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Study on the Factors Influencing Demotivation in English Learning among Non-English Major Undergraduates in Chinese Universities of Science and Engineering

-- A Case Study of Southwest Petroleum University

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Abstract: This study adopts a quantitative research method to investigate the factors influencing the demotivation of English learning among the first-year and second-year non-English major undergraduate students from Southwest Petroleum University by means of a questionnaire survey. And upon conducting a statistical analysis of data by using SPSS 26.0, the following conclusions are drawn: The influencing factors of college students' demotivation in learning English mainly comes from the student dimension and the class environment dimension, while the influence of teacher dimension factors is relatively small; among the three dimensions, there exists a general correlation between the student dimension and the class environment dimension, while the correlations of the former two dimensions with the teacher dimension are weaker; the influencing factors of college students' demotivation to learn English show a gender difference under the class environment dimension and a grade difference under the teacher dimension.

Keywords: English Learning; Demotivation; The Student Dimension; The Class Environment Dimension; The Teacher Dimension.

1. Introduction

Motivation is an important individual difference that affects learners' learning behaviors and outcomes, particularly sparking extensive discussion and research among scholars both domestically and internationally in the field of foreign language education. Since the introduction of foreign language motivation research into China in the 1980s, domestic scholars have conducted in-depth studies on students' motivation in learning English, including research on the influencing factors of learners' foreign language motivation and the correlation between learners' foreign language motivation and other individual differences or learning characteristics. These studies help us understand the psychological characteristics of learners during their English learning process and assist teachers in improving and optimizing their teaching methods, thereby enhancing students' motivation to learn English and stimulate their English learning behaviors. Generally, the research on motivation contributes to providing theoretical support and empirical foundation for promoting students' English learning from the perspective of learning motivation.

"Demotivation" is an important concept related to motivation, also known as "motivation decline," or "motivation deficiency." In 1985, Deci and Ryan introduced the Self-Determination Motivation Theory, which posits that "the reasons individuals choose to engage in a particular activity depend on the extent to which they can make a choice autonomously."[1] This theory distinguishes types of motivation into intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and demotivation. Demotivation is the least self-determined type of motivation, characterized by individual learners being unaware of the connection between their actions and outcomes, showing no interest in the activities they engage in, and lacking any intrinsic or extrinsic regulatory behaviors to ensure the proper conduct of the activities[2]. In 2001, Zoltán Dörnyei defined "demotivation" as certain specific external factors that reduce or weaken the motivation to engage in learning behaviors[3]. Learners with lack of motivation are disinterested in learning English, with a doubt about their ability to learn it well or a lack of the desire to succeed in English learning. The study of learners' demotivation is an effective expansion of foreign language motivation research, shifting from studying positive factors that encourage learners to maintain their motivation and learning behaviors in English study to studying negative factors that weaken learners' motivation in English learning and hinder their learning behaviors, thereby broadening the perspective of foreign language motivation research and providing new insights to understand the psychological characteristics of English learners in a more comprehensive and scientific manner.

Abroad, Dörnyei summarized the main factors contributing to the lack of motivation as teacher, textbook, psychological factors caused by failed learning experiences, etc., with the greatest impact from teacher factors[4]; Japanese scholars Sakai and Kikuchi confirmed after surveying high school students in Japan that the content and materials of teaching, teachers' ability and methods, the lack of intrinsic motivation, and exam results are significant factors affecting students' decline of motivation to learn English[5]. However, unlike Dörnyei, in their findings, the share of teacher factors impact has significantly decreased. Domestically, Tang Wenli conducted a study on the phenomenon of motivation lacking in learning English among Chinese non-English major college students, categorizing the factors causing the lack of motivation into English proficiency, teaching content, teacher

personality, and other factors[6]; Yu Zhangya and Wei Xiaobao concluded through research that the decline in foreign language learning motivation among non-English major graduate students is influenced by factors such as communication opportunities and willingness, conflicts with professional study, and self-efficacy[7].

