

---

4-9-2017

## What Demotivates Foreign EFL Teachers? A Case Study in Turkish Context

Turgay Han  
*Ordu University, turgayhan@yahoo.com.tr*

Zinat Mahzoun  
*Kafkas University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr>

 Part of the [Elementary Education and Teaching Commons](#), [Junior High, Intermediate, Middle School Education and Teaching Commons](#), [Quantitative, Qualitative, Comparative, and Historical Methodologies Commons](#), and the [Social Statistics Commons](#)

---

### Recommended APA Citation

Han, T., & Mahzoun, Z. (2017). What Demotivates Foreign EFL Teachers? A Case Study in Turkish Context. *The Qualitative Report*, 22(4), 1001-1014. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2017.2619>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the The Qualitative Report at NSUWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Qualitative Report by an authorized administrator of NSUWorks. For more information, please contact [nsuworks@nova.edu](mailto:nsuworks@nova.edu).

---



## What Demotivates Foreign EFL Teachers? A Case Study in Turkish Context

### Abstract

This article is the report of a qualitative case study proposed to investigate the demotivation factors of foreign EFL teachers in Turkish context. To that end, two foreign teachers of English language were chosen as the subjects at a primary/ secondary school in east of Turkey. Face-to-face interviews, profile forms, field notes and diaries were used to obtain the necessary data for the research. The findings indicated that lack of effective communication with school administration and colleagues and lack of interest, attention and respect from behalf of students were the main causes of demotivation at work for both teachers.

### Keywords

Demotivation, Foreign, Native, EFL Teachers

### Creative Commons License



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-Share Alike 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

## What Demotivates Foreign EFL Teachers? A Case Study in Turkish Context

Turgay Han

Ordu University, Ordu, Turkey

Zinat Mahzoun

Kafkas University, Kars, Turkey

---

*This article is the report of a qualitative case study proposed to investigate the demotivation factors of foreign EFL teachers in Turkish context. To that end, two foreign teachers of English language were chosen as the subjects at a primary/ secondary school in east of Turkey. Face-to-face interviews, profile forms, field notes and diaries were used to obtain the necessary data for the research. The findings indicated that lack of effective communication with school administration and colleagues and lack of interest, attention and respect from behalf of students were the main causes of demotivation at work for both teachers. Keywords: Demotivation, Foreign, Native, EFL Teachers*

---

Many countries have adopted and implemented national projects for recruiting native speakers of English as EFL teachers; such as Brunei, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and Taiwan (Copland, Davis, Garton, & Mann, 2016). The Foreign Expert (FE) scheme in China, the Native English Teacher (NET) scheme in Hong Kong, the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) scheme, and the EPIK (English Program in Korea) program in Korea are some examples (Copland, et al, 2016). Similarly, Turkey, as 16<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world, plans to set about a project - Yabancı Dil Öğretiminin Geliştirilmesi Projesi<sup>1</sup> - (Turkish Ministry of Education) to recruit 40,000 native English speaker teachers (NESTs) to work with local English teachers (LETs) in EFL classes in Turkey (Coskun, 2013). The reason is that, in spite of large investments in ELT area, the proficiency level of English cannot reach an optimum level in the country and Turkey ranks 43<sup>rd</sup> among 44 countries in terms of English proficiency (Coskun, 2013). This impelled the educational authorities to embark on a project to create an environment for LETs to collaborate with NESTs for upgrading teaching skills of LETs and general English proficiency levels by injection of native English teachers into the education system of Turkey. In order to attain successful integration of NESTs with LETs, there are several key elements which must be taken into account. Copland, et al. (2016) investigated the NEST schemes around the world. Among the factors which have led to the failure of such schemes, lack of joint planning was identified as the key factor. Planning itself is dependent on many other factors, such as experience, confidence, time, English language skills, cultural understanding and motivation.

In this study, we draw on motivation factor of EFL teachers, proposing to contribute to the rare literature of the issue. We do believe that motivation level of NESTs is one of the key principles which determines the success of the project in obtaining its goals.

Motivation is a process by which individuals begin and maintain purposeful activities (Rakes & Dunn, 2010). Hastings (2012) asserted that there had been a transition of focus in L2 motivation research, since it had changed from macro-level studies (social level) to micro-level (individual level), and at the new level it had also undergone many changes. The focus of attention was turning away from understanding the learners' needs to teachers' role because it

---

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Language Teachers' Development Project

was believed that, since learners were in a wide contact with their teachers, they had a vital role in learners' success and degree of motivation.

