of the most influential factors in language learning due to its undeniably substantial impacts. As a broad concept, it is not easily condensable into a straightforward

definition (Gardner, 2010), and with regards to language learning, it is even more complex (Williams, Burden & Lanvers, 1997). In fact, “no single individual difference factor in language learning has received as much attention as MOTIVATION” [all letters uppercase in the original text] (Ellis, 2008, p. 677). As one of the key determinants of second and foreign language learning achievement, motivation provides the initial stimuli to start L2 learning and later is the driving force to sustain the long learning process; needless to say, all the other factors involved in second language acquisition (SLA) presuppose motivation to some extent (Dörnyei, 2010).

The abundance of theories in L2 motivation in the related literature has not led to a conclusive and unitary result. Shifts in focus have led to promising new conceptual themes and the evolution of new motivational theories, which, in turn, enrich our understanding of the motivational basis of language learning. Since the models of motivation might differ during the language learning process – according to gender, across age groups, learning environments, and linguistic/cultural contexts – and many factors, such as individual differences and cultural contexts, influence models of L2 motivation, potentially very different conclusions might be drawn. Hence, studying the multifaceted nature of motivation, discovering the motives language learners experience and how they prioritize between competing motives, and extending knowledge of other motivational issues, would be useful in complementing prior research and significant in advancing SLA research.

The current study was conducted to investigate Iranian military learners' motivation change or lack of change in an intensive language learning course. The aim, furthermore, was to investigate potential influential factors affecting language learners' motivation. Since motivation is context-bound (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009), it is worthwhile to study L2 motivation in a specific language learning context such this one to investigate what influential factors affect learners' motivation.

Literature Review

As one of the key determinants of second and foreign language learning achievement, motivation provides the initial stimuli to start L2 learning, and later serves as the driving force to sustain the long learning process; needless to say, all other factors involved in second language acquisition (SLA) presuppose motivation to some extent (Dörnyei, 2010). Therefore, as a step beyond the traditional dichotomies in L2 motivation (e.g., intrinsic/extrinsic motivation) which had dominated the L2 research for several decades, since the beginning of the 21st century, there has been an increasing interest in motivation change in learners as a result of their interaction within specific contexts. One of the most influential theories of motivation change is the L2 Motivational Self-System, proposed by Dörnyei and his colleagues (Dörnyei & Clement, 2001; Dörnyei & Csizer, 2002), in which the researchers investigated Hungarian language learners' motivations change over ten years. The results of these studies led to the emergence of the L2 Motivational Self System that provides the main dimensions of L2 motivation. The framework is influenced by the notion that foreign language learning is different from learning other academic subjects, and therefore different paradigms than educational and psychological apply. The L2 Motivational Self System includes three dimensions, namely, the Ideal L2 self, the Ought-to self, and the L2 learning experience. The Ideal L2 self refers to the ideal image a person has in learning a foreign language. This ideal image can be a powerful motivator because it can reduce the distance between the actual and the ideal self. The Ideal L2 self is closely associated with traditional integrative/instrumental motivation. The Ought-to self “concerns the attributes that one believes one ought-to possess to meet expectations and to avoid negative outcomes” (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29). For instance, if a language learner does a task for the sake of the teacher's affirmation or wants to please the teacher with outperforming, the Ought-to self is the main motivational factor behind this learning. This dimension is

equivalent to extrinsic motivation in the tradition of L2 motivation since it is influenced by external rewards. The L2 learning experience focuses on the “situated, executive motives related to the immediate environment and experience” (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29). It is not linked to self-image but to the context in which the learning process happens. A number of studies have reported the validity of the L2 motivational self-system in different learning contexts (e.g., Csizer & Kormos, 2009; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009). These studies found that integrative/instrumental motivation and the Ideal L2 Self are closely correlated concepts.