The author believes that understanding the factors that lead to a decrease of learners' motivation to learn English is equally important as studying the factors that can enhance their motivation. Both aspects are beneficial for educators to intervene in students' foreign language motivation, which is an individual difference that can improve students' learning outcomes. Given the significant implications of researching demotivation in foreign language learning for both individual learners and the overall field of foreign language education, the author conducted an investigation into the factors influencing demotivation in learning English among non-English major students at Southwest Petroleum University, a “Double First-Class” science and engineering institution in China. Taking the freshmen and sophomores from this university as subjects, the study aims to understand the current status of demotivation factors in English learning among undergraduate students in domestic colleges of science and engineering and to identify the main factors that hinder these students' motivation to learn English, thus proposing reasonable suggestions based on this current situation to contribute to domestic motivation research among college students.

2. Method

The main purpose of this study is to understand the current state of demotivation factors in English learning among non-English major undergraduates at universities of science and engineering in China. After understanding the distribution features of the factors influencing learners' demotivation in English learning, reasonable suggestions will be proposed to reduce students' demotivational factors in English learning.

2.1. Research Questions

This study is conducted mainly around the following two questions:

(1) What is the overall situation of English learning demotivation factors among non-English major undergraduates in China's universities of science and engineering?

(2) What are the main factors influencing demotivation in English learning among non-English major undergraduates in this type of colleges in China? What are the characteristics in the distribution of the factors?

2.2. Participants

The participants of this study are 87 non-English major undergraduates from Southwest Petroleum University, a "Double First-Class" institution of science and engineering in China. There are 42 first-year students and 45 second-year students, from two classes of the public English course of this university respectively and who are taught by the same English teacher, effectively controlling the variable of teacher. The students' ages range from 18 to 22 years old, predominantly 19 and 20 years old, accounting for 78.2% of the total. As the participants are from a typical college of science and engineering, the gender distribution shows a significant disparity, with the number of male students apparently exceeding that of female students. As a result, there are 62 male students in the sample, accounting for 71.3% of the total, while there are 25 female students, just accounting for 28.7% of the total. The detailed information is showed in the following Table 1.

Table 1. The basic information of participants

Item		Number	Share
gender	male	62	71.3%
	female	25	28.7%
age	18	11	12.6%
	19	36	41.4%
	20	32	36.8%
	21	7	8.0%
	22	1	1.1%
grade	the first	42	48.3%
	the second	45	51.7%

2.3. Research Instrument

The research instrument of this study is primarily based on the demotivation questionnaire designed by Japanese scholars Sakai and Kikuchi. On this basis, relevant questions were modified according to the actual situation of English learning in China to make it more appropriate for Chinese college students' English learning. The specific content of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix. The scale adopts the form of five-point Likert scale, including "1 - Strongly Disagree", "2 - Disagree", "3 - Unsure", "4 - Agree", and "5 - Strongly Agree". The questionnaire is divided into two parts: the first part collects basic information of students, including gender, age, grade, and major; the second part assesses the influencing factors of students' demotivation in English learning, which includes 35 items under three dimensions: the teacher dimension (6 items), the student dimension (12 items), and the class environment dimension (17 items). Before the formal survey, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire were tested by using SPSS 26.0 in a pilot survey, which indicated that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.877, standing for good reliability; the KMO value was 0.700, higher than 0.6, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity showed a significance level of 0.000, lower than 0.005, indicating good validity. Therefore, the questionnaire meets the standard for statistical data analysis.

2.4. Research Process

The experimental process of this research is mainly divided into two phases. In the first phase, a questionnaire survey was mainly adopted. After communicating with the English teacher of two sample classes and with students’ cooperation, the author selected lesson times of the two classes and asked the students to fill out the questionnaires before the formal

lessons. The completed questionnaires were collected immediately and the whole process took about ten minutes. In the second phase, the author organized the collected questionnaires. A total of 93 questionnaires were distributed, and after excluding incomplete and invalid ones, 87 valid questionnaires were adopted. After organizing the data, statistical software SPSS 26.0 was utilized to describe and analyze them.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. An Overall Analysis of Demotivational Factors

After organizing the relevant data collected before, frequency analysis was conducted with the help of SPSS 26.0, with specific data presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency analysis of all question items