Hastings (2012) pointed out an important difference between students' motivation and teachers' motivation, namely that teacher motivation was in fact *work motivation*. According to Herzberg (1966), there are growth or motivator factors that are intrinsic to the job (e.g., achievement, recognition for achievement, the work itself, responsibility, and work promotion). On the other hand, there are factors called dissatisfaction-avoidance or hygiene factors that are extrinsic to the job (e.g., administration and company policy, supervision, interpersonal relations, working conditions, payment, status, and security). Based on Herzberg's theory, work satisfaction originates from growth factors and work dissatisfaction is the result of hygiene factors.

Addison and Brundett (2008) distinguished between two modes of motivational sources: extrinsic vs. intrinsic; they concluded that motivation originates from intrinsic factors (inherent in the task) whereas demotivation is caused by extrinsic factors (originates from outside).

In educational area, teacher demotivation can be defined as the lack of effort, need and desire from behalf of the teacher (Aydin, 2012). Several sources have been found in the studies that have investigated the sources leading to demotivation of EFL teachers: the shocking gap between expectations and the real experience of the teachers (Kumazawa, 2013); workload and long working hours (Addison & Brundett, 2008), students use cellphone during the lesson, they are not interested in the subject; hostile behaviors; long meeting hours and much paperwork; teaching materials change frequently; large difference in students' abilities in a single class; students show a different attitude towards female teachers; too much emphasis on examinations like TOEFL and TOEIC (Sugino, 2010), uninterested students and economic issues (Kızıltepe, 2008), repetitive teaching materials and low opportunities for professional growth (Baleghizadeh & Gordani, 2012).

On the other hand, several sources contribute to the motivation of teachers: well-motivated and well-behaved students, encouraging colleagues, progress of students, having a sense of achievement. (Addison & Brundett, 2008; Aydin, 2012; Baleghizadeh & Gordani, 2012; Bernaus, Gardber, & Wilson, 2008; Dweik & Awajan, 2013; Hastings, 2012; Kızıltepe, 2008; Simpson, 2008; Sugino, 2010). Ng and Ng (2015) have conducted studies through various approaches. However, very few researches have investigated the issue of motivation or demotivation of foreign EFL teachers (e.g., Simson, 2008).

In Turkish research context, although there are some studies on EFL teachers' motivation (e.g., Aydin, 2012; Kızıltepe, 2008), to the best of our knowledge, there is no study that has investigated this issue regarding foreign teachers. Therefore, this study aims to bridge this research gap by examining two cases in Turkish research context.

## Literature Review

The following research studies have examined the issue of teacher motivation based on experiences of teachers in different countries, such as Japan, England, Iran, Korea, USA, China and Turkey.

Kumazawa (2013) examined four inexperienced Japanese teachers' motivation levels. The findings indicated that teacher educators should inform teacher training students during their service about the realities of their job in the future, since there is a shocking gap between what they expect from their would-be job and what they experience later in reality. Thus, the main cause of demotivation in this study was found to be the shocking gap between expectations and the real experience of the teachers.

Addison and Brundett (2008) studied the motivational factors of six primary school teachers in England. The study yielded that well-motivated and well-behaved students, encouraging colleagues, progress of students, having a sense of achievement were the main motivators of teachers. The de-motivating factors are lack of any of the afore-mentioned factors.

Addison and Brundett (2008) also examined de-motivational factors of teachers from the point of view of ethnographic characteristics. In terms of religion, Muslim teachers or those without any religious faith were more likely to get de-motivated than their colleagues with other religious beliefs. Single teachers or those with no child were more vulnerable to de-motivating drives. In brief, the main de-motivators discovered from among six schools were workload and long working hours.

Sugino (2010) read up on 97 Japanese college teachers to find out their sources of demotivation, by using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The results highlighted the following factors as the main de-motivators for teachers: students use cellphone during the lesson; they sleep in the class; they are not interested in the subject; they show hostile behaviors; there are long meeting hours and much paperwork; teaching materials change frequently; large difference in students' abilities in a single class; students show a different attitude towards female teachers; too much emphasis on examinations like TOEFL and TOEIC. Some teachers stated that they are personally organized and when the department does not look professional and organized, it has a negative impact on their motivation. Another result which was also seen in Kumazawa (2013) indicated that there was a wide gap between what teachers had expected and their real experiences in their job, which was a great source of demotivation for some teachers.

Baleghizadeh and Gordani (2012) examined career motivation of 160 secondary school EFL teachers from the viewpoint of the quality of work life in Iranian context. Among the culprits of loss of motivation, repetitive teaching materials and low opportunities for professional growth were of higher priority to the teachers.