During the process of movement from the Ideal L2 self to the Ought-to self, a number of factors are influential in learners’ motivation change. Dörnyei (1998) found that teachers (personality, competence, teaching methods), facilities (e.g., frequent change of teachers), and reduced self-confidence (e.g., the experience of failure) are all influential demotivational factors. Kikuchi (2009), using interviews and questionnaire in a small-scale study, found that teacher behaviors, the grammar-translation method, tests and university entrance examinations, and a focus on memorization and textbooks to be demotivating factors in a Japanese high school context. These studies confirm the existence of a general pattern in demotivating factors among different L2 learning contexts. Although about two-thirds of the demotivating factors can be attributed to teachers (Christophel & Gorham, 1995), Ushioda’s (1998) study found a number of motivational reasons in the course of study including ‘loving and enjoying the L2’, ‘having a positive learning history,’ and ‘meeting desired language-learning goals.’ Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, and Mihic (2004) suggested that overall changes in trait-like components, such as ‘interest in foreign languages’, ‘attitudes toward target community (French Canadians), or ‘desire to learn French, were very slight, while classroom-specific variables such as, ‘language learning anxiety’, ‘teacher evaluation’, and ‘language course evaluation’ suggested more changes. Irie (2005) reported relatively different results in comparison with previous studies. She found a relatively stable degree of motivation change in the motivation trajectory over a course of more than three years. The skill of the classroom teacher was the main factor leading to such a result.

A number of studies have investigated motivation change in students over short-term or long-term periods. These studies mostly have made use of questionnaire-types instruments to investigate attitudes or motivation changes at different time points (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2014). An overall decrease in learners’ motivational level has been reported in previous studies investigating motivation change in the process of L2 learning among university or high school students (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2006; Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, & Mihic, 2004; Kim & Kim, 2016). The results of such studies confirmed that such changes are more evident during great environmental changes (e.g., transfer from elementary school to high school). The studies conducted in the Iranian context have focused mostly on the relationship between L2 motivation constructs (such as integrative, instrumental, anxiety) and English achievement. Most of the studies have used questionnaires (such as Attitude Motivation Test Battery) or other scales (such as an autonomy questionnaire) and a number of tests measuring learners’ proficiency (e.g., Jodai, Madavi Zafarghandi, & Danaye Tous, 2013; Rashidi, Rahimi, Alimorad, 2013; Papi & Abdollagzadeh, 2012), and no particular study has investigated Iranian EFL learners’ motivation change. Furthermore, the studies in the related literature have mostly been of product-oriented approaches. Such a perspective toward L2 motivational studies has failed to provide insights on the process of L2 motivation in learning another language. The present study is an attempt to fill this research gap and to investigate Iranian learners’ motivation change in an intensive language learning course and the influential motivational or demotivational factors that affected such changes.

Method

Participants

The participants of this study were 61 Iranian military staff aged 23-35, who took part in an intensive English course at the foreign language center of a military university in Tehran, Iran in the first semester of 2016. All of the participants were male with Persian as their native language. The selection of the participants was primarily made by opportunity/convenience sampling. Based on a locally designed test, the learners were chosen from different units of the army throughout the country. The course is usually taught at four or five levels depending on the total number of participants. The course lasts for six months, and classes meet six hours a day, five days per week. The center offers courses in foreign languages, including English, Russian, Arabic, and French.

Instrumentation

Background information questionnaire

This researcher-made questionnaire was used to identify the participants' demographic, educational, and academic backgrounds. The items used for this purpose were on the participants' ages, their experience in the army, total hours of English study per week outside the classroom, and familiarity with other foreign languages. An English translation of the background information questionnaire is provided in the Appendix (Appendix A).

Mini-attitude motivation test battery (mini-AMTB)

The quantitative section of the study used the international version of the Attitude Motivation Test Battery for English as a foreign language (mini-AMTB), which consists of a set of 12 test items. Likert items are statements asking for the degree of agreement or disagreement. They are typically measured based on five responses, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with the highest score for the most favorable items, and the lowest score for the least favorable attitudes (McIver & Carmines, 1981). For the present study, a contextualized and translated version of the mini-AMTB, contextualized and validated by Jodai, et al., (2013), was used to determine their motivational factors. The mini-AMTB consists of one item corresponding to each scale on the AMTB and uses semantic differential scaling, instead of a Likert scale, to gather information from the participants (Appendix B).