Item	Mean	Kurtosis	Skewness	Standard deviation	Item	Mean	Kurtosis	Skewness	Standard deviation
1	4.02	3.2	-1.47	0.89	4	2.43	-0.34	0.68	1.17
2	3.85	0.39	-0.74	0.91	27	2.39	0.04	0.55	1
16	3.54	0.52	-0.91	1.01	33	2.33	-0.55	0.47	1.01
23	3.48	-0.75	-0.6	1.28	19	2.24	-0.12	0.53	0.94
29	3.37	-0.73	-0.55	1.23	5	2.22	0.17	0.86	1.06
6	3.32	-0.85	-0.31	1.18	9	2.08	2.56	1.06	0.81
17	3.3	-0.79	-0.15	1.01	28	2.05	-0.19	0.72	0.93
25	3.21	-0.76	-0.29	1.19	20	1.9	1.5	1.09	0.86
3	3.09	-0.97	-0.05	1.17	18	1.86	1.94	1.07	0.81
24	3.03	-0.8	-0.02	1.12	22	1.76	1.41	1.21	0.89
8	2.99	-0.97	-0.18	1.13	26	1.76	-0.11	0.59	0.72
7	2.92	-0.8	0.12	1.19	21	1.53	1.68	1.01	0.61
35	2.85	-1.15	-0.07	1.21	10	1.47	-0.29	0.82	0.59
30	2.69	-0.95	0.27	1.16	13	1.39	-0.27	0.91	0.54
34	2.64	-1.04	0.31	1.2	12	1.38	3.45	1.67	0.6
31	2.57	-0.65	0.46	1.2	11	1.23	22.42	3.97	0.56
32	2.57	-0.61	0.5	1.19	14	1.23	-0.3	1.31	0.42
15	2.45	-0.64	0.5	1.11					

From the data in the above table, it can be seen that Item 1 (I seldom have chances to communicate in English) shows the highest mean 4.02, followed by Item 2 (Most of the lessons focus on translation and grammar) 3.85 and Item 16 (The passages in the English textbook are too long) 3.54, and then by Items 23 3.48 and 29 3.37, among others. The means of the top 10 items all exceed 3 points, indicating a tendency to agree or above. It can be concluded that these 10 factors, which contribute to students' stronger demotivation in learning English, are more widely recognized among the 35 items. They mainly involve some inherent characteristics of traditional English courses in China that negatively impact students' English learning; students' insufficient understanding of English learning, with motivation only being at a tool level, lacking integrative motivation; as well as their poor English learning abilities and past experiences of failure in learning, among other aspects. Additionally, the average scores of other items mostly range from 1 to 3 points, with degrees of agreement being uncertain or lower, indicating that students do not have a high recognition of the demotivational factors in English learning expressed by those items. Notably, five items with the lower rankings are all related to teacher dimension factors, suggesting that in this survey, the influence of teacher factors on students' demotivation in learning English is relatively slight.

3.2. Dimensional Analysis

The second part of the questionnaire divides the influencing factors into three different dimensions: the teacher dimension, the student dimension, and the class environment dimension. After conducting a descriptive analysis of the means of each dimension, the data is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The dimensional analysis

Dimensions	N	Means	Standard deviation
The teacher dimension	87	1.46	0.43
The student dimension	87	2.84	0.72
The class environment dimension	87	2.61	0.47

The descriptive analysis of each dimension in Table 3 shows that the means of the three dimensions are all below 3 points, lower than uncertainty. This suggests that, in a whole, the motivation of students in this school in English learning is relatively slightly influenced by negative factors from the three dimensions. Even so, among the three dimensions, the mean of the teacher dimension is significantly lower than those of the student dimension and the class environment dimension, falling between strongly disagree and disagree and with the lowest deviation value. This indicates that

students generally and unanimously believe that the factors under the teacher dimension have the least impact on their demotivation to learn English. The dimension with the highest mean value is the student dimension and it can be assumed that factors in the student dimension have the greatest impact on their demotivation in learning English. The second is the class environment dimension, which differs slightly from the student dimension in terms of mean. Therefore, it can be considered that students perceive the negative impact of factors under the student dimension and the class environment dimension on their English learning motivation to be quite similar. However, the standard deviations of the two dimensions differ greatly. The deviation value of the student dimension is higher than that of the class environment, indicating that students have more dispersed opinions regarding the negative impact of the student dimension factors on their motivation, with a lower concentration than that of the class environment dimension. Although the mean of the class environment is slightly lower, its deviation is also low, indicating that students' opinions under the class environment dimension are more consistent compared to the student dimension. The specific data for each dimension is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Specific analyses of items under three dimensions

