Curriculum Research

Volume 5, Issue 2
Jun. 30, 2024

A comparative study of novice and experienced EFL teachers' remotivational strategies: Ecological systems and Self-determination theories in perspective

Article info

Article Type:
Original Research

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Article History:

Received: 2024.02.28
Accepted: 2024.06.15
Published: 2024.06.30

Abstract

This study, drawing on a dual theoretical standpoint constituting ecological systems theory (EST) and self-determination theory (SDT), compared Iranian novice and experienced EFL teachers' remotivational strategies. The participants, selected based on convenience sampling technique, comprised two equal 32-member groups of novice and experienced EFL teachers teaching different proficiency levels at six language institutes. To gather data, semi-structured interviews were conducted. The results of thematic data analysis indicated that novice and experienced teachers were approximately similar in terms of the emerging theme instances situated within the integrative SDT/EST framework. Nonetheless, novice and experienced teachers were markedly different concerning the number of theme instances for each SDT facet positioned in the EST layers. Moreover, the results of Chi-square test demonstrated significant differences between novice and experienced teachers in terms of the number of themes existing in the SDT/EST frame. The results, enhancing teacher educators' understanding of the similarities and disparities between novice and experienced teachers' perceptions of remotivational strategies, can provide teachers and teacher educators with awareness concerning how remotivational strategies are nested across multiple systems while simultaneously being informed by a certain motivation-specific theory.

Keywords: Ecological Systems Theory (EST), Motivation, Remotivational Strategies, Self-determination Theory (SDT), Teaching Experience

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1. Introduction

Motivation, characterized as the students' incentive and desire to engage in sustained learning (Darvin & Norton, 2021; Loewen & Reinders, 2011), is construed to play a cardinal role in the process of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (Dörnyei, 2020). Foregrounding the paramount importance of motivation and its integral role in language learning, Dörnyei (2001, 2020) contends that motivation is the prominent driving force behind the SLA process. Confirming the centrality of motivation, researchers (Hu, 2011; Zheng et al., 2023) have also found that a great number of English language learners believe that their lack of success in learning ESL/EFL is rooted in demotivation. Such empirical evidence has encouraged many researchers (e.g., Csizer & Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Gao et al., 2022; Pae, 2008; Ramage, 1990) to attempt to identify the sources of demotivation among second language learners from both learners and teachers' perspectives.

Not only having an insight into the sources of demotivation is of great assistance in removing the obstacles to motivation, but also determining the practical ways or intervening strategies to remotivate learners is also pivotal (Afshari et al., 2019). In essence, measures should be taken to remotivate learners who become demotivated during the language learning process (Sun, 2018; Wang & Littlewood, 2021; Wu et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2020). However, as stated by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), the main problem is that teachers are not completely familiar with the strategies that can be used to decrease the impacts of demotivational factors to remotivate learners and maintain their motivation. Therefore, studies are required to contribute toward the identification of the strategies which can assist teachers in remotivating their demotivated learners (Song & Kim, 2017; Wang & Littlewood, 2021). A distinction should be made here for differentiating between motivational and remotivational strategies as the focus of the current investigation is on remotivational strategies and not motivational strategies. While motivational strategies are characterized as those strategies employed by teachers to initiate and sustain learners' motivation (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Tim et al., 2021; Yang & Sanchez, 2021), remotivational strategies refer to those strategies which are employed by teachers to motivate the demotivated learners and bring back motivation online again (Falout, 2012; Falout et al., 2013; Song & Kim, 2017; Wang & Littlewood, 2021).

Remotivational strategies can be subject to influences from teacher-related factors such as teaching experience.

As the review of literature indicates teaching experience, as an important factor, influences teachers' beliefs, cognitions (Sun & Zhang, 2022), and interpretations regarding classroom events (Wolff et al., 2017), which can affect their instructional practices. Therefore, teaching experience, as an antecedent to the formation of teachers' cognition and perceptions, should be investigated when it comes to psychological constructs such as motivation and remotivational strategies. However, there is a paucity of research exploring novice and experienced teachers in terms of their perceptions of remotivational strategies. Moreover, the results of previous studies have yielded conflicting findings in terms of novice and experienced teachers' perceptions in general. While some investigations (e.g., Gatbonton, 2008; Karimi & Asadnia, 2022; Koni & Krull, 2018; Shvarts & Bakker, 2019; Sun & Zhang, 2022; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007; Westerman, 1991; Wolff et al., 2017) have revealed disparities between novice and experienced teachers' perceptions, others (e.g., Fitriyah et al., 2022; Estaji & Ghiasvand, 2022; Bennett et al., 2013) have divulged similarities in this respect. Accordingly, the issue of teaching experience in relation to teachers' perceptions merits more research to partially offer a resolution to such contradictory findings.

