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## The Impact of Language Awareness Enhancing Strategies on Iraqi EFL Learners' Linguistic Performance and Motivation

**Hafedh Ibrahim Shabeeb \***

General Directorate of Education in Anbar

[hafedh.shabeeb@gmail.com](mailto:hafedh.shabeeb@gmail.com)

&

**Abdul Sattar Ibrahim Shabeeb**

General Directorate of Education in Anbar

[sattar.shabeeb@gmail.com](mailto:sattar.shabeeb@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

There are many demotivating factors that affect learning a foreign language. The available literature indicates that researchers in the Iraqi context are more interested in investigating the motivation factors than the demotivation ones. Thus, limited research has been conducted to examine the demotivation factors and their resources in Iraq for EFL learners. Therefore, this study attempts to shed light on these factors among EFL learners and the way to reduce through by using language awareness-enhancing strategies (LAES). The study particularly aims to examine the effect of using LAES on reducing or eliminating the demotivating sources. For this reason, a quantitative quasi-experimental study was designed. A 5-week course was implemented on 100 purposefully selected participants from the department of English, College of Arts, University of Anbar. The course provided the EFL learners with strategies related to enhancing their awareness for

\* **Corresponding Author:** Hafedh Ibrahim Shabeeb, Email: [hafedh.shabeeb@gmail.com](mailto:hafedh.shabeeb@gmail.com)

**Affiliation:** General Directorate of Education in Anbar- Iraq

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better foreign language (FL) learning, specifically, learning English. A questionnaire was conducted on the students and statistical analysis was implemented. The results show that these LAES had little or no influence on the learners in terms of reducing these demotivating factors. Therefore, it is suggested that LAES intervention could be integrated with other pedagogical approaches to be more effective in its applicability.

**Keywords:** demotivation factors, language awareness enhancing strategies, Iraqi EFL learners, EFL classrooms, university students

## تأثير استخدام استراتيجيات تحسين الوعي اللغوي في تقليل العوامل المثبطة لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية العراقيين

حافظ أبراهيم شبيب (المديرية العامة لتربية الانبار)  
و  
عبدالستار أبراهيم شبيب (المديرية العامة لتربية الانبار)

### المستخلص

يواجه كثير من الطلاب صعوبات مختلفة عند تعلم لغة أجنبية، ومن بين أبرز هذه الصعوبات ما يُعرف بالعوامل المثبطة، التي تقلل من دافع التعلم لديهم. في السياق العراقي، ركزت معظم الدراسات السابقة على جوانب التحفيز، بينما لم تُعطِ العوامل المثبطة الاهتمام الكافي. ومن هنا جاءت هذه الدراسة لتسليط الضوء على هذه العوامل ومعرفة كيفية الحدّ من تأثيرها باستخدام استراتيجيات تساعد على رفع الوعي اللغوي. (LAES)

تهدف الدراسة بشكل رئيسي إلى معرفة ما إذا كانت هذه الاستراتيجيات قادرة على تقليل أو إزالة مصادر التنشيط لدى طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. ولتحقيق ذلك، أُجريت دراسة شبه تجريبية على مدار خمسة أسابيع، شارك فيها 100 طالب من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في كلية الآداب بجامعة الأنبار. خلال هذه الفترة، تعرّف الطلاب على مجموعة من الاستراتيجيات المصممة لمساعدتهم على فهم اللغة وتعلمها بشكل أعمق وأكثر وعياً.