Items	N	Means	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
The teacher dimension					
9	87	2.08	0.81	1.06	2.56
10	87	1.47	0.59	0.82	-0.29
11	87	1.23	0.56	3.97	22.42
12	87	1.38	0.60	1.67	3.45
13	87	1.39	0.54	0.91	-0.27
14	87	1.23	0.42	1.31	-0.30
The student dimension					
6	87	3.32	1.18	-0.31	-0.85
7	87	2.92	1.19	0.12	-0.80
8	87	2.99	1.13	-0.18	-0.97
23	87	3.48	1.28	-0.60	-0.75
24	87	3.03	1.12	-0.02	-0.80
25	87	3.21	1.19	-0.29	-0.76
26	87	1.76	0.72	0.59	-0.11
30	87	2.69	1.16	0.27	-0.95
31	87	2.57	1.20	0.46	-0.65
32	87	2.57	1.19	0.50	-0.61
34	87	2.64	1.20	0.31	-1.04
35	87	2.85	1.21	-0.07	-1.15
The class environment dimension					
1	87	4.02	0.89	-1.47	3.20
2	87	3.85	0.91	-0.74	0.39
3	87	3.09	1.17	-0.05	-0.97
4	87	2.43	1.17	0.68	-0.34
5	87	2.22	1.06	0.86	0.17
15	87	2.45	1.11	0.50	-0.64
16	87	3.54	1.01	-0.91	0.52
17	87	3.3	1.01	-0.15	-0.79
18	87	1.86	0.81	1.07	1.94
19	87	2.24	0.94	0.53	-0.12
20	87	1.9	0.86	1.09	1.50
21	87	1.53	0.61	1.01	1.68
22	87	1.76	0.89	1.21	1.41
27	87	2.39	1.00	0.55	0.04
28	87	2.05	0.93	0.72	-0.19
29	87	3.37	1.23	-0.55	-0.73
33	87	2.33	1.01	0.47	-0.55

3.2.1. The Teacher Dimension

The scores of the six items related to the teacher dimension are relatively low. Except Item 9, whose mean is slightly above 2, the means of the other 5 items fall between 1 and 2, indicating an agreement degree ranging from strongly disagree to disagree and with a low standard deviation. This suggests that students have a higher consensus regarding the impact of teacher factors on their demotivation in English learning, holding a low level of recognition for this dimension's factors in weakening their motivation. They think highly of their English teachers' professional level, educational quality, and personal charisma. This contrasts with Dörnyei's conclusion in the initial research phase of demotivation, which claimed that teacher factors account for more than 50% of influence on students' demotivation in English learning. It further corroborates subsequent research by scholars in Japan and China indicating that the influence of teacher factors on students' demotivation in English learning has decreased, and there is a tendency for the teacher factor to deviate significantly from the primary factors in causing students' demotivation in learning English.

Notably observed from the charter, the skewness and kurtosis of Item 11 are excessively high. Upon verification by the author, a score of 5 was recorded in Item 11, meaning that one student believed that the teacher's way of handling students' mistakes severely impacted his motivation in learning English. Since this situation occurred only once among 87 students, it cannot be ruled out that this student's personally subjective factors caused his extreme perception of the class teaching experience, leading to a high score in this area of teacher factors.

3.2.2. The Student Dimension

The mean of the student dimension is higher than those of the teacher dimension and class environment dimension, ranking the first among the three dimensions. Almost each item under this dimension received frequent scores of 4 or 5, indicating that the negative impact of the student dimension factors on students' motivation in learning English is greater than that of the other two dimensions, thus its unfavorable impacts on students being the most evident.