The contextualized version of the AMTB questionnaire consists of four main constructs obtained from factor analysis. The constructs included Language Learning Motivation, Anxiety, Integrativeness, and Organizational influences. Instead of taking each item individually, the questionnaire considers the aggregated variables. Experts in the field of measurement have argued that aggregated items tend to be more valid, accurate, and reliable than single items (McIver & Carmines, 1981; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). In Likert data, using individual (not summated) items as a measurement tool is problematic. It is "very unlikely that a single item can fully represent a complex theoretical concept or any specific attribute for that matter" (McIver & Carmines, 1981, p. 15).

In this study, several items, including item 4 (My desire to learn English is...), item 11 (My motivation to learn English is...), item 5 (My attitude toward learning English is...), item 3 (My interest in foreign language is...), item 6 (My attitude toward my English teacher is...), item 9 (My attitude toward my English course is...), and item 7 (My motivation to learn English for practical purposes) are amalgamated to constitute the

language learning motivation. In this questionnaire, the second construct is anxiety, which is measured by calculating the means score for the participants' responses to two items, including item 8 (I worry about speaking English outside of class) and item 10 (I worry about speaking in my English class). The two items related to the third construct, Integrativeness, are item 1 (My motivation to learn English to communicate with English speaking people is...) and item 2 (My attitude toward English speaking people is...). Finally, the last item, item 12 (My organization encourages me to learn English...) represents the organizational influence on the participants' motivation. In the original AMTB (Gardner, 2004), this item was labeled as 'parental influence.' However, since parents play no role in the context of this research, Jodai., et al., (2013) label this construct as 'organizational influences'. The questionnaire was found to have acceptable reliability ($\alpha=.70$) for both the total constructs and the individual constructs ($\alpha_{\text{motivation}}=.87$, $\alpha_{\text{integrativeness}}=.63$, $\alpha_{\text{anxiety}}=0.72$).

Retrospective interview

The interview aimed to elicit an in-depth understating of learners L2 motivation in the beginning, during, and after the intensive course. It furthermore aimed at collecting retrospective patterns of motivational and attitudinal variations during the course. Trustworthiness was attested by an expert review of the questions themselves to reduce ambiguity and increase the content validity of the instrument. The questions of the interview (Appendix C) were based on the Dörnyei (1998) demotivational factor study. The researcher made use of Lynch's (1996) general framework for an interview:

Casual questions: (to do this the researcher firstly opened the conversation with a friendly tone and explained the aims of the study).

General questions: (general questions were asked about the learners' attitudes towards language learning and the course)

Specific questions: (The researcher asked questions related to the interview guide).

Closing questions: (The researcher asked about the participants' motivation to continue leaning the foreign language)

Casual questions: (The researcher asked if there are any comments which the participant would like to add).

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted at the end of the course using a cross-sectional survey and retrospective qualitative interview with participants. In the pilot study, the instruments were distributed among six volunteer students from the same course in the military university. An in-depth interview also was conducted with two of them. The participants in the pilot study were requested to provide their feedback regarding the study. After analyzing the results of the pilot study, a number of minor changes were made to the instruments of the study. For example, the researchers added some background information variables (such as education) and revised the wording of ambiguous questions in the interview session. Furthermore, the feasibility of the main study regarding administrative issues such as the length of time necessary to complete the instruments was considered.

For the purpose of the main study, first, written permission and informed consent for use of the collected data were collected from the director of the center and the study participants. As the teacher of the course, the first author distributed and collected the questionnaires for data analysis. The students had taken all the exams, and we assured them that the study results would not affect their grades. The researcher distributed the questionnaire to the 70 participants, and 61 returned the completed questionnaire. A retrospective interview

was conducted with 8 participants who agreed to take part in the interview session. The interview with learners took about 15-20 minutes, and an audio recorder was used to record the interview. The researchers transcribed the interview data in Microsoft Word and translated them from Persian to English.

Analysis and Results

A qualitative and quantitative approach was adopted in the data analysis. For the purpose of qualitative analysis, content analysis was used, and for the quantitative section, descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were calculated. Categories revealing change or lack of change in their motivation were then established according to the conceptual framework and related literature in language learner motivation.