وبعد تطبيق استبيان وتحليل نتائجه، تبين أن تأثير هذه الاستراتيجيات في تقليل العوامل المثبطة كان محدوداً أو غير واضح. لذلك، تقترح الدراسة أن يكون استخدام هذه الاستراتيجيات ضمن إطار أوسع، يشمل دمجها مع أساليب تدريسية أخرى لجعلها أكثر فعالية وفائدة للطلاب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العوامل المثبطة، استراتيجيات تعزيز الوعي اللغوي، طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في العراق، صفوف اللغة الإنجليزية، طلاب الجامعة.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is a well-established fact in the academic field of EFL teaching and learning education, that motivation is a key element for success (Khladoon & Hussein, 2019; Hu, 2011). It specifies the kind of aims and goals that learners intend to achieve throughout their learning and the amount of effort they exert to reach these goals (Han, 2019). Thus, without enough motivation or aptitude towards learning, learners are unable or struggle to reach and achieve the goals and objectives they pursuit. While motivated students, according to Dörnyei (2001), motivation helps to lead students to excel despite all potential challenges they face in the learning process. As such, any insufficient level of motivation would normally result in students learning problems and even hindering their progress. Therefore, studying motivation and the reason for demotivation is key to “develop new paradigms to value-add to the ever-changing landscape of language teaching environments” (Chong et al, 2019, p. 64). Thereby, recent studies on learner motivation have focused to investigate why EFL students lose or their motivation diminishes and the right response to that. Hence, demotivation in the EFL context has attracted scholars and researchers to research them. Demotivation, as is known to be a “common phenomenon and teachers have a role to play in causing such demotivation in language learning” (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 34).

In the early phases of the learning process, any demotivation that occurs in learning may result in students’ negative impacts and consequences. For instance, the students fail in their learning or blame themselves. Besides, they could also lose their self-esteem and confidence. As such, they suffer a lot to regain their motivation throughout their learning (Falout & Falout, 2005). Therefore, intervention to stop and heal demotivation is required to avoid any learning fossilization or breakdown. However, firstly, there is a need to learn the reasons and factors that led to demotivation. Then, a possible response or treatment can be implemented. Teachers, for instance, may closely observe their students and their motivation or aptitude for learning then report on it. Moreover, the teachers could also use techniques and strategies to stop their students from losing their motivation, for instance, the Language Awareness Enhancing Strategies (hence LAES) to identify the demotivation factors (hence DFs) and try to support their students to regain their motivation and confidence during the learning process. Among many strategies, teachers should be selected according to the reasons or factors they find to be behind their students’ demotivation.

Generally, it is claimed that DFs are less academically researched and investigated in the area of EFL / second language (hence L2) context than motivation (Khajavy et al, 2017). However, several studies were found to deal with DFs from different perspectives in different countries as Turkey, the USA, Ireland, China, Japan, Vietnam, Hungary, Germany, and China. These studies have revealed six main factors of demotivation in EFL classes (Han, 2019). They are:

- "Those factors related to the teachers and the teaching staff".
- "The class environment, methods of teaching, test or exam results".
- "The materials, lack of motivation or interest in the subject of the class" (p.65-57).

In recent years, there has been immense advocacy towards using LAES in EFL education as a response to the different aspects of the DFs in the classrooms (Rezaee & Farahian, 2020). It is proposed that these LAES would support and foster learning throughout the learning process (Timuçin, 2013) and potentially may reduce the demotivation factors encountered by the students. However, the DFs in the EFL atmosphere first are to be identified before any kind of intervention.

The following questions, related to the use of LAES, are raised. Specifically:

1. What are the main demotivating factors affecting Iraqi university EFL learners?
2. To what extent can LAES reduce these demotivating factors?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in demotivation before and after a LAES intervention?

Based on the research questions, the research hypotheses can be set as follows:

- H1: There is no significant difference in the levels of demotivation before and after the LAES intervention.
- H2: There is a significant reduction in demotivation levels after the LAES intervention.

The answer to these questions is highly worth investigating as it has not been approached with a LAES intervention to reduce DFs in the EFL context. Then, the current study with empirically-based research tries to bridge this gap of knowledge on the Iraqi EFL learners and teachers. More specifically then, the current study aims to investigate the most prominent affective factors leading to demotivation among the EFL students and whether understanding the DFs lead to better language learning. Besides the study attempts to see if there are any significant differences in demotivation factors after the LAES intervention is conducted to the students.

This research employed a one-group pretest, post-test quasi-experimental design to examine the impact of Language Awareness-Enhancing Strategies (LAES) on demotivation factors among Iraqi EFL learners (Cook & Campbell, 1979; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This model allows for measurement of change within the same participants, but does not include a control or

comparison group; consequently, it is vulnerable to threats against internal validity such as history, maturation, and testing effects (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). In particular, the five-week duration of the intervention may have been too brief to observe substantial shifts in deeply rooted affective factors (Khajavy et al., 2017).