First, in this dimension, item 23 (I study English only for further education or job hunting) shows the highest score 3.48, with a tendency to agree. Although this instrumental motivation is beneficial for students to maintain their English learning behavior to a certain extent, its duration is short, producing positive effects only for a brief period before achieving a goal. Once the goal is reached or other options arise, students' motivation in English learning tends to decline rapidly, or even disappear. Therefore, it is a crucial step for teacher to help students transition from instrumental motivation to intrinsic motivation so as to encourage students' English learning. Secondly, item 6 indicates that students have difficulty in memorizing English words, item 24 shows that students are afraid to speak English in class, and item 25 reflects feelings of inferiority in learning English, all of which are significant factors impairing students' motivation to learn English in this dimension. However, not all factors in this dimension scored so high, as seen in item 26, which has the lowest mean 1.76, just above 1, and the lowest standard deviation. This shows that good interpersonal relationships among students can help decrease their demotivation for English learning.

In summary, the student dimension has the greatest impact on the demotivation in students' English learning, meaning that students are more inclined to attribute their lack of motivation in learning English to themselves, such as having lower academic abilities, viewing English as a tool for exam passing and job seeking, and feeling diffident about their English skills. This not only reflects contemporary students' increasing ability to self-reflect and summarize during the English learning process but also indirectly demonstrates the continuous progress of school education. External factors such as teacher and learning environment actually motivate students' English study to some extent.

3.2.3. The Class Environment Dimension

Among the top ten items ranked by mean value, six belong to the class environment dimension, indicating that the impact of the class environment on students' demotivation in learning English is significant. Item 1 shows a mean score of 4.02, with a low deviation and a left skew, suggesting that most students believe that the lack of an environment for communicating in English severely undermines their motivation to learn English. This factor not only ranks highest in the class environment dimension but also appears as the top one in the entire questionnaire, indicating that it is the main factor affecting students' motivation in learning English in this survey. In other words, the lack of environment and opportunities of communicating in English hinders the motivation of most students to learn English.

Domestic universities continuously advocate for educational reform, shifting the focus of education from teachers to students, thereby achieving a student-centered education model. However, the traditional education model which is dominated by teacher lecturing and student listening and has occupied the leading position for a long time in domestic educational system, still prevails in today's foreign language teaching class. In class, the teaching focus is mainly on teachers who deliver English vocabulary and grammar knowledge and students are always guided by written exams. Encouraged by traditional teaching methods, students lack opportunities to communicate in spoken English, failing to test their learned English knowledge in practical applications. This easily leads students to develop a mindset that English is useless and they just need study it intensively only before exams. Therefore, the lack of opportunities and environment for speaking English greatly diminishes students' motivation to learn English. The second and third highest means including 3.85 and 3.09 relate to the orientation of exam and the lengthy of text, which also confirms that the traditional teaching model and materials have, to some extent, weaken students' motivation to study English.

It is noteworthy that while the mean of this dimension is relatively high, not all factors under this dimension have a significant impact on students' demotivation. The means of items 20, 21, and 22 are all slightly higher than 1 point, with small deviations, indicating a relatively unified opinion among students. This illustrates that students generally agree that the teaching facilities and resources at the school do not negatively affect their motivation to learn English. It also reflects that the school, as a leading domestic ' Double First Class ' university, has a comparatively complete and advanced teaching equipment and resources, providing a good campus environment for students' English learning, thus promoting their efficient study.

3.3. Correlational Analysis among Three Dimensions

The Pearson correlation test was conducted among the three dimensions and the result is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Correlational analysis of three dimensions

Dimension		The student dimension	The class environment dimension	The teacher dimension
The student dimension	Pearson correlation coefficient	1	.487**	.215*
	Sig.(two-tailed)		.000	.046
The class environment dimension	Pearson correlation coefficient	.487**	1	.359**
	Sig.(two-tailed)	.000		.001
The teacher dimension	Pearson correlation coefficient	.215*	.359**	1
	Sig.(two-tailed)	.046	.001	

**At the 0.01 level (two-tailed), the correlation is significant.

*At a 0.05 level (two-tailed), the correlation is significant

The Pearson correlation coefficient between the student dimension and the class environment is 0.487. The significance level is 0.000, lower than 0.01. Thus, there is a moderate positive correlation between the student dimension and the class environment dimension. The Pearson correlation coefficient between the class environment dimension and the teacher dimension is 0.359 and the significance level is 0.01. Therefore, the class environment dimension and the teacher dimension are also positively correlated. Furthermore, the correlation of the former is higher than that of the later. The Pearson correlation coefficient between the student dimension and the teacher dimension is 0.215 and the significance level is 0.046, which is lower than 0.05. This means that the correlation between the student dimension and the teacher dimension is weak.