A review of extant empirical investigations into teachers' perceptions in general (e.g., Jalilzadeh & Coombe, 2023; Kic-Drgas et al., 2023), novice and experienced teachers' perceptions (e.g., Fitriyah et al., 2022; Scherer et al., 2023), and teachers' perceptions of motivational strategies (e.g., Al-Qahtani & Alwaheebi, 2023; Jeon & Lee, 2023) in particular, indicates that such studies have adopted single theoretic perspectives. However, in this study, we capitalized on an integrative framework encompassing the quadripartite EST, consisting of microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem layers (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), and the tripartite SDT including autonomy, relatedness, and competence dimensions (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Such a dual vantage point can provide a holistic framework to unravel teachers' perceptions of remotivational strategies (Author et al., 2022).

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1. Remotivational Strategies

Motivation as a factor intertwined with engagement stands at the center of the language acquisition processes (Dörnyei, 2020: Khanzadeh Darabi & Memari Hanjani, 2024). Accordingly, it is highly important to remotivate the demotivated learners in the learning process. Remotivational strategies refer to those specific steps that teachers take in an attempt to maintain learners' motivation or help learners become motivated again (Jung, 2011). In today's educational programs, assisting demotivated learners in maintaining their motivation or becoming motivated again is an important aspect and consequently teachers should accommodate remotivational strategies in their teaching (Ghasemi, 2021). Awareness about the strategies to remotivate learners can assist teachers help demotivated learners in a systematic way and, thus, pave the way for taking appropriate measures in dealing with those EFL learners who have lost their motivation along the course of language learning (Falout, 2012). Therefore, researchers (e.g., Albalawi & Al-Hoorie, 2021; Falout, 2012; Falout et al., 2013; Jung, 2011; Sahragard & Ansaripour, 2014; Song & Kim, 2017; Wang & Littlewood, 2021) have realized that it is vital to investigate teachers' remotivational strategies.

As Maeng and Lee (2017) maintain, while studies have investigated the role of motivation in learning and teaching, more research on teachers' motivational strategies is required. Moreover, although there have been several studies investigating motivational strategies, the area of teachers' remotivational strategies is quite underexplored (Wang & Littlewood, 2021). Furthermore, not adequate attention has been paid to teachers' remotivational strategies from an integrative perspective encompassing the Ecological Systems Theory (EST) and Self-determination Theory (SDT) (Author et al., 2022). Additionally, remotivational strategies have their roots in the construct of motivation and any motivation-related construct such as remotivation is a complex and multifaceted construct. Thus, exploring the remotivational strategies necessitates an integrative framework in which remotivational strategies can be viewed through a multi-layered and multi-faceted lens and a more holistic picture of motivation and remotivational strategies is provided (King, 2021).

2.2. Ecological Systems Theory (EST)

The EST postulated by Bronfenbrenner (1979) examines human development based on ecosystems, which are comprised of four layers: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. As the innermost layer the microsystem has to do with the immediate setting where the person is undergoing development. There is a close relationship between this layer and a face-to-face interaction among persons and objects in the immediate situation. The mesosystem is concerned with a setting where the developing person is in situations beyond the immediate setting. The exosystem has to do with the linkages and processes occurring between two or more settings, with one of them lacking the developing person; however, the events take place here that indirectly influence processes in an individual's immediate setting (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Finally, the macrosystem contains micro-, meso-, and exosystems as a reflection of a culture or subculture. The strand of very recent studies (e.g., Amali et al., 2023; Chong, 2021; Chong et al. 2023), adopting an EST perspective in addressing a lens offering the potential to conduct layered-analysis, substantiate the rigor of this framework for studying complex constructs including remotivational strategies. As Bronfenbrenner (1979) holds, EST has the potential to provide a quadripartite layered and interconnected lens helping to map the developmental patterns of an individual in relation to a specific construct.

2.3. Self-determination Theory (SDT)

One of the most applicable theories of motivation in educational psychology is self-determination theory (SDT) (Dorniye & Ushioda, 2021). Dorniye and Ushioda (2021), highlighting the uniqueness of SDT, assert that this theory places emphasis on "people's inherent motivational propensities" (p. 17), which renders this theory as an important motivational theory with the potential to offer immense contributions to the study of motivation in L2 settings (Alamer et al., 2023; Sumi & Sumi, 2023). Deci and Ryan (1985) distinguished between different types of motivation based on different reasons or goals that give rise to an action in SDT. According to this theory and based on Deci et al., (1989), "to be self-determining means to experience a sense of choice in initiating and regulating one's own actions" (p. 580). Accordingly, self-determination is seen as a prerequisite for any behavior to be inherently satisfying (Dörnyei, 1994).