Quantitative Analysis

A large number of educational research papers using questionnaires have employed Likert scales in assessing outcomes. Therefore, understanding Likert-type data analysis is crucial. There has been a lengthy argument in the field as to whether Likert data should be considered as ordinal data or interval data (Jamieson, 2004). As an ordinal scale, the responses can be rated, but the distance between the responses cannot be measured. Hence, the distances between “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neutral” cannot be considered equal on Likert scales. That is, if numbers are assigned to the responses, the differences between them cannot be considered equivalent. In contrast, in interval data, the distance between attributes has meaning and is measurable; for example, in a language achievement test, the difference from 60-70 is equal to that of 80-90. Based on this argument, we analyzed Likert data as both ordinal (via frequencies, percentages, and medians) and interval scale (via means and standard deviations).

Ordinal Likert Analysis

The authors made use of frequencies and percentages for data analysis in this section. The first construct of this questionnaire was 'language learning motivation,' which was an amalgamation of items 4, 11, 5, 3, 6, 9, and 7. Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage of the participants' responses to the first construct.

TABLE 1
Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Responses to the First Construct

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly disagree (1) | 22 | 5.15 |
| Disagree (2) | 15 | 3.51 |
| No idea (3) | 60 | 14.05 |
| Agree (4) | 127 | 29.74 |
| Strongly agree (5) | 203 | 47.54 |
| Total | 427 | 99.99 |

As Table 1 shows, the number of times that (strongly agree) and (agree) were selected by the participants in the first construct (motivation) was (N=203, 47.54%) and (N=127, 29.74%), respectively. Therefore, overall, 77.28% (47.54+29.74) of the participants were highly motivated to learn the foreign language, i.e., more than 75% of the participants' choices fall above the median (median= 3).

The second construct was anxiety, measured by calculating the mean scores of the participants' responses to two items, including item 8 and 10. Table 2 shows the frequency and percentage of the participants' responses to this construct.

TABLE 2
Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Responses to the Second Construct (Anxiety)

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly disagree (1) | 24 | 21.81 |
| Disagree (2) | 29 | 26.36 |
| No idea (3) | 36 | 32.72 |
| Agree (4) | 13 | 11.81 |
| Strongly agree (5) | 8 | 7.27 |
| Total | 110 | 99.97% |

As Table 2 shows, the frequency of (strongly disagree) and (disagree) was N=53 (48.17%), and the frequency of "strongly agree" and "agree" was 21 (19.08%). Hence, about half of the participants had relatively low anxiety toward learning the second language. Conversely, about 20% of the participants were highly anxious about learning the second language, and over 30% were neutral about their level of anxiety.

Table 3 shows the frequency and percentage of the participants' responses to two items of the third construct (Integrativeness), namely item 1 and item 2.

TABLE 3
Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Responses to the Third Construct (Integrativeness)

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly disagree (1) | 4 | 3.36 |
| Disagree (2) | 7 | 5.88 |
| No idea (3) | 28 | 23.52 |
| Agree (4) | 42 | 35.29 |
| Strongly agree (5) | 38 | 31.93 |
| Total | 119 | 99.98 |
| | 4 | 3.36 |

As the Table shows, the total frequency of items 5 and 4 is 80 (67.22%). This suggests that more than half of the participants had integrative motivation, and only about 9% did not have positive attitudes toward the target community.

Finally, the last item, item 12 (*My organization encourages me to learn English...*) represents organizational influence, as shown in Table 4. This construct is aimed at investigating learners' viewpoints about the role of the military organization in students' learning.

TABLE 4
Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Responses to the Fourth Construct (Organizational Influences)

| Scale | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly disagree (1) | 19 | 31.14 |
| Disagree (2) | 13 | 21.31 |
| No idea (3) | 14 | 22.95 |
| Agree (4) | 6 | 9.83 |
| Strongly agree (5) | 9 | 14.75 |
| Total | 61 | 99.99 |

As the Table shows, 32 of the participants (52.45%) selected ‘strongly disagree’ and ‘disagree.’ There were only 15 participants (24.58%) who believed that the organization was supportive of learners’ language learning.