The sample was drawn purposively from a single institution (Department of English, College of Arts, University of Anbar) and consisted of 100 university students. This limits the external validity of the findings, as the homogeneity of participants (in terms of age, educational level, and cultural context) restricts the generalizability to other EFL populations in Iraq or beyond (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Furthermore, the study relied solely on self-reported questionnaire data to identify demotivation sources and measure change; thus, findings may be affected by social-desirability bias and lack the depth that classroom observations or interviews could provide (Dörnyei, 2001; Falout & Falout, 2005). Finally, while the statistical analysis was sufficient to test the stated hypotheses, the absence of qualitative follow-up limits our understanding of *why* LAES had little or no measurable effect. Future studies might address these limits by incorporating control groups, extending the intervention period, employing mixed methods, and sampling across multiple institutions.

By shifting the focus from motivational to demotivational factors in the Iraqi EFL context, this study fills a notable gap in the literature (Khajavy et al., 2017). It offers the first empirical evaluation of LAES as an intervention specifically aimed at reducing demotivation among Iraqi university learners. Theoretically, the research extends current models of affective factors in second-language acquisition by integrating language awareness strategies into the demotivation framework (Rezaee & Farahian, 2020). Practically, the findings provide instructors and curriculum designers with insight into the limited standalone efficacy of LAES for demotivation, underscoring the need to combine these strategies with other pedagogical approaches (Timuçin, 2013). By highlighting contextual particularities, such as classroom infrastructure, assessment practices, and cultural attitudes toward English. It informs policy discussions on EFL program development in Iraqi higher education. Moreover, the study's methodological reflections offer guidance for future research, particularly with respect to experimental design in applied linguistics. Educators and researchers can build on its recommendations by employing more rigorous designs and diversified data sources. Ultimately, this work contributes to a forward-thinking agenda for enhancing learner engagement and well-being in EFL settings, benefiting not only Iraqi learners but also those in comparably under-researched contexts.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

## **2.1 Demotivation Factors in EFL Context**

The study of demotivation is not seen as an end by itself, but rather connected to the study of motivation and motivational strategies (Yahya & Al-Mofti, 2017). Demotivation, according to Dornyei (2001) as those factors that have an external or deriving force on learning with negative consequences where students' motivation drops or sometimes diminishes to a level of no participation in the learning tasks. In more recent work, Dornyei & Ushioda (2011) have a more refined definition of DFs focusing on its influence on the learners' behaviors where the students' intention towards learning is reduced for the language practice-related activities. DFs are external forces that derive learners towards negativity towards learning and enforce them to leave or drop their participation in any language learning activities. Subsequently, that "absence of motivation

DFs concept as only external factors according to Dornyei (2011) and Dornyei & Ushioda (2011) towards learning was objected by other researchers that there are also internal factors that demotivate EFL learners. For instance, a group of scholars in the field of EFL demotivation such as Chong et al (2019) denoted that internal factors might be the reason for demotivation besides external factors. In addition, Chong et al (2019) argued that psychological factors related to the students themselves could be behind their demotivation especially when they lose their "self-confidence and have negative attitudes towards foreign language learning" (p. 66).

In its close connection with motivation, demotivation is known to be the "dark side of motivation" (Khajavy et al, 2017). The DFs require close attention during the learning process due to their interference to both the learners and the pedagogy since their reasons are derived by multiple forces internal and external factors. No matter the factors behind demotivation are, the quick response and the better appropriate treatment is the best way to stop or reduce the learners' disintegration, long-term negative impacts and may bring motivation back to them (Han, 2019).