Based on SDT, individuals seek to meet three innate psychological needs

including autonomy, relatedness, and competence (Deci & Ryan, 1985). As Ryan and Deci (2000) hold, relatedness is characterized as the learners' established feelings of being welcomed on the part of the teachers and the speaking community. Competence refers to the learners' feelings of capability in learning the subject matter. Autonomy features the learners' feelings of their ability in choosing the subject under instruction and the ways to independently use the learning materials rather than the external impositions being excreted on the learners' choices.

2.4. Teaching Experience

Novice and experienced teachers display variations and differences in terms of their perceptions, which result in disparities in terms of their instructional practices (Berliner, 2001; Farrell, 2012; Sun & Zhang, 2022; Tsui, 2003). Novices need to take into account the potential effect of all available information and actively search for information since they have not yet developed the type of knowledge that allows for efficient and effective cognitive processing (Boshuizen & Schmidt, 2008; Haider & Frensch, 1996). Therefore, extensive practice for experienced teachers leads to accumulation of knowledge, which can help such teachers implement instructional practices more effectively and efficiently. In contrast, novice teachers due to a lack of knowledge gained from extensive experience cannot make informed and efficient instructional decisions (Fitriyah et al., 2022).

A review of extant empirical literature indicates that novice and experienced teachers are different in terms of self-efficacy beliefs (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007), interpretations of problematic classroom management events (Wolff et al., 2017), decision making (Westerman, 1991), pedagogical knowledge (Gatbonton, 2008), professional growth dimensions and teaching efficacy (Akiri & Dori, 2022), cognitions and practices in terms of sustainable teacher development (Sun & Zhang, 2022), student-teacher interaction patterns (Sha et al., 2022), language assessment literacy (Fitriyah et al., 2022), perceptions about classroom supervision and professionalism (Estaji & Ghiasvand, 2022), pedagogical cognitions in online instructional contexts (Karimi & Asadnia, 2022), factors antecedents to retaining teachers in the field (Bennett et al., 2013), and perceptions in regard to sources of demotivation among learners (Afshari et al., 2019). However, previous investigations lack a rigorous conceptual framework for studying teachers' perceptions in general and teachers' perceptions of remotivational

strategies in particular. Thus, the current study, situated in an integrative theoretic framework encompassing SDT and EST, aimed at investigating Iranian novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of remotivational strategies. It should be noted that the SDT and EST exist in isolation in the extant literature. However, in this study, in a novel attempt, we integrated these two theories to provide a multi-layered and multi-faceted analysis of teachers' remotivational strategies.

To address the objective of this study, the following research question was formulated:

- **RQ:** What are the areas of matches and/or mismatches between the perceptions of Iranian novice and experienced EFL teachers for the strategies they adopt to remotivate Iranian EFL learners from an integrative EST/SDT perspective?

3. Methodology

3.1. Design

This study mainly adopted a qualitative design in which only qualitative data were collected and analyzed. However, to check the significance of the similarities/differences between experienced and novice teachers' perceptions, statistical analyses were also employed. Thus, semi-structured interviews were used to gather the required data. The collected data became then subject to thematic analysis to unravel novice and experienced EFL teachers' remotivational strategies from an EST and SDT theoretical perspective.

3.2. Participants

The participants comprised a total of 64 Iranian EFL teachers teaching different levels of language proficiency in six language institutes in Isfahan and Hamedan provinces. All the participants were native speakers of Persian selected based on convenience sampling technique from both male (N=34) and female (N=30) teachers. Their age ranged between 21 and 45. The teachers with less than three years of teaching experience (N=32) were considered novices and teachers with more than three years of experience (N=32) were regarded as experienced teachers in line with Farrell (2012). Since this study aimed to compare the remotivational strategies between novice and experienced teachers, an equal number of novice and experienced teachers was recruited. The participants were selected only from among those teachers teaching at language institutes and EFL

teachers teaching in public state schools were excluded due to two reasons. Firstly, it was not manageable for the researcher to choose participants from public schools. Moreover, delimiting the participants to a specific educational context would yield more consistent results as remotivational strategies are context-sensitive (Noels et al., 2001).