Doyle and Kim (1999) examined the EFL/ESL teacher demotivation issue. They concluded that lack of the following factors caused dissatisfaction of EFL/ESL teachers: respect from administration, promotion opportunities, long-term employment and job security, rewards for creativity, functioning of the education system, funding for projects, autonomy in the teaching and evaluation system, autonomy due to mandated curricula and tests, proper teaching environments, teacher training and institution of team teaching and foreign assistant teachers. Other unsatisfactory factors included heavy workloads, alienation of teachers, over-commercialization of textbooks and discrepancies in teaching philosophies (as cited in Oga-Baldwin & Praver, 2008)

Simpson (2008) investigated the conflicts that foreign EFL teachers encountered in China. The origin of the conflict was discovered to be low mutual awareness between teacher and students and high unrealistic expectations of both sides from each other. The results of the conflict were frustration and demotivation of both teachers and students. Foreign EFL teachers must be aware of the fact that for being a successful teacher, merely being a native speaker is not sufficient and they must gain some knowledge of Chinese cultural, historical, and philosophical background in order to better understand their students and their expectations and act accordingly to minimize the existing conflicts.

Kızıltepe (2008), in the study of motivation and demotivation of university teachers in Turkey, found that the most determining factor for teachers' motivation or demotivation was students. Teachers challenge with uninterested students. Next triggers of demotivation were economic- and research-related issues. The findings of the study revealed a remarkable difference between male and female teachers' priorities so that female teachers were found to

be more influenced by students as a source of motivation, whereas male teachers were more concerned with economic issues and research opportunities.

Aydin (2012), in a qualitative case study on the factors causing demotivation in EFL teaching process in Turkish context, found that the problems stemmed from teaching occupation, curriculum, working conditions, students and their parents, co-workers and school administration, and physical conditions. From viewpoint of students and their parents, the problems reported by the subject arose from the following factors: learners' low motivation levels, violence and abuse, negative attitudes and perceptions of EFL learning and not using computer for learning English; parents were also reported to show no interest in English. There was also miscommunication among teachers and ideological discrimination from behalf of school administrators.

Few studies have investigated the issue of EFL teachers' motivation in Turkish context (e.g., Aydin, 2012); yet, to the best of our knowledge, there is no study that has investigated this issue regarding foreign EFL teachers. The purpose of this study is to shed lights on this gap in the research literature by examining the demotivation factors of two native EFL teachers in Turkish context.

### **About the Authors**

Dr. Han is an assistant professor at Foreign Languages Department. Throughout his professional career, he has worked with many foreigners who, in spite of the initial enthusiasm, gradually lost their motivation at work. This impelled him to organize a study with one of his foreigner Master's students who studies under his supervision, Mahzoun, and explore the issue. Mahzoun teaches English at a primary/secondary school, together with two native English teachers who are also demotivated at their work. This provided the grounds for a collaboration to launch the current study. Due to the close contact of Mahzoun with the two teachers, they were chosen as the subjects of the study and the data collection procedure was carried out with utmost authenticity and punctuality.

### **Methodology**

This study is a qualitative case study which provides opportunities for the researchers to read up on a phenomenon within its context by using multiple sources of data (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Specifically, it is an intrinsic case study in which "the researchers are primarily interested in understanding specific individuals or situations" (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2015, p. 433). The current study was intended to identify and document the factors which had led to the loss of motivation in two foreign EFL teachers in Turkish context.

### **Subjects**

Two native EFL teachers constituted the units of analysis. The particular reason for choosing them as cases of study was that both teachers were native speaker of English and both were demotivated to teach. One of the researchers had been working in the same institution with the two subjects and knew them for a few months. Based on informal talks between the researcher and the subjects, it was understood that they were somewhat demotivated to teach.

Both cases were male and native speakers of English: An American and a British. The subjects had been teaching English for almost two years at a private school in an eastern city of Turkey. The target students consisted of preschool, primary and secondary school students. Both subjects had a teaching certificate; subject A held a TESOL certificate and Subject B held a CELTA. Subject A had worked in Georgia as an EFL teacher before coming to Turkey and

Subject B had a short experience of teaching in England before teaching in Turkey. The experience duration of both subjects in Turkey was same, which equaled two and half years. The demographic information of the subjects is classified in Table 1, below.