Interval Likert Analysis

In this section, the learners’ level of motivational constructs was investigated on a categorical basis. The 5-point scaling used in this study ranged from 1-5, i.e., from the lowest (1) to the highest score (5). Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics for the total constructs of the questionnaire.

TABLE 5
Descriptive Statistics of the Entire Questionnaire

| Construct | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------|----|---------|---------|------|----------------|
| Motivation | 61 | 2.14 | 5.00 | 4.08 | .61 |
| Anxiety | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.70 | .98 |
| Integrativeness | 61 | 1.50 | 5.00 | 3.41 | .82 |
| Organizational influence | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.52 | 1.37 |

For the participants’ current motivational state, the first construct in the contextualized version of the mini-AMTB showed that, overall, the study participants had high motivation to learn the second language (Mean=4.08, Std. Deviation= .61).

Table 6 shows the related descriptive statistics for the first construct (language learning motivation).

TABLE 6
Descriptive Statistics for Language Learning Motivation (LLM) Construct

| Construct | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|-----------|----|---------|---------|-------------|----------------|
| item3 | 61 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 4.57 | .64 |
| item4 | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 4.50 | .78 |
| item5 | 61 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 4.37 | .75 |
| item6 | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 4.22 | .88 |
| item7 | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.98 | .99 |
| item9 | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.62 | 1.36 |
| item11 | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 4.31 | 1.04 |
| LLM | 61 | 2.14 | 5.00 | 4.08 | .61 |

Considering the mean score of each sub-construct, the highest score was attributed to item 3 (Mean=4.57, Std=.64) suggesting that the participants were highly interested in learning English. The participants’ mean score for Item 4 (*My desire to learn English is...*) followed this, confirming the notion that students had high interest in learning the second language. The other scores in this category were generally the same, except for item 9 (*My attitude toward my English course is...*), which showed that the participants had a relatively negative attitude toward the course.

The second construct in the contextualized version of the mini-AMTB aimed to assess the respondents’ level of anxiety about learning the foreign language (Table 7).

TABLE 7
Descriptive Statistics for the Second Construct (Anxiety)

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std.Deviation |
|---------|----|---------|---------|------|---------------|
| item8 | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.72 | 1.26 |
| item10 | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.68 | 1.13 |
| Anxiety | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.70 | .98 |

As Table 7 shows, the total mean score for anxiety (Mean= 2.70, Std. Deviation=.98) and the sub-construct of this construct (Mean_{item8}= 2.72, Std. Deviation= 1.26; Mean_{item10}= 2.68, Std. Deviation= 1.13) suggest a relatively low level of anxiety toward learning English. Furthermore, it suggests that the learners' level of anxiety in speaking English outside of the learning context is higher than inside an instructional class.

The third construct in the contextualized version of the mini-AMTB shows the participants' motivation and attitudes toward learning English in communicating with people from English speaking countries. Table 8 shows the related descriptive statistics for the construct (Integrativeness).

TABLE 8
Descriptive Statistics for the Third Construct (Integrativeness)

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std.Deviation |
|-----------------|----|---------|---------|------|---------------|
| item1 | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 4.13 | 1.08 |
| item2 | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.60 | .95 |
| Integrativeness | 61 | 1.50 | 5.00 | 3.41 | .82 |

As the mean score for Integrativeness (Mean= 3.41, Std. Deviation=.82) shows, the participants have relatively positive attitudes toward the target language community. However, the related score for motivation to learn English to communicate with English-speaking people was higher than that of the learners' attitude toward English-speaking people.

The last construct in the contextualized version of the mini-AMTB showed the effect of a contextual factor, organizational influence, on learner attitudes and motivation. Table 9 shows the descriptive statistics for the fourth construct (organizational influence).

TABLE 9
Descriptive Statistics for the Fourth Construct (Organizational Influence)

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std.Deviation |
|--------------------|----|---------|---------|------|---------------|
| item12 | 61 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.52 | 1.37 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 61 | | | | |

As Table 9 suggests, the score is the lowest score among all sub-constructs (Mean=2.52, Std. Deviation= 1.37), suggesting that the participants agree that the organization does not play an effective role in enhancing learners' motivational level.