## **2.2 LAES in EFL Context**

Many scholars have identified the importance and benefits of using LAESs in EFL classrooms (Svalberg 2007) and their success is identified through many instructional constituents (Wright and Bolitho 1993). LAESs are known as those practices that can be applied by teachers and identified through multiple elements of instructions (Farahian & Rezaee, 2015). Specifically, the instructional elements or components include but are not limited to the practices of education through exploration, student-centered learning, and autonomy, engagement (Van den Broek and others, 2019). In its specific meaning, language awareness means understanding,

knowing how certain skills of language can be taught, developed with full mastery (Timuçin, 2013) in an “internalized ability and implicit knowledge” (Farahian & Rezaee, 2015, p. 19).

Language awareness is seen as both “situational” and “operational” according to Van den Broek et al (2019, p. 3). By “situational” it is meant that every practice of teaching is rather guided and situated where the learning process is described by students’ involvement in the learning process, developing self-autonomy using language in real-life contexts.

### **2.3. Definition of Key terms**

- **Demotivating Factors**

This study draws on Dörnyei (2001) and understands demotivating factors (DFs) as those external forces that negatively influence learners, often leading them to withdraw from language tasks. Demotivation is not simply the absence of motivation, but rather the presence of specific forces that reduce or extinguish learners’ willingness to engage in language learning. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) emphasized both external and internal dimensions of demotivation, such as poor teaching methods, unsupportive classroom environments, or students’ loss of self-confidence and interest. This classification helps frame demotivation as a multifaceted concept that must be tackled holistically.

- **LAES**

Language Awareness Enhancing Strategies (LAES) involve structured pedagogical interventions aimed at increasing learners’ metacognitive and linguistic understanding. LAES support learners by improving self-regulation, engagement, and autonomy (Svalberg, 2007; Timuçin, 2013). According to Farahian & Rezaee (2015), LAES promote active reflection on language use and learning strategies, which may indirectly reduce demotivation. However, while widely advocated in theory, their empirical effectiveness in demotivation contexts, particularly in Iraq, remains underexplored.

### **2.3 Previous Studies**

The reviewed literature related to LAESs and DFs was found to share similar application backgrounds. Each one of these two concepts was investigated separately on students in different contexts. Several studies were conducted to show the factors or reasons for demotivation in EFL classrooms. A study conducted by Han (2019) where they investigated the influence that causes demotivation among EFL learners in Turkey and the ways that the learners use to cope or overcome these demotivating factors. The study included a large number of participants to reach more reliable results. Thus, there were almost 469 students from different undergraduate levels. For data collection, both questionnaires and interviews were conducted. The researchers

performed descriptive and inferential statistics to research for accurate results. The study findings showed that there were many major demotivating factors that the EFL learners encountered. One of them was the negative attitudes towards the classroom itself, while the other one was related to the teacher and his issues in teaching.

Moreover, the students suffered from the educational system having a lot of administrative issues that they have to complete during their course. On the other hand, the students adopted some strategies to enhance their learning and overcome their demotivation factors. They reduced anxiety by asking for help and assistance, with different and changing perspectives towards their teacher and his behavioral features. Also, the learners overcame their negative attitudes towards the classroom by thinking positively and encouraging one another to ignore what could other things of them be sharp on their target. It can be seen from the results that demotivating factors are critical for overcoming any demotivating factors that the learners may face throughout their learning journey.

Another interesting study was conducted by Vakilifard et al (2020) in the context of Iranian students. The study was conducted mainly to investigate what were the demotivating factors for the Persian EFL students and also the frequency of significance of these demotivating factors for the learners. Thus, a questionnaire was submitted to 100 students from university undergraduate levels for data collection. The findings obtained showed that there were no real differences in gender with relation to the demotivating factors. However, there were significant differences in the demotivating factors between the Iranian learners at different levels of education.

Similarly, Haryanto et al (2018) discussed the special demotivating factors that particularly influencing Indonesian students in high and secondary school levels where no previous studies were conducted to fill that gap because all the studies were conducted in the Indonesian contexts were focused on EFL learners at the university level. The participants were selected purposefully who were enrolled at public schools in the city of Madrasah, Indonesia. The study was a quasi-experiential analysis whereby both face-to-face interviews and quantitative analysis were conducted for collecting data. Hence, the results revealed that the main demotivating factor for the learners was peer influence. Also, the conditions of the schools, for instance, the lack of materials, facilities, and resources.