3.3. Instruments

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to uncover the strategies Iranian EFL teachers perceive to use to remotivate Iranian EFL learners. To develop the interview questions, first, the literature related to remotivational strategies (e.g., Albalawi & Al-Hoorie, 2021; Falout, 2012; Falout et al., 2013; Jung, 2011; Sahragard & Ansaripour, 2014; Song & Kim, 2017; Wang & Littlewood, 2021) was extensively reviewed and an initial list of 12 questions was prepared. Following that, the questions were situated within the integrative EST/SDT theoretic perspective. This list of questions became subject to expert opinions in a panel of three Ph.D. holders in the field of TEFL to assure content validity and the relevance of the questions to the adopted theoretic framework. Afterward, the list of questions was reviewed and minor modifications were made. Moreover, three questions were discarded due to having overlapping content and a final list of nine questions won the approval of the panel. Thus, the list of questions consisted of nine questions in which the first two questions addressed remotivational strategies from a general perspective to help set the stage for the whole interview process. Questions 3, 4, 5, and 6 addressed the EST perspectives in regard to remotivational strategies, and the last three questions tapped into teachers' perceptions of remotivational strategies via an SDT lens. Next, this list of questions was piloted on five teachers to modify any vagueness and ambiguity in regard to content in an attempt to enhance the readability and clarity of the questions. The final list of questions (See Appendix) was prepared after minor changes based on the teachers' comments at the piloting stage. It should be noted that the interviews in the present study were of a semi-structured type and thus the questions developed were just used for initiating the interview process as the whole process of the interview was conducted in a dialogic manner (Brown & Danaher, 2017).

3.4. Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

At the onset of the study, a group of 64 language teachers were recruited to collect the

required data through semi-structured interviews. Before conducting the interviews, these teachers were briefed regarding the objectives of the study. To observe ethical considerations, the participants were informed that the collected data would be used only for research purposes. Moreover, they were told that the collected data would be kept confidential. Following that, they were given a short demographic questionnaire to identify the novice and experienced teachers. To categorize teachers into experienced and novice, Farrell's (2012) classification was employed. Based on Farrell's (2012) classification, in this study teachers with less than three years of teaching experience were considered novices and those with above three years of teaching experience were regarded as experienced ones. Subsequently, through making proper arrangements and checking class hour schedules of the teachers, they were interviewed for the strategies they adopted to remotivate Iranian EFL learners. The duration of interviews was within the range of 45 minutes to 1.5 hours. The interviews were carried out face-to-face in Persian which was the mother tongue of the participants. The reason behind using participants' mother tongue was that they felt more convenient with Persian compared to English as they were able to express their perceptions without the possible hindrance caused by a second language. Note should be taken that although the participants were English teachers and speculatively had a satisfactory level of English language proficiency, the researcher gave them the choice of either of the two languages for the interview process and all the participants selected their mother tongue. The interview contents were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for content analysis. The excerpts reported in the current manuscript are the translated versions from Persian into English.

To analyze the data, the procedures of thematic analysis proposed by Auerback and Silverstein (2003) were followed. As Auerback and Silverstein (2003) maintain, six stages should be conducted in the analysis of qualitative data. These phases are: getting familiar with the data, coming up with initial codes, looking for themes among codes, reviewing the themes, defining and labeling the themes, and producing the final report. All these stages were followed strictly by the two analyzers to produce the final report. To establish trustworthiness, as an important step in qualitative research, in line with Merriam (1997), the results of the analysis were submitted to 10 participants, 5 from each group,

to make sure that the interpretation of the data had been carried out appropriately. To establish credibility, the researcher and a research assistant with a Ph.D. degree in applied linguistics independently categorized the data. Following that, the degree of agreement was calculated based on Holsti's (1969) coefficient of reliability. The value turned out to be 0.89, which indicated an acceptable level of consistency.

4. Results

4.1. Comparing novice and experienced teachers' perceptions in the microsystem layer

The microsystem includes elements such as individuals and objects existing in the immediate context (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Thus, the microsystem in an EFL context constitutes instructional materials and learners' interactions among themselves and with the teacher in the immediate teaching-learning environment. Moreover, SDT constitutes autonomy, relatedness, and competence (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Tables 1 and 2 present the results of thematic analysis for novice and experienced teachers' perceptions of remotivational strategies in the microsystem layer of EST and the three facets of SDT.