The moderate correlation between the student dimension and the class environment dimension indicates that the factors influencing demotivation under the student dimension are somewhat related to those under the class environment dimension. For example, students with poor learning abilities or a lack of interest in the English language and English-speaking countries' cultures may have a smaller achievement in acquiring class knowledge, leading to growing difficulties in understanding English knowledge taught in class. Additionally, if learning in class is focused on grammar and translation and there is a lack of opportunities of speaking English for communication, students may develop a disdain for English, perceiving it as boring and useless, thereby decreasing their interest in English and English cultures.

The correlation between the teacher dimension and the student dimension is relatively weak, suggesting that these two dimensions play parallel roles in causing students' demotivation, existing in a state of somewhat mutual exclusion. Students tend to attribute the causes of their demotivation in learning English to themselves rather than their teachers. There is also a certain degree of correlation between the teacher dimension and the class environment dimension though it is weaker. This may be due to the fact that the overall class environment is primarily led by teacher, meaning that teacher's influence on the class environment does have an impact, to some extent, on students' demotivation in learning English.

3.4. Analyses of Gender and Grade Difference under Three Dimensions

The data obtained after conducting independent samples T-tests for gender and grade differences under each dimension is shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Gender and grade difference analyses under three dimensions

Gender		**N**	**Mean**	**Standard deviation**	**Significance(two-tailed)**
The teacher dimension	male	62	1.44	0.43	0.495
	female	25	1.51	0.44	
The student dimension	male	62	2.84	0.76	0.954
	female	25	2.83	0.65	
The class environment dimension	male	62	2.53	0.44	0.02
	female	25	2.79	0.49	
Grade					
The teacher dimension	freshman	42	1.37	0.37	0.046
	sophomore	45	1.55	0.46	
The student dimension	freshman	42	2.74	0.75	0.249
	sophomore	45	2.92	0.70	
The class environment dimension	freshman	42	2.51	0.52	0.067
	sophomore	45	2.70	0.39	

In terms of gender, the mean values of girls are higher than those of boys under both the teacher dimension and the class environment dimension, while the mean values of boys are slightly higher than those of girls only in the student

dimension. However, the significance levels of the teacher dimension and the student dimension are both above 0.05, indicating no significant difference under them. Only the significance level of the class environment dimension is 0.02, which is lower than 0.05, suggesting that a gender difference exists under the class environment dimension. Specifically, in recognizing the negative impact of the class environment factors on their English learning motivation, girls are stronger than boys. This may be related to the smaller sample size of girls compared to boys and the natural characteristics of girls like being more meticulous and sensitive to external environments.

Regarding grade, the mean values of the second grade are higher than those of the first grade under all dimensions, but the significance levels for the student dimension and the class environment dimension are both above 0.05. Only the significance level of the teacher dimension is below 0.05, indicating that there is a significant difference by grade level only under the teacher dimension. Specifically, the second-year students show a higher recognition of the impact of teacher dimension factors on their English learning demotivation compared to the first-year students. This may be related to the fact that the second-year students have more experiences of college English courses, leading to a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the influence of English teacher on their own English study.

4. Conclusion

In summary, the author of this study conducted a quantitative research method to investigate the demotivation influencing factors of English learning among the first and second-year non-English major undergraduates at a "Double First-Class" science and engineering university in China. Statistical analyses reveal that: (1) The influencing factors mainly come from the student dimension and the class environment dimension, such as a lack of learning strategies and intrinsic motivation and limited opportunities to speak English for communication, which is the most influential factor; (2) The correlation of demotivation influencing factors within the student dimension and the class environment dimension is higher, while the correlation within the student dimension and the teacher dimension is lower; (3) The influencing factors of demotivation in English learning show gender difference under the class environment dimension and grade difference under the teacher dimension.