Moreover, some studies investigated the demotivating factors in the EFL context and its relation with the learning of language skills and achieving proficiency as in (Tanaka, 2017; Méndez et al, 2017; Hu, 2011). Tanaka (2017) studied the relationship between the peers' roles, motivation, and EFL vocabulary learning, and the demotivation factors in the Japanese



environment. The study concluded with the fact that peers with high demotivation have a great negative influence on their colleagues' learning in general and for learning vocabulary in particular. Hu (2011) similarly conducted a study to investigate the link between any prior demotivating circumstances or environment by EFL students and the acquisition of language skills of the English language. To answer the objectives of his study, he conducted a regression analysis which showed that learning obstacles and difficulties were the most variances influencing the learners' competence.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Study Design**

The study was implemented over 5 weeks. **This study employed a quasi-experimental design with pre-test and post-test measurements.** LAES were integrated into the course throughout the classes whereby the instructor teaching the classes integrated them to measure the students' demotivating factors to recognize the learners' demotivating factors and overcome them. Both pre-and post-questionnaire distributions were implemented to see if the LAES helped in reducing the demotivating factors of the EFL learners. The questionnaire was inspired and adapted from Sakai & Kikuchi (2009) and verified by its high reliability by Vakilifard et al (2020). The LAES implemented in this study were taken from Timuçin (2013) and as they were proved to be effective in the EFL context. The LAES implementation in the current study is shown in Table 1 below.

**Table (1): Course of LAES Implementation**

Course Time	The LAES used in each session	No of Participants	Male or Female
Week 1	Representational language:	100	Both
Week 2	Suitable material and text selection	100	Both
Week 3	Interpretation of language use	100	Both
Week 4	Classroom activities	100	Both
Week 5	Pedagogical practice	100	Both

#### **a. Participants**

The participants consisted of 100 randomly selected students (50 males and 50 females) from the College of Arts at the University of Anbar. They were between 18 and 22 years old and were enrolled in the second and third years of their undergraduate English language program. These participants were randomly selected from a pool of 120 EFL learners in the Department of English. Participation was voluntary, and the group was gender-balanced to allow comparative analysis.

**b. Instruments**

Data were collected using a validated questionnaire composed of 25 items grouped into five components, each targeting different demotivating factors: classroom environment, learning materials, attitudes toward learning English, instructional methods, and teacher characteristics. The questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 (true) to 5 (not true). This instrument was adapted from Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) and has been verified as reliable in the context of EFL demotivation studies by Vaklifard et al. (2020).

**c. Procedures**

The study was conducted over five weeks following the procedure below:

- **Pre-intervention phase:** The questionnaire was distributed to all 100 participants to collect baseline data regarding their demotivation levels (approximately 20 minutes).
- **Intervention phase:** The Language Awareness Enhancing Strategies were integrated into the weekly EFL classes by the instructor over the course of five weeks. The LAES applied were based on Timuçin (2013) and focused on areas such as representational language, material and text selection, interpretation of language use, classroom activities, and pedagogical practice (see Table 1). Participant feedback was monitored to ensure understanding and engagement.
- **Post-intervention phase:** The same questionnaire was administered again to all participants (approximately 20 minutes) to assess any changes in demotivation after the intervention.

Table (2) below summarizes these procedures:

**Table (2): Procedures for Implementing the Current Study**

Intervention	Time	Participants	Data collection
Distribution of the questionnaire	Before the intervention (20 minutes) to answer	Both male and female	the results of the responses to the questionnaire by the students are analyzed statistically and

to the participants	the questionnaire		presented in tables to be compared with the results obtained after the intervention
The LAES were integrated with the sessions	during the intervention period of 5 weeks	Both males and females participated in this activity	Feedback was taken from the participants to ensure their understanding of the LAES
Distribution of the questionnaire to the participants	After the intervention (20 minutes) to answer the questionnaire	Both males and females participated in this activity	the results of the responses to the questionnaire by the students are analyzed statistically, presented in tables, and compared with the results obtained before the intervention

#### 4. DATA ANALYSIS

To answer the questions raised in this study, descriptive statistics were used. Firstly, descriptive analysis was used for the responses obtained from the questionnaire results that were distributed to the participants before the intervention. ANOVA procedure was performed to analyze the demotivating factors.