Table 1. Results of Thematic Analysis for the Microsystem Layer of EST and SDT Dimensions for Novice Teachers

No	Autonomy	Frequency and Percentage	Relatedness	Frequency and Percentage	Competence	Frequency and Percentage	Total
1	Giving learners control over the learning content	2 (6.25%)	Encouraging learners to speak together	10 (31.25%)	Complementing learners who have good performance	24 (75%)	36
2			Asking learners to respect each other's opinions	20 (62.5%)			20
Total		2		30		24	56

Table 2. Results of Thematic Analysis for the Microsystem Layer of EST and SDT Dimensions for Experienced Teachers

No	Autonomy	Frequency and Percentage	Relatedness	Frequency and Percentage	Competence	Frequency and Percentage	Total
1	Giving learners control over learning content.	25 (78.12%)	Encouraging learners to cooperate in learning.	27 (84.37%)	Encouraging learners to self-assess themselves.	31 (96.87%)	83
2	Encouraging learners to voice their needs and wants	24 (75%)	Asking learners to respect each other's opinions	25 (78.12%)	Encouraging learners to compare their performance with others	30 (93.75%)	79
3			Teaching learners to empathize with other classmates	23 (71.87%)	Complementing learners who have good performance	28 (87.5%)	51
Total		49		75		89	213

Table 3 displays the results of the thematic analysis for comparing the theme instances of novice and experienced teachers in regard to the microsystem layer.

Table 3. Comparing the Novice and Experienced Teachers' Results of Thematic Analysis for the Microsystem Layer

Experience level	Autonomy	Relatedness	Competence	Total Mentions
Novice	2	30	24	56
Experienced	49	75	89	213

As indicated in Table 3, both novice and experienced teachers mentioned themes in regard to the three facets of SDT (autonomy, relatedness, and competence) in the microsystem layer. Nevertheless, novice and experienced teachers are markedly different not only in the total mentions related to SDT dimensions but also in the individual dimensions of SDT in the microsystem layer. As shown in Table 3, the total number of themes for novice teachers was 56 while that of experienced teachers equals 213. Moreover, novice teachers had two theme mentions for the autonomy aspect of SDT whereas the corresponding number for experienced teachers is 49. Likewise, the number of theme instances for the relatedness aspect of SDT for novice and experienced teachers was 30 and 75, respectively. Similarly, the number of theme instances with respect to the competence dimension of SDT for novice and experienced teachers was

24 and 89.

To investigate if there existed a significant difference between the number of theme instances for the novice and experienced teachers in the microsystem layer, a Chi-square test was run. Table 4 portrays the results of the Chi-square test.

Table 4. Results of the Chi-square Test for the Theme Instances between Novice and Experienced Teachers in the Microsystem Layer

Test Statistics	
	Novice and Experienced Microsystem
Chi-Square	91.632a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

As indicated in Table 4, there was a significant difference in the number of theme instances between novice and experienced teachers in the microsystem layer ($\chi 2$ = 91.63, df = 1, p=.00 < 0.001). In other words, there was a significant difference between the frequency of theme mentions in the microsystem layer for novice (Frequency=56) and experienced (Frequency=213) teachers.

4.2. Comparing novice and experienced teachers' perceptions in the mesosystem layer

The mesosystem encompasses the settings existing beyond the immediate context while such settings have a close relevance to the developing person (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Thus, the mesosystem in an EFL context encompasses other teachers and colleagues. Tables 5 and 6 depict the results of thematic analysis for novice and experienced teachers' perceptions of remotivational strategies in the mesosystem layer of EST and the three facets of SDT.

Table 5. Results of Thematic Analysis for the Mesosystem Layer of EST and SDT Dimensions for Novice Teachers

No	Autonomy	Frequency and Percentage	Relatedness	Frequency and Percentage	Competence	Frequency and Percentage	Total
1	Asking other teachers about how they acknowledge learners' preference	1 (3.12%)	Seeking colleagues' advice concerning the improvement of interpersonal relationships between learners	7 (21.85%)	Seeking more experienced teachers' expertise in learners' self-assessment techniques	15 (46.87%)	23
Total		1		7		15	23

Table 6. *Results of Thematic Analysis for the Mesosystem Layer of EST and SDT Dimensions for Experienced Teachers*

No	Autonomy	Frequency and Percentage	Relatedness	Frequency and Percentage	Competence	Frequency and Percentage	Total
1	Enquiring the supervisor about the ways learner control can be promoted	22 (68.75%)	Seeking colleagues' advice concerning the improvement of interpersonal relationships between learners	20 (62.5%)	Seeking more experienced teachers' expertise in learners' self-assessment techniques	16 (50%)	58
2	Asking other teachers about how they acknowledge learners' preferences	21 (65.62%)	Asking the board of managers for holding sessions on how to cultivate rapport among learners	19 (59.37%)	Asking the board of education for holding sessions on self-assessment	15 (46.87%)	55
Total		43		39		31	113

Table 7 presents the results of the thematic analysis for comparing the theme instances of novice and experienced teachers with respect to the mesosystem layer.