Table 1. The Demographic Information of the Subjects of the Study

Subjects	Subject A	Subject B
<b>Gender</b>	Male	Male
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	Single
<b>Age</b>	28	40
<b>Nationality</b>	American	British
<b>Mother tongue</b>	English	English
<b>Highest educational degree</b>	Bachelor's	Bachelor's
<b>English language teaching experience</b>	4	4
<b>Foreign languages</b>	Georgian, Turkish	Portuguese

### Data Collection Tools

The first stage, after inviting the teachers to take part in the study, was to give them a consent form to sign. This research was based on participants freely volunteered informed consent. They were explained deeply what the research was about and its dissemination. Participants accepted to participate voluntarily and they knew how the data would be used; further, they were asked to if they wanted to continue to participate. In the consent form, the subjects were given necessary information about the study as far as they would be concerned. After obtaining their consent, the data collection process started. The data were collected by deploying four tools: (a) profile forms, (b) interviews, (c) diaries kept by the subjects, and (d) fieldnotes by one of the researchers over a four-month period. The details of data collection procedure are given below.

**The profile form.** The first step of collecting the data was to gather the basic information of the subjects. The profile form embraced questions on demographic information of the subjects (e.g., age, gender, nationality, marital status, etc.) and complementary open-ended questions which the researchers used to obtain subjects' professional background (teaching experience, teaching certificate, their field and level of education).

**The interviews.** The second step was to get to know more deeply about the subjects and their opinions on the issue. For this purpose, one of the researchers arranged the interviews with each subject on their convenient day and conducted face-to-face interviews separately with each subject. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed later by the interviewer.

**The diaries.** After obtaining the subjects' consent to take part in the study, they were asked to keep daily diaries of what they experienced regarding the issue under investigation. In some cases, the diaries were reported verbally to one of the researchers, who was a co-worker of the subjects, and she registered them in her notes.

**The fieldnotes.** One of the researchers kept the diaries, who had a prolonged involvement in the field, through overt observation; that is, the subjects were informed about the study and they were aware of being observed by the researcher.

## Data Collection Procedures

First, the researcher invited the subjects and informed them about the study. They were given consent forms as well in which the researchers had stipulated that the subjects' safety and privacy would be strictly taken into consideration and the collected data would be kept confidential by the researchers. Then, the timing arrangements and procedure of data collection was scheduled. Table 2 summarizes the data collection procedures.

Table 2. Data Collection Timetable

Time	Data gathered	Instrument
January 2016	Confirmation of the subjects for accepting the invitation to take part in the study. Demographic information and professional background of the subjects	Consent forms and Profile forms
January-April 2016	Field notes of one of the researchers, based on the daily observation of what was happening in the research context	Overt field notes
Interviews: April 2016	The attitudes of the subjects on the research items	Face-to-face Interviews
January-April 2016	Casual notes of the subjects	Diary kept by the subjects

## Data Analysis

After asking some preliminary questions about why they had chosen teaching as their profession, or why this country and why at a private school, the subjects were asked more specifically about their views on ten categories in terms of the level of impact on their work motivation; namely, (1) school administration, (2) colleagues, (3) parents, (4) students, (5) workload, (6) school facilities, (7) payment, (8) public respect, (9) living conditions and people's attitudes, and (10) their personal criteria or expectations.

For simplicity, the categories of the study are classified into three groups. As illustrated in Tables 3, 4 and 5, categories 1 to 3 are grouped into Human Factors, categories 4 to 8 are grouped into Working Conditions Factors, and categories 9 and 10 are grouped into Personal Factors.

The data are analyzed from two perspectives. Firstly, the data are represented from the viewpoint of subjects (Emic focus), for which the transcripts of interviews and subjects' diaries are used; Secondly, the data are represented from the viewpoint of the researchers (Etic focus), for which the fieldnotes of observation are used (Buchanan & Bryman, 2009).

In reply to the preliminary questions, both subjects said that they loved this profession, but none had a preference to specifically teach at a private school or in this country; it could be any other institution or any other country. However, Subject A affirmed that his initial reason

to leave the previous country and come to teach in Turkey was to make more money than he did in the former country.

Among the ten categories in the interviews, lack of communication was found to be the primary reason of being demotivated for both teachers. This includes communication with the administration and colleagues. The statements in the face-to-face interviews and the observations from the overt field notes regarding demotivators were noted. The participants' statements about their experiences and field notes were examined in details from each data source. Motivation related issues were determined and underlined by each researcher separately. Only statements that focused on school administration, colleagues, parents, students, workload, school facilities, payment, public respect, living conditions and people's attitudes, and their personal criteria or expectations were taken into consideration. The negative statements about these issues were regarded as demotivators. This process was conducted for each data source and each participant separately. Next, concept maps were used to analyze the data from each source and each participant. Finally, the statements and numbers in the concept maps were compared to examine if the data obtained confirmed validity and trustworthiness.