##### 4.1. EFL Learners' DFs before Intervention

The questionnaire's responses obtained from the EFL learners concerning the most significant demotivating factors were analyzed statistically for each component of the questionnaire as presented in Table 3 below.

**Table (3): Descriptive Analysis of DFs before Intervention**

The Demotivating Factors	Gender	The Mean score	The standard deviation
Learners attitudes towards EFL learning	Female	5.16	1.11
	Male	6.34	1.18
The teacher	Female	5.67	1.04
	Male	5.34	1.01
	Female	4.17	1.23

<b>The classroom activities</b>	<b>Male</b>	5.16	1.48
	<b>Female</b>	3.89	1.66
<b>The materials and learning contents</b>	<b>Male</b>	4.52	1.09
	<b>Female</b>	2.70	1.94
<b>Experience of failure</b>	<b>Male</b>	2.01	1.36
	<b>Female</b>		

It is quite obvious from Table (3) above that there are significant differences in male/ female demotivating factors in all of the components of the questionnaire. From the table, it is apparent that the DFs are varied and almost include all the sources mentioned in the questionnaire.

The main demotivating source seems to be the EFL learners, attitude towards learning English. Both means of male and female of the first component "Learners attitudes towards EFL learning" has the highest rate among other components with (5.16), (6.34) respectively. While the least rate score among the components is "Experience of failure" with (2.70), (3.01) respectively. The major DFs sources taken from the students' responses to items of the questionnaire are represented statistically in Table (4) below:

**Table (4): Main Sources of Student's Demotivation**

Factors of students' demotivation	Gender Frequency		Total number of responses
	Female	Male	
<b>Learners' negative attitudes</b>	17 (34 %)	14 (28%)	31 (31%)
<b>Teacher's personal characteristics</b>	12 (24%)	13 (26%)	25 (25%)
<b>Activities used in the classroom and learner's engagement</b>	10(20%)	11 (22%)	21 (21%)
<b>Textbooks and materials</b>	6(11.5%)	8(16%)	14 (14%)
<b>Learners' experience</b>	5(10.5%)	4 (8 %%)	9 (9%)
<b>Total</b>	50(100%)	50 (100%)	100

Table (4) shows that (34%) of females reported that the most demotivating factor for them is their negative attitudes towards learning English in general. The driving source of this would be attributed to their selection of English department as a major and going without having real aptitudes towards earning. Obtaining a bachelor's degree in English for better job opportunities could be behind their selection rather than learning a foreign language itself. Similarly to the

female responses, 14 (28%) male participants reported that they have negative attitudes towards learning a foreign language.

Moreover, statistically, the teacher's characteristics come second with the highest frequency 25 (25%) over the other items of the questionnaire. Male participants were more direct expressing that the teacher's personal characteristic is a demotivating factor to them than the females. This is seen from the frequency rates of males with 13 (26%) while females with

#### **4.2. The demotivating Factors of the EFL learners after the intervention**

After the application of the language awareness learning enhancing strategies intervention on the 100 EFL learners during the 5-week course, the same questionnaire distributed to the learners before the intervention was used to collect data on whether these LAES were helpful in reducing the demotivation factors or not. The following table below is used to represent statistically any significant details:

**Table (5): Descriptive Analysis of DFS after Intervention**

The Demotivating Factors	Gender	The Mean score	The standard deviation
<b>Learners attitudes towards EFL learning</b>	<b>Female</b>	5.01	1.17
	<b>Male</b>	5.98	1.08
<b>The teacher</b>	<b>Female</b>	5.67	1.10
	<b>Male</b>	4.18	1.01
<b>The classroom activities</b>	<b>Female</b>	4.08	1.46
	<b>Male</b>	5.16	1.48
<b>The materials and learning contents</b>	<b>Female</b>	3.67	1.80
	<b>Male</b>	4.09	1.21
<b>Experience of failure</b>	<b>Female</b>	2.33	1.87
	<b>Male</b>	2.74	1.07

It is obvious from Table (5) above that the students' demotivating factors are still posing a clear challenge to the learner even though they have the 5-week course. Sources of demotivation are similar to those experienced before the intervention and learners even complained of other factors related to class materials and topics. This can be attributed to the reasons that learning is a

continuum whereby targeting only the students with the LAES is not enough and other interventions are required, for instance, the teachers.