Table 7. Comparing the Novice and Experienced Teachers' Results of Thematic Analysis for the Mesosystem Layer

Experience level	Autonomy	Relatedness	Competence	Total Mentions
Novice	1	7	15	23
Experienced	43	39	31	113

As shown in Table 7, both novice and experienced teachers have mentioned themes in relation to the three facets of SDT in the mesosystem layer. Nonetheless, novice and experienced teachers are substantially different not only in the total number of mentions related to SDT dimensions but also in the individual aspects of SDT (autonomy, relatedness, and competence) in the mesosystem layer. As presented in Table 7, the total number of themes for novice teachers was 23 whereas experienced teachers mentioned 113 themes. Furthermore, novice teachers had only one theme mentioned for the autonomy aspect of SDT whereas the corresponding number for experienced teachers was 43. Similarly, the number of theme instances for the relatedness aspect of SDT for novice and experienced teachers were 7 and 39, respectively. In a similar vein, the number of theme instances with respect to the competence dimension of SDT for novice and experienced teachers were 15 and 31.

To explore whether there was a significant difference between the number of theme instances for the novice and experienced teachers in the mesosystem layer, a Chi-square test was conducted. Table 8 portrays the results of the Chi-square test.

Table 8. Results of the Chi-square Test for the Theme Instances between Novice and Experienced Teachers in the Microsystem Layer

Test Statistics	
	Novice and Experienced Mesosystem
Chi-Square	59.559a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

As presented in Table 8, there was a significant difference in the number of theme instances between novice and experienced teachers in the mesosystem layer ($\chi 2$ = 59.55, df = 1, p=.00 < 0.001). In other words, there was a significant difference between the frequency of theme mentions in the mesosystem layer for novice (Frequency=23) and experienced (Frequency=113) teachers.

4.3. Comparing novice and experienced teachers' perceptions in the exosystem layer

The exosystem layer covers the relationships, linkages, and processes taking place between the previous layers (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). As Bronfenbrenner explains further, the exosystem layer at a conceptual level shows the linkages between the microsystem and mesosystem layers via a process-oriented lens. Tables 9 and 10 display the results of thematic analysis for novice and experienced teachers' perceptions of remotivational strategies in the exosystem layer of EST and the three facets of SDT.

Table 9. Results of Thematic Analysis for the Exosystem Layer of EST and SDT Dimensions for Novice Teachers

No	Autonomy	Frequency and Percentage	Relatedness	Frequency and Percentage	Competence	Frequency and Percentage	Total
1		0	Explaining the linkages between cooperative learning and motivation in professional meetings	4 (12.5%)	Emphasizing a process-oriented perspective towards learners' competence in teacher development sessions	5 (15.62%)	9
Total		0		4		5	9

Table 10. Results of Thematic Analysis for the Exosystem Layer of EST and SDT Dimensions for Experienced Teachers

No	Autonomy	Frequency and Percentage	Relatedness	Frequency and Percentage	Competence	Frequency and Percentage	Total
1	Explaining how learners' autonomy is related to motivation in professional meetings	18 (56.25%)	Explaining the linkages between cooperative learning and motivation in professional meetings	17 (53.12%)	Emphasizing a process-oriented perspective towards learners' competence in teacher development sessions	15 (46.87%)	50
2	Drawing colleagues' attention to promoting learners' autonomy in teacher	17 (53.12%)	Explicating how teachers' acknowledgment of the benefits of cooperation lead to more motivation in	16 (50%)	Explaining the linkages between colleagues' perceptions of competence	15 (46.87%)	48

	development sessions	teachers' meetings	and development of learners' competence in teachers' meetings	
Total	35	33	30	98

Table 11 demonstrates the results of thematic analysis for comparing the theme instances of novice and experienced teachers in relation to the exosystem layer.

Table 11. Comparing the Novice and Experienced Teachers' Results of Thematic Analysis for the Exosystem Layer

Experience level	Autonomy	Relatedness	Competence	Total Mentions
Novice	0	4	5	9
Experienced	35	33	30	98

According to the information in Table 11, both novice and experienced teachers mentioned themes in regard to the relatedness and competence aspects of SDT in the exosystem layer. However, novice teachers did not generate any themes concerning the autonomy aspect of SDT at the exosystem layer. As shown in Table 11, novice and experienced teachers were markedly different not only in the total mentions related to SDT dimensions but also in the individual dimensions of SDT in the exosystem layer. Based on the information in Table 11, the total number of themes for novice teachers in the exosystem layer was 9 while that of experienced teachers equaled 98. Moreover, novice teachers had no theme mentions for the autonomy aspect of SDT whereas the corresponding number for experienced teachers was 35. Likewise, the number of theme instances for the relatedness aspect of SDT for novice and experienced teachers were 4 and 33, respectively. Similarly, the number of theme instances in respect to the competence dimension of SDT for novice and experienced teaches were 5 and 30.