Qualitative Content Analysis

Textual content analysis of the collected qualitative data revealed further influential factors, which included motivation at the beginning of the course, influential motivation or demotivation factors, motivation change during the course, and motivation state after the course.

In total, 52 themes related to the motivational state of the learners at the start of the course were found (Table 10).

TABLE 10
Motivation at the Beginning of the Course in Frequency and Percentage

| Theme | Frequency | Percentage% |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|
| High motivation | 45 | 86 |
| Low motivation | 7 | 13 |
| Total | 52 | 100 |

As Table 10 shows, of these 52 themes, 45 themes (86%) involved high motivation, and only seven themes (13%) included low motivation levels at the beginning of the course (Table 10). Those participants who were highly motivated at the beginning of the course described the initial state of motivation as “very high,” “really willing to learn the second language,” and “with great enthusiasm.” The other learners who made such a comment had more or less the same opinion regarding their level of motivation at the beginning of the course. On the other hand, those who believed they were not motivated highly at the beginning of the course argued that “they had no motive and were just forced to come to the center”, “it was low and even became lower”, and “I did not have motivation at the beginning because I came here for my personal reasons”.

A number of key motivational and demotivational themes (268 themes in total) were extracted from the qualitative part of the data. The following themes were identified based on the learners’ comments (Table 11).

TABLE 11
Frequency and Percentage of Motivational and Demotivational Themes

| Themes | Frequency | Percentage% |
|------------|-----------|-------------|
| Management | 78 | 30.70 |
| Facilities | 57 | 22.44 |
| Context | 47 | 18.50 |
| Planning | 33 | 12.99 |
| Teachers | 26 | 10.23 |
| Exam | 13 | 5.11 |
| Total | 254 | 100% |

As Table 11 suggests, problems related to the center’s management system were the theme most mentioned by the course participants (N=78, 30.70%). The reasons for such a view can be traced in one of the student’s written diaries:

Management and command system is critical; the lack of proper management is the result of using a head who is not an expert in language teaching.

The participant also commented that in that center there were management problems. From his point of view, the ‘proper management’ means using a person who is an expert in the field. The attitudes of stakeholders and teachers towards the learners’ capabilities and their humanistic values play an important role in learners’ motivation. Some participants considered background education to be an influential factor affecting the stakeholders’ attitudes toward the learners.

A 35-year-old language learner argued that he was highly motivated at the beginning of the course, but his motivation changed dramatically because of a lack of proper management. The learner was highly motivated to learn the language to communicate with target culture people (integrative motivation). His motivation was also mostly instrumental motivation, as he had a high score for item 4 of the questionnaire (*My attitude towards language learning*), but his lowest score was for item 9, for attitudes toward that particular context. The participant stated:

We should have a head who is familiar with the process language learning and teaching so he can understand us.

Facilities were another distinctive concept that emerged from the content analysis of the respondents' comments. In-class facilities related to the educational equipment available inside a language class (e.g., audio-visual aids), and out-of-class facilities were those available to the learners (e.g., accommodation, welfare conditions, and non-educational materials). Of the total number of themes that emerged relating to facilities (N=56), the number of in-class facilities was 38 (67.85%), and the number of out-of-class facilities was 18 (32.14%).

Analysis of the qualitative data determined the number of related themes to contextual factors (N=47, 18.50%). Contextual factors also included rules and regulations particular to the learning environment. Because of the nature of the context, a number of rules were applied, such as, 'students should be present at a particular time in the center and can leave the class only at a specified time,' or 'the learners have to wear uniforms when they come to the center.' A motivating environment, according to the participants' comments, is defined as an environment with a "lack of mental pressure on students," that is "calm and appropriate environment," that has "less stress," is "less threatening," and is characterized by a "lack of punishment." The learners commented that the atmosphere of the center should have fewer strict military rules; it should be less of a military-like unit and more of an educational unit.

The center should not look like a military place; goals and planning should not be sacrificed to regulations and orders and implementing strict military conducts in training environment cause loss of motivation.