In response to the research findings, the author proposes the following suggestions to reduce students' demotivation in learning English: (1) Teachers should proactively adopt relevant teaching measures to cultivate students' English learning strategies, such as adding teaching steps to develop students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing capabilities in class, thereby improving students' overall English proficiency. At the same time, teachers should pay close attention to students' attitudes towards and psychological states in learning English, and convey the long-term benefits of English learning to them so as to transform students' instrumental motivation to learn English into intrinsic motivation, thus helping them develop enduring learning motivation. (2) Universities should continue to emphasize the investment and development of teaching equipment, continuously providing a positive and conducive learning environment for students. Additionally, they should design and organize more classroom and campus activities related to English speaking, such as English speeches and cultural exchange salons to provide students with more chances to communicate in English, allowing them to enhance their intrinsic motivation in learning English through personal experience. (3) Students themselves should strengthen their awareness of the importance of English, explore the long-term value of English study, and enhance their interest and enthusiasm for English learning through a variety of ways.

Finally, this study also has certain shortcomings, such as a small sample size with limitation to two grades in one university, which raises the need for further research to verify the generalizability of the conclusions of this study; the research method is quantitative, lacking qualitative research and focusing primarily on statistical significance in terms of conclusions, which neglects analysis of the intrinsic emotional and psychological factors behind the studied individuals. It is hoped that scholars will conduct in-depth investigations and researches on the foreign language demotivation of English learners in China in the future, addressing these two shortcomings and providing more scientific and reasonable suggestions to alleviate the demotivation of domestic college students in learning English.

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Appendix

Questionnaire items (translated into English)

Dear Student,

Hello!

Thank you for giving the time to fill out this questionnaire. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. English learning is an important part of university studies. Having strong motivation can help you learn English more easily and improve your English proficiency. The following items are factors that may lead to a lack of motivation during English learning. These are common phenomena, so please do not have any psychological burden.

This survey is completely anonymous, and all answers will be kept strictly confidential. Please answer honestly and objectively based on your actual situation.

Thank you again for your cooperation. Wish you progress in your studies and a happy life!

Part 1 Personal Information

Gender:
Age:
Grade:
Major:

Writing Instructions: please tick the corresponding level of agreement for each item.

Attention: only one level of agreement should be selected for each item.

This survey uses a Likert scale with 5 levels, where the numbers 1-5 represent different levels of agreement as follows:

1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Unsure
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

Table 7. Questionnaire

Items	1	2	3	4	5
01. I seldom have chances to communicate in English.					
02. Most of the lessons focus on translation and grammar.					
03. Most of the lessons are entrance examination oriented.					
04. I am forced to use English for communication and writing in class.					
05. I am often forced to memorize sentences in English textbooks.					
06. I have difficulty in memorizing English words and phrases.					
07. I got low scores in English exams (such as mid-term and final examinations).					
08. I get lost in how to self-study for English lessons.					
09. The pace of English lessons is not appropriate.					
10. Teachers' pronunciation of English is poor.					
11. Teachers ridicule students' mistakes.					
12. Teachers' teaching methods are monotonous.					
13. Teacher's explanations are not easy to understand.					
14. Teachers are not close to students (shout or get angry at students).					
15. Topics of English passages in English lessons are not interesting.					
16. The passages in the English textbook are too long.					
17. The sentences in the English textbook are difficult to interpret.					
18. We are required to read a great number of English textbooks and supplementary materials.					
19. The topics in the English textbook are old.					
20. The teaching equipment in the classroom is poor.					
21. Visual and audio teaching materials (such as videos and recordings) are not used.					
22. English classes only involve written exercises with few other activities (like no use of online resources).					
23. I study English only for further education or job hunting.					
24. There are too many people in English class and I am afraid to speak English in front of a large group.					
25. I could not do as well on tests as my friends.					
26. I don't like my classmates.					
27. My friends don't like learning English.					
28. I am often compared with my friends.					
29. English is a compulsory subject, so I must study it.					
30. I lost my understanding of the purpose of studying English.					
31. I have lost my interest in English.					
32. I have lost my goal to be a speaker of English.					
33. English questions don't have clear answers.					
34. I am not interested in the culture of English-speaking countries.					
35. I am afraid of embarrassing myself in English class and leaving a bad impression on others.					