To probe the significant difference between the number of theme instances for the novice and experienced teachers in the exosystetm layer, a Chi-square test was applied. Table 12 shows the results.

Table 12. Results of Chi-square Test for the Theme Instances between Novice and Experienced Teachers in the Exosystem Layer

Test Statistics	
	Novice and Experienced Exosystem
Chi-Square	74.028a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

As seen in Table 12, there was a significant difference in the number of theme instances between novice and experienced teachers in the exosystem layer ($\chi 2 = 74.02$, df = 1, p=.00 < 0.001). Put it another way, there was a significant difference between the frequency of theme mentions in the exosystem layer for novice (Frequency=9) and experienced (Frequency=98) teachers.

4.4. Comparing novice and experienced teachers' perceptions in the macrosystem layer

The macrosystem is characterized as the realization of a specific culture or subculture as the consequence of the combination of micro-, meso-, and exo systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). As Bronfenbrenner maintains further, the macrosystem is concerned with holding and promoting a multi-dimensional perspective towards the development taking place in the environment. Tables 13 and 14 demonstrate the results of thematic analysis for novice teachers' perceptions of remotivational strategies in the macrosystem layer of EST and the three facets of SDT.

Table 13. Results of Thematic Analysis for the Macrosystem Layer of EST and SDT Dimensions for Novice Teachers

No	Autonomy	Frequency and Percentage	Relatedness	Frequency and Percentage	Competence	Frequency and Percentage	Total
1		0	Holding and promoting a multidimensional view towards cooperative learning	2 (6.25%).		0	2
Total		0		2		0	2

Table 14. Results of Thematic Analysis for the Macrosystem Layer of EST and SDT Dimensions for Experienced Teachers

No	Autonomy	Frequency and Percentage	Relatedness	Frequency and Percentage	Competence	Frequency and Percentage	Total
1	Holding and promoting a holistic view towards accommodating learners' control and preferences	12 (37.5%)	Holding and promoting a multidimensional view towards cooperative learning	14 (43.75%)	Holding and promoting a multi-perspective, competence-development view in teaching and learning	11 (34.37%)	37
Total		12		14		11	37

Table 15 illustrates the results of thematic analysis for comparing the theme instances of novice and experienced teachers in relation to the macrosystem layer.

Table 15. Comparing the Novice and Experienced Teachers' Results of Thematic Analysis for the Macrosystem Layer

Experience level	Autonomy	Relatedness	Competence	Total Mentions
Novice	0	2	0	2
Experienced	12	14	11	37

As displayed in Table 15, experienced teachers mentioned the themes concerning the three facets of SDT in the macrosystem layer. Conversely, novice teachers failed to make any mentions regarding the autonomy and competence dimensions of SDT and only generated two theme instances concerning the relatedness aspect of SDT. Nevertheless, novice and experienced teachers were substantially different not only in the total number of mentions related to SDT dimensions but also in the individual aspects of SDT in the macrosystem layer. As presented in Table 15, the total number of themes for novice teachers in the macrosystem layer was 2 whereas experienced teachers mentioned 37 themes. Furthermore, novice teachers mentioned no theme for the autonomy aspect of SDT whereas the corresponding number for experienced teachers was 12. Similarly, the number of theme instances for the relatedness aspect of SDT for novice and experienced teachers was 2 and 14, respectively. Moreover, the number of theme instances with respect to the competence dimension of SDT for novice and experienced teachers ranged between 0 and 11.

To explore whether there was a significant difference between the number of theme instances for the novice and experienced teachers in the macrosystem layer, a Chi-square test was performed. Table 16 exhibits the results.

Table 16. Results of the Chi-square Test for the Theme Instances between Novice and Experienced Teachers in the Macrosystem Layer

Test Statistics	
	Novice and Experienced Macrosystem
Chi-Square	31.410a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

As noticed in Table 16, there was a significant difference in the number of theme instances between novice and experienced teachers in the macrosystem layer ($\chi 2$ = 31.42, df = 1, p=.00 < 0.001). As such, there was a significant difference between the frequency of theme mentions in the macrosystem layer for novice (Frequency=2) and experienced (Frequency=37) teachers.