Planning (N=33, 12.99%), teachers (N=26, 10.23%), and exams (N=13, 5.11%) were the other related concepts that emerged from the analysis of the study. Lack of appropriate training programs, weekly changes in educational programs, exam-based planning, and a high volume of books but a short period, contributed to low-level motivation among learners. Considering timing, some of the learners mentioned that the hours of the class were boring and long, non-standard, and intense. The test and score systems were other influential concepts proposed by the learners. "Tests cause stress," "students with different levels have the same test," "not having an entrance exam for the course," "score/test orientedness of the center," were some notes made by the participants regarding the role of tests and scores in the center. Teachers' efforts are appreciated from the learners' point of view. A number of the participants mentioned that the center offers qualified and experienced teachers who understand learners and use motivating teaching. However, some learners identified the absence of a uniform teaching method, caused by changing of teachers, as a problem that made it difficult for them to learn, as they struggled to adapt to different teaching methods.

Discussion and Conclusion

Overall, the study showed a great decline in students' motivational level from the beginning of the course to the end of it. The qualitative and quantitative findings furthermore showed that the study participants were highly motivated to learn the second language at the beginning of the course. Situation-specific factors (management issues, facilities, learning context, teacher-related factors, the intervention of organizational regulations, the timing of the course, assessment, and planning) were the most influential in the students' progress from a motivated to an unmotivated state in the motivation trajectory. From the participants' points of view, problems relating to the management system had the highest impact. This may be the result of using

a non-expert at the administrative level, which requires an understating of the learning and teaching process. This study found that the learners' motivational level decreased over the course of language learning. This finding is in line with the findings of other prominent studies conducted in the related literature (e.g., Dörnyei, 2006; Gardner et al., 2004; Kim & Kim, 2016). Although the context of the current study was different from other typical learning contexts, the results revealed the same general patterns reported in the previous studies. The demotivating factors reported in this study has some common factors with Dörnyei's (1998) study, in which the teacher (personality, competence, teaching method), facilities (e.g., frequent change of teachers), and reduced self-confidence (e.g., experience of failure) were reported to be the key demotivational factors. Kikuchi (2009), using interviews and questionnaires in a small-scale study, found teacher behaviors, grammar-translation methods, tests and university entrance examinations, a focus on memorization, and textbooks to be demotivating factors in a Japanese high school context. These studies confirm the existence of a general pattern in demotivating factors among different L2 learning contexts. Although about two-thirds of the demotivating factors can be attributed to teachers (Christophel & Gorham, 1995), the current study found that factors related to the administrative level have a more influential role in learners' motivation/demotivation than teachers. This relatively opposite finding may be described as context-specific factors related to military rules interventions, which had a great impact on learners' demotivation. The results of the study are also in line with other prominent studies conducted in Iran. In an investigation of the various socio-psychological orientations of Iranian EFL learners, Chalak and Kassaian (2010) found that the participants were highly motivated to learn the second language and did so for both integrative and instrumental reasons.

This study showed that regardless of the L2 learning context, the learners are likely to lose their motivation, so teachers and stakeholders need to be aware of this general trend and take proper action. One possible approach is applying the framework for motivational teaching practice in the L2 classroom proposed by Dörnyei (2000), which considers the four key elements of creating basic motivational conditions, generating student motivation, maintaining and protecting motivation, and encouraging positive self-evaluation. A number of motivational strategies can be used by teachers to create the basic motivational conditions, including appropriate teacher behaviors, establishing a positive relationship with the learners, and construing cohesive learning groups. Furthermore, initial motivation can be enhanced by creating realistic goals, increasing the students' expectancy of learning, and creating a positive attitude for learners. After creating the basic motivational conditions and generating initial motivation, teachers can maintain and protect learners' motivation by setting achievable goals, presenting materials in a motivating manner, working on students' self-confidence, encouraging autonomous learning, and leading learners to develop self-motivational strategies. Finally, self-evaluation can be promoted by providing more feedback to learners, and increasing students' stratification by using a reward and punishment system. By using such a framework, the effective use of context-specific motivational strategies can be established in each phase of the language learning process in an L2 context. Another method is using a number of motivation enhancing strategies, such as setting attainable goals. Irie's (2005) study of 84 junior high school Japanese students showed that most of the learners maintained a stable degree of L2 motivation over three years since they and their teachers used a variety of strategies to enhance and keep learners motivation.