## Findings

### Interviews (Emic Focus)

The subjects were asked to present their perspectives regarding ten categories in the interviews in terms of impact on their motivation levels. The categories are classified into three groups: Human Factors, School Settings Factors and Personal Factors. The subjects' responses are coded briefly and represented along with some quotations in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

In the category of *administration*, the demotivating factors reported by the subjects are as follow: (1) lack of effective communication, (2) laid-back attitude and lack of urgency, (3) lack of support, (4) lack of professionalism and organization.

From the point of view of *colleagues*, the primary reason of demotivation arises from lack of support and communication, the fact that foreign teachers cannot effectively socialize with Turkish co-workers.

In the category of parents, Subject A had a neutral feedback and Subject B was positive. However, both subjects mentioned that there are some parents who are not appreciative of what they do, but this was not to the extent to cause serious demotivation.

A narrative presentation of the findings is provided below, which deals with each category separately by introducing and explaining the features of each category, followed by evidence from the subjects.

### Human Factors That Affect the Motivation Level of EFL Teachers

Human factors in this study include administrative board (school manager, employer, and coordinator), colleagues, and parents. The way each category plays role in demotivation of the subjects is discussed below:

**Administrative board.** Based on the analysis of data regarding the impact of administrative board on the motivation levels of the subjects, the findings were coded into four items; namely, lack of effective communication, laid-back attitudes, ambiguity of rules, and lack of support. Each item will be defined and provided evidence from the subjects here.

The administrative board of the school, which consists of the school manager, the employer who is in charge of hiring native English teachers, and the coordinator between the school and the native teachers, are not successful at building an effective communication between and among each other. As one of the subjects complains that "we can't really

communicate with our principal and the coordinator is not always available.” The other subject is concerned about another aspect of communication and asserts that “they don’t really communicate with us as much as the Turkish teachers and the reason is not related to language barriers.”

**Laid-back attitudes.** Both subjects agree that the people in administrative board are totally unconcerned about the issues reported to them by foreign teachers. One of the subjects said bitterly “even when we explain our problem, nobody cares except you!” and the other one said “they don’t have any urgency to get things done.”

**Ambiguity of rules.** The next item extracted from the findings’ analysis was related to the ambiguity of the rules set by the administrative board, which was not related to the rules itself as much as the people who are involved in practicing those laws. These are the impressions of the subjects of the situation: “they do whatever is in their best interest,” “rules are kind of suggestions, not real rules,” “they expect me to know things without being told about them before.”

**Lack of support.** The last administrative issue which led to the demotivation of the subjects was lack of support from the administrative board to the foreign teachers. As they stated, “they are not helpful or they are reluctant to help,” “they behave as if we are easily replaceable,” “when there is an issue regarding the students, there is no support from the school manager.”

**Colleagues.** In the category of colleagues, the only factors which had caused annoyance was lack of communication and support from behalf of the colleagues. One of the subjects expressed his feelings this way: “in our school, people are just going out in working for themselves... it’s all about one person, not co-working,” “Turkish teachers stick together and the foreigners stick together.” The other subject put his words this way: “the biggest problem is lack of communication and that’s not anyone’s fault... it could be my fault... my Turkish could be better.”

**Parents.** Lack of appreciativeness was the only demotivating factors related to parents. These are the impressions of the subjects: “when there is an issue, they never talk to me... even those who know English,” and “not all of them are appreciative of the work that we do.”

### **Factors Related to Working Conditions That Affect the Motivation Level of EFL Teachers**

Working conditions have many aspects; workload, salary, student readiness to learn, school amenities and public respect for teachers, to name but a few (National Center for Education Statistics-NCES, 1996). Among the five factors pertaining to Working Conditions, workload, salary, school facilities and public respect had little or no impact on the motivation levels of our subjects. On the other hand, students were the primary demotivating factor among the five factors, which in several ways caused the demotivation of teachers. As the subjects stated “they do not show any interest and attention to the lesson and there is no authority and respect for teachers.”

**Workload.** Although the native English teachers had the longest working hours among other teachers at the school, none of them considered this factor to play a role in their motivation levels. On the other hand, they described their workload as manageable and a hobby: “I’m used to working a lot... I can’t imagine working less,” “I have enough time to do any necessary work,” “in this city, it’s nice to be busy because there is nothing else to do,” “there is no social life in this city, so it’s good to be working.”