The mean scores from table (5) are almost as similar as the ones in table 4 with a very slight decrease in some of the components of the questionnaire. This means that the LAES intervention had little or no influence on the EFL learners' perspectives towards the main demotivating factors.

#### **4.3. Discussion of the Results**

From the results obtained in the current study, major DFs and sources were found. The study investigated the effectiveness of using LAES in reducing the demotivating factors by EFL learners. The study applied quantitative analysis to reach its results. The participants were 100 undergraduate learners who were selected purposefully from the department of English, college of arts, university of Anbar.

After analyzing the obtained data collected from the questionnaire distributed to the participants before the intervention statistically, many demotivating factors were revealed, namely, the attitudes towards EFL learning, teacher, classroom activities, the learning contents, and experience of failure. Generally, the obtained results from the current study align with the results of past studies on the factors or reasons of motivation in different educational settings (Meshkat, 2012; Sahragard, 2013; Jahedizadeh, 2016; Çankaya, 2018; Khouya, 2018; Han, 2019).

The main objective of the current study was to validate the effectiveness of using LAES in reducing the DFs among the EFL learners in the Iraqi context. However, the findings obtained from the questionnaire after the intervention revealed that the learners' demotivating sources were present even after the intervention with very little decrease. Therefore, it means that the LEASs were not useful in alleviating or stopping the demotivating sources for the learners. This, consequently, can be attributed to the following reasons:

- Teaching and learning require a comprehensive holistic approach, being aware of students' needs, appropriate environment, proved pedagogical and methodological methods as well as well trained teachers.
- Any intervention in the teaching and learning continuum should include both the learners and teacher at the same time.

Thus, with these reasons in mind, the intervention of the current study was not effective and not up to the educational expectations. Moreover, the current study proved that there are many gender differences in terms of the kind of demotivating factors and sources that EFL learners may encounter in their learning journey. For instance, the difference of frequencies between males and females concerning the attitudes of learners towards learning a foreign language whereby females had a higher mean rate than the male participants.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In general, the obtained results showed that several demotivating factors are found. Among the five demotivating factors revealed, the most prominent one was the attitudes towards learning English which means that the learners have different attitudes towards the learning of a foreign language in their environment, the Iraqi context. Moreover, other salient factors were the teacher, class activities and characteristics meaning that learners were not satisfied with the materials, content, and teaching methods and styles implemented by the teacher.

In this regard, the intervention that was implemented by the researcher to reduce the demotivating factors did not have the expected results because the demotivating sources seemed to stay even after the 5-week course. Nevertheless, the LAES could be integrated into more holistic approaches in language teaching for better results.

### 5. 1 Testing Hypotheses

Based on the findings, the following hypotheses were examined as follows:

- $H_0$ : No significant difference in demotivation levels before and after the LAES intervention.
- $H_1$ : A significant reduction in demotivation levels after the LAES intervention.

The questionnaire results showed only a slight, statistically insignificant decrease in demotivation. Recurring issues—such as negative attitudes and dissatisfaction with classroom practices—suggest the intervention was ineffective.

Thus, the study does not support  $H_1$  and accepts  $H_0$ . While LAES shows some pedagogical promise, it was not comprehensive enough to reduce demotivation among Iraqi EFL learners.

### 5.2 Recommendation:

It is recommended that future language teaching interventions in Iraqi EFL contexts adopt a more Well-rounded approach that involves both Language learners and educators, emphasizes learner-centered methods, and addresses instructional materials and classroom environment to significantly lower demotivation.

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