Factors Influencing Low-Achieving High School Students'Motivation in Learning English: A Case Study

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Teachers, educators, and researchers have broadly reckoned that motivation is one of the most important elements contributing to EFL students'academic performance and achievement. However, students'low-achievement, particularly how it is connected to motivation, as an unusual phenomenon still remains under-investigated. Therefore, this study, using Ryan's and Deci's (1985) Self-determination Theory as the theoretical framework, works with four EFL low-achieving high school students and aims to find out factors affecting their motivation in learning English which may shape their current learning outcomes. This research is designed as a cross-sectional case study employing semi-structured interviews as the instrument of data collection. Findings figure out that EFL low-achieving high school students'motivation in learning English is strongly affected by not only external factors but also internal factors. On the one hand, external factors include institutional, parental, teacher-related, peer-related and socio-cultural factors. Internal factors, on the other hand, consist of the need of knowledge acquisition, the need of achievement, and personal interests. Subsequently, it is indicated that external factors have more significant effects on EFL low-achieving high school students'motivation in learning English than internal factors do. Pedagogical implications are also proposed for stakeholders to address the identified factors.

Key words: motivation, low-achieving students, SLA, external factors, internal factors

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