**Students.** Students are the only factor that the subjects considered as having a remarkable role in their motivation levels. Their biggest concerns were about lack of interest and attention from students and lack of authority and respect for the teacher in the classroom.

For the first concern, the subjects' words are as follows: "having kids focus on what we're doing is so difficult at times," "they don't realize the importance of learning English." For the latter, they asserted that "getting students to respect my authority is too challenging," "when you ask them a question, they ignore you and it's very rude and disruptive," "they don't show the same respect as they do with Turkish teachers."

**Salary.** None of the subjects felt dissatisfied in terms of the amount of their salary. Nonetheless, they thought it was reasonable and more surprisingly, they believed that salary has no impact on their motivation. Here are some excerpts from the interview transcription: "well for Turkey, it is a good and reasonable salary," "I'm not really motivated by money," "money is not my main reason for becoming a teacher, so money is secondary."

**School facilities.** Although both subjects agreed that the school facilities are not fully utilized and they are not modern, they believed this factor does not contribute to their motivation levels. As they stated: "they have a lot of potential but the facilities are not being utilized," "a lot of teachers don't use the computers or projectors or bring internet in... I only get down when they don't understand my way of doing things," "there are no interactive boards... students don't have computers... but it doesn't affect my teaching."

**Public respect.** This category like most of the categories in working conditions factor was considered as not determining in terms of demotivation, though the subjects had some degree of dissatisfaction, as they both said that "I don't get the same respect or support as I would in my home country" and "they don't show the same respect as they do with local teachers."

### **Personal Factors That Affect the Motivation Level of EFL Teachers**

Personal factors consist of two categories. The first being the living conditions and people's attitudes towards you as a foreigner and the second, personal criteria and expectations. In response to the first category, both subjects expressed some degree of dissatisfaction as well as positive remarks. Both subjects held that living in a small city has its own difficulties; for example, the feeling of being watched and judged all the time, different political and religious attitudes towards foreigners, and absence of social life. However, they appreciate and grab the opportunity of the absence of social life to better focus on their job. In effect, this factor does not account for the demotivation of the teachers in our study.

In terms of personal criteria and expectations, Subject A expressed that for him, potential for growth at the school really matters and in terms of this expectation, he does not feel completely satisfied. Subject B complained about feeling of great loneliness and he hopes to resolve this problem by leaning Turkish language.

### **Summary of the Findings**

Lack of effective communication with school administration and colleagues was the main reason of demotivation at work for both teachers. The reason that students caused demotivation, based on the subjects' opinions, originated from the fact that they are too young to realize the importance of learning English; there is lack of respect for foreign teachers; they are hard to control and not attentive; they ignore teachers easily and this is very rude and disruptive at times. Facilities, workload, living conditions, working conditions, personal criteria, parents and salary had little or no negative impact on the subjects' motivation. In toto, the main demotivating factors identified in the current study were administration (school principal, employer and coordinator), students and coworkers.

## Observation Fieldnotes (Etic Focus)

In this section, we draw upon fieldnotes to convey an in-depth view of the situation which is complementary to the findings from the interviews. Fieldnotes were taken by one of the researchers who was also teaching at the same school as the subjects of the study and had a close collaboration with them. Therefore, there was an opportunity to make full-time observation. The fieldnotes were recorded during and after observation. Fieldnotes are analyzed and presented thematically to provide a comprehensive description of the issue.

### Human Factors

**Administration.** The presence of NESTs at school is advantageous to the administrative board (school management, employer and coordinator) because they make extensive advertisements to absorb students to their school and make big profits since it is a private school. Nevertheless, they hardly value NESTs in lieu of the profits they bring to school. During the four-month period of observation, the employer visited the school only two times and the coordinator, who is supposed to be readily available to the teachers and resolve their problems, came to school once a week, for one or two hours. There was only the school management, with whom there was no possibility of communication due to language issue. The result was that NESTs received no support from the administrative board.

**Colleagues.** There was a separate room for NESTs to rest during the break times. Practically, there was no communication between LETs and NESTs and if NESTs needed any kind of help, they did not feel comfortable to ask their co-workers.

**Parents.** During the parent-teacher meetings, it was the NESTs who were blamed more than other teachers. Many parents complained about the failure of hiring NESTs, they believed that their children had shown no improvement in English. Their expectation levels of foreign teachers were so high that they expected their children to speak English fluently after a few months of training by native speakers. Based on the dissatisfactions resulting from unrealistic expectations and some cultural differences, reluctance to communicate with NESTs could be observed obviously in most of the parents' behaviors.