This study had a number of limitations. First, we acknowledge the limitation that such a case study may not represent all the Iranian EFL learners since the participants were 61 military EFL learners. Further studies can take into account more participants for a more comprehensive understanding of motivation change and influential motivational or demotivational factors affecting such changes. Furthermore, a cross-sectional retrospective design may not provide a comprehensive understanding of L2 motivation change; further researchers can take a process-oriented approach which investigates learners' motivation and attitudes at several phases of language learning process. Then researchers could make use of other research methods such as ecological observation, in which the learners' motivation in real-time learning is observed. This could add

triangulation in data collection, which was likely to add more depth to the study.

The study may have some micro and macro pedagogical implications. In a micro sense, this study's results can be applied directly to similar language learning and teaching contexts. The stakeholders can benefit from the results of this study by considering the motivational and demotivational factors affecting learners' L2 motivation. In a macro sense, this study can also pave the way for other researchers to conduct similar studies in other contexts to determine the context-specific motivational factors affecting language-learning motivation among learners. Further studies may undertake a closer investigation of each of the influential motivational factors affecting language learning. For a more comprehensive understanding, future studies may examine motivational change from a complex dynamic approach using retrodictive qualitative modeling as introduced by Dörnyei (2014). The effect of teachers' motivational behavior on learners' motivation and achievement – especially teachers' – and of learners' dynamic motivational interaction have not yet been adequately researched. As Dörnyei and Ushioda (2014) stated, "Until very recently, the issue of teacher motivation ha[s] received rather little attention in educational psychology" (p. 158). This issue is important, as we note that if a teacher is motivated to teach, there is a good chance that his or her students will be motivated to learn. Since teachers also play an important role in students' language learning, an analysis of teachers' views can also provide useful insight.

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Appendix A

The Contextualized Version of mini-AMTB

Thank you for your participation in this study. The purpose of the survey is to investigate your feelings about different aspects of learning English. The first part of this questionnaire involves information asking for your demographic, educational, and academic backgrounds. The second part includes a number of items designed to measure your attitudes towards each item. Each item is followed by a scale that has a label on the left and another on the right, and the numbers 1 to 5 between them. For each item, please circle any number from 1 to 5 that best describes you. The second part includes a few questions regarding language learning motivation; the researcher would appreciate it if they are answered thoroughly.

Your age:

Familiarity with foreign language:

Beginner Upper-beginner Pre-intermediate Intermediate Upper-intermediate

Educational level:

Pre-university Bachelor Master

Your experience in army

Less than 5 years between 5-10 more than 10 years

Total hours of language study per week:

Less than 5 hours between 5-10 more than 10 hours

Appendix B

Mini-Attitude Motivation Test Battery (mini-AMTB).

1. My motivation to learn English to communicate with English speaking people is:
WEAK.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5 STRONG
2. My attitude toward English speaking people is:
UNFAVORABLE.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5 FAVORABLE
3. My interest in foreign language is:
VERY LOW.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5 VERY HIGH
4. My desire to learn English is:
WEAK.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5 STRONG
5. My attitude toward learning English is:
UNFAVORABLE.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5 FAVORABLE
6. My attitude toward my English teacher is:
UNFAVORABLE.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5 FAVORABLE
7. My motivation to learn English for practical purposes (e.g., to get a good job) is:
WEAK.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5 STRONG
8. I worry about speaking English outside of class:
VERY LITTLE.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5 VEY MUCH
9. My attitude toward my English course is:
UNFAVORABLE.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5 FAVORABLE
10. I worry about speaking in my English class:
VERY LITTLE.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5 VEY MUCH
11. My motivation to learn English is
VERY LITTLE.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5 VEY MUCH
12. My organization encourages me to learn English:
VERY LITTLE.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5 VEY MUCH

Appendix C

Sample Interview Questions

How was your language learning motivational level at the beginning of the course?
Did you experience any change in language learning motivation change during the course?
How do you describe your current language learning motivational level?
Will continue language learning after finishing this course?
Based on your idea and experience what are influential motivational or demotivational factors?
Would you like to add any comments regarding the topic of the study?