### Working Conditions Factors

**Students.** Fieldnotes from the classroom observations revealed many differences between classes being taught by Turkish teachers and foreign teachers. These are some examples of what was observed:

The foreign teacher enters the classroom... only a few of students stand up, the others are continuing what they were doing during the break time (similar situation cannot be seen in classes with Turkish teachers). The teacher has started teaching, while almost half of the students are talking or playing... the teacher tries to get the students' attention to the lesson and calls their names to answer his question... the students asks what!?... or sometimes the teacher repeats same question several times and some students ignore him... the teachers is standing in front of students and is explaining the topic while many of students are not even looking at him....

**Workload.** At this school, foreign teachers teach for almost 30% longer than other teachers. Nonetheless, they never complain about the heavy workload or work pressure and I have observed them even working in their break time.

**Salary.** I have never heard them complain about the amount of the salary they are paid. The only problem is over the timing. They are always paid with delay.

**School facilities.** There are many deficiencies in technological facilities of the school. Projectors do not work, there are no blinds in most of classrooms, the computers and printers do not work well. Despite all deficiencies, teachers try to do their job uninterruptedly.

**Public respect.** As far as I have observed, foreign teachers are not treated with respect at this school. This includes administration, colleagues, school staff, parents and students. Turkish teachers tend to criticize foreign teachers in their own circle while they do not have the audacity to talk to them frankly.

### *Personal Factors*

The effect of personal factors on demotivation levels is presented above in the section of Interview Findings.

## **Discussion**

It was the primary aim of this study to draw attention to the issue of foreign EFL teachers' demotivation origins. To that end, we attempted to explore the issue from different angles by employing as many tools as possible to gain a clear insight into the matter in hand. In the previous section, the findings of the study were presented in detail. In this section, a contrastive analysis of the study is done against the studies introduced in the literature review.

In the category of *administration*, the demotivating factors reported by the subjects are as follow: (1) Lack of effective communication, (2) laid-back attitude and lack of urgency, (3) lack of support, and (4) lack of professionalism and organization, which is in agreement with the study of Sugino (2010).

In the category of *students*, (1) Lack of interest and attention, and (2) Lack of authority and respect were the main causes of demotivation. The first finding is in agreement with the findings of Kızıltepe (2008), Addison and Brundett (2008), Sugino (2010), and Aydin (2012). The second one is one of the main demotivating factors identified in the work of Doyle and Kim (1999).

From the point of view of *colleagues*, the primary reason of demotivation arises from lack of communication, the fact that foreign teachers cannot effectively socialize with Turkish co-workers. This finding is supported by Addison and Brundett (2008), who state that having supportive colleagues is one of the main motivating factors of teachers. This finding is also approved by Doyle and Kim (1999) who introduced the notion of *alienation of teachers* as one of the main demotivating factors of EFL/ESL teachers.

In spite of some problems experienced occasionally by both subjects, the negative impacts of the next four categories: parents, workload, salary and school facilities, based on the subjects' perspectives, were not so powerful to cause any sort of demotivation. These findings are in contrast to some reports in the literature review, as in Sugino (2010) and Doyle and Kim (1999).

## Conclusions

From the outcome of our investigation it is possible to conclude that lack of effective communication with school administration and colleagues and lack of interest, attention and respect from students were the main causes of demotivation at work for both teachers. The findings of the study have practical implications for educators and institutions. Induction programs for NESTs and LETs is recommended before NESTs start working with LETs so that they can discuss their expectations together (Copland, 2016). Administrators should encourage students and their parents to maintain a genuine regard for the value of foreign EFL teachers and the importance of English language learning. Administrators themselves should also hold foreign EFL teachers in high esteem and provide them with the same respect and support as LETs.

To our knowledge, this is the first study to investigate demotivational factors of foreign EFL teachers in Turkish context. Thus, the main limitation of this study lies in the low number of subjects. Although, it provided us an opportunity to gain deep insights into the issue and obtain first-hand findings, the findings cannot be generalized. More research into the demotivational factors of foreign EFL teachers in Turkish context is necessary to extend our knowledge of the issue. The study can be replicated in different settings: other cities, teachers of different backgrounds and the like.

## References

- Addison, R., & Brundrett, M. (2008). Motivation and demotivation of teachers in primary schools: The challenge of change. *Education, 3-13*, 36(1), 79-94. doi: 10.1080/03004270701733254
- Aydin, S. (2012). Factors causing demotivation in EFL teaching process: A case study. *The Qualitative Report*, 17(51), 1-13. Retrieved from <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol17/iss51/1>
- Baleghizadeh, S., & Gordani, Y. (2012). Motivation and quality of work life among secondary school EFL teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 37(7), 30-42. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2012v37n7.8>
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544-559. Retrieved from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR13-4/baxter.pdf>
- Bernaus, M., Gardner, R. C., & Wilson, A. (2008). Teacher motivation strategies, student perceptions, student motivation, and English achievement. *The Modern Language Journal*, 92(3), 387-401. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4781.2008.00753.x
- Buchanan, D. A., & Bryman, A. (Eds.). (2009). *The Sage handbook of organizational research methods*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Copland, F., Davis, M., Garton, S., & Mann, S. (2016). *Investigating NEST schemes around the world: Supporting NEST/LET collaborative practices*. British Council, UK. Retrieved from <http://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/sites/ec/files/38426%20BC%20NEST%20Publication%20EnglishAgenda.pdf>
- Coşkun, A. (2013). Native speakers as teachers in Turkey: Non - native pre - service English teachers' reactions to a nation - wide project. *The Qualitative Report*, 18(29), 1-21. Retrieved from <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol18/iss29/1>
- Doyle, T., & Kim, Y. M. (1999). Teacher motivation and satisfaction in the United States and Korea. *MEXTESOL Journal*, 23, 1-17.

- Dweik, B. S., & Awajan, N. W. (2013). Factors that enhance English language teachers' motivation in Jordanian secondary schools. *ELR English Linguistics Research*, 2(1). doi:10.5430/elr.v2n1p33
- Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. H. (2015). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (9th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Hastings, C. (2012). Teacher motivation: The next step in L2 motivation research. *TNTESOL Journal*, 5, 61-69.
- Herzberg, F. (1966). *Work and the nature of man* (3rd ed., Vol. 39). Cleveland, OH: World Pub. doi:10.1177/0033688208096847
- Kızıltepe, Z. (2008). Motivation and demotivation of university teachers. *Teachers and teaching Journal*, 14(5-6), 515-530 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13540600802571361>
- Kumazawa, M. (2013). Gaps too large: Four novice EFL teachers' self-concept and motivation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 33, 45-55. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2013.02.005
- NCES (1996). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Youth Indicators, 1996. NCES 96-027, by Thomas Snyder and Linda Shafer. Washington, D.C. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/yi/youth.pdf>
- Ng, C. F., & Ng, P. K. (2015). The motivation of English language teachers in a language centre. *International Journal of Languages, Literature and Linguistics*, 1(2), 87-92. doi:10.7763/ijlll.2015.v1.18
- Oga-Baldwin, W.L.Q., & Praver, M. (2008). The motivated language teacher: Work satisfaction in a Japanese context. In K. Bradford Watts, T. Muller, & M. Swanson (Eds.), *JALT2007 Conference Proceedings*. Tokyo: JALT. Retrieved from <http://jalt-publications.org/archive/proceedings/2007/E049.pdf>
- Rakes, G., & Dunn, K. (2010). The impact of online graduate students' motivation and self-regulation on academic procrastination. *Journal of Interactive Online Learning*, 9(1), 78-93.
- Simpson, S. T. (2008). Western EFL teachers and East-West classroom-culture conflicts. *RELC Journal*, 39(3), 381-394. doi:10.1177/0033688208096847
- Sugino, T. (2010). Teacher demotivational factors in the Japanese language teaching context. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 3, 216-226. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.07.036

### Author Note

Dr. Han is an assistant professor at the Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Letters of Ordu University (2016-continue). He also worked at Kafkas University between 2006 and 2016. His areas of research center on EFL measurement and assessment issues, language learning and teaching. Correspondence regarding this article can be addressed directly to: [turgayhan@yahoo.com.tr](mailto:turgayhan@yahoo.com.tr).

Zinat Mahzoun is an English teacher. She is currently doing a Master's degree in language learning and teaching. Her areas of research center on individual differences in language learning.

Copyright 2017: Turgay Han, Zinat Mahzoun, and Nova Southeastern University.

**Article Citation**

Han, T., & Mahzoun, Z. (2017). What demotivates foreign EFL teachers? A case study in Turkish context. *The Qualitative Report*, 22(4), 1001-1014. Retrieved from <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol22/iss4/5>

---