5. Discussion

Drawing on a dual theoretical standpoint constituting ecological systems theory (EST) and self-determination theory (SDT), this study aimed at comparing Iranian novice and experienced EFL teachers' remotivational strategies. The results showed both similarities and differences between the perceptions of novice and experienced teachers towards the strategies they adopted to remotivate Iranian EFL learners. As for similarities, the results demonstrated that both novice and experienced teachers touched upon all the SDT (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem) and EST facets (relatedness, autonomy, and competence) dimensions concerning the adoption of remotivational strategies. However, experienced teachers were markedly different from novices in the number of theme instances both from an SDT perspective and EST lens.

Consistent with the results of the current study, revealing similarities between novice and experienced teachers, some studies have shown that novice and experienced teachers are similar in terms of their perceptions. For instance, Fitriyah et al.'s (2022) results revealed similarities between novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions in fundamental principles in language assessment and using them in the classroom. In a

similar vein, Estaji and Ghiasvand's (2022) findings showed that both novice and experienced teachers had similar perceptions towards supervision. Similarly, Bennett et al.'s (2013) results indicated that both novice and experienced teachers had similar perceptions concerning the factors which made them stay in the teaching profession.

The similarities between novice and experienced teachers in terms of remotivational strategies can be ascribed to the holistic lens provided by the integrative SDT/EST theoretic perspective adopted in this study. As Van Lier (1997) maintains EST offers a lens "to look at the learning process, the actions and activities of teachers and learners, the multi-layered nature of interaction and language use, in all their complexity and as a network of interdependencies among all the elements in the setting" (p. 3). Additionally, the SDT has the protentional to address different dimensions and processes involved in motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and consequently the motivational and remotivational strategies (Sadr Alavian et al., 2022). Accordingly, the multi-dimensional and holistic attributes of the integrative theoretic perspective adopted in this study provided the lens to capture the intricate nature of both novice and experienced teachers' perceptions regarding remotivational strategies.

The results of the present study concerning the differences between novice and experienced teachers resonate with the findings of previous studies such as those by Afshari et al. (2019). Similar to the findings of the current study, Afshari et al.'s results indicated marked differences between novice and experienced teachers' perceptions. Likewise, Gatbonton's (2008) findings revealed differences between novice and experienced teachers' perceptions in terms of different knowledge categories. Moreover, Sun and Zhang (2022) showed that both novice and experienced teachers favored a focus on instruction but novice teachers failed to implement their perceptions in practice, whereas the experienced counterparts carried it out consistently. Additionally, Karimi and Asadnia's (2022) results demonstrated disparities in the pedagogical cognitive frameworks of novice and experienced teachers.

The results concerning the differences between novice and experienced teachers in terms of remotivational strategies can be attributed to various approaches that experienced and novice teachers interpret information in the teaching process. As Rink et al. (1994) contend, experienced teachers pay attention to various facts, interpreting

information differently than novices. Studies have shown that experienced teachers seek to combine knowledge of teaching and learning when analyzing classroom events, while novices focus on surface-level concerns, including teacher and learner characteristics or behavior as well as disciplinary concerns (Tsui, 2003). In a similar vein, Shvarts and Bakker (2019) note that experienced teachers are more supportive and capable of promoting learner autonomy as one of the facets of SDT. Moreover, previous studies (Berliner, 2001; Farrell, 2012) show that expert teachers are characterized by having sophisticated, contextualized knowledge of classroom events, the ability to adapt and integrate their knowledge of types of events and students, and being more perceptive to the multidimensional complexity of classroom reality compared with novices. Therefore, the extensive practice and the more expanded repertoire of knowledge by experienced teachers may impact their capability to look for relevant cues in a more effective and efficient manner as compared with their novice counterparts.

5. Conclusion

The results of this study substantiated the findings of previous investigations concerning the similarities and differences between novice and experienced teachers' perceptions. Such findings underscore the importance of acknowledging and accommodating the potential of integrative frameworks in unraveling teachers' perceptions in general and teachers' perceptions of remotivational strategies in particular. The potential of integrative frameworks, such as the SDT/EST perspective, lies in that they provide a robust, multi-dimensional, and holistic perspective that can lend itself to uncovering the complexities and multi-dimensionalities inherent in language teachers' perceptions. The findings of the present study, apart from enriching the theoretical and empirical literature, shed light on how novice and experienced teachers conceptualized remotivational strategies.

In addition to the theoretical implications, the findings of the current research hold practical value in informing the creation of workshop resources within teacher education programs aimed at enhancing teachers' array of remotivational tactics for pedagogical implementation. More specifically, teacher educators need to develop their awareness in addressing novice teachers' repertoire of remotivational strategies as the findings of the current study indicated that they perceived to adopt fewer number of remotivational

strategies in comparison with their experienced counterparts. Novice teachers' awareness concerning the autonomy dimension of SDT needs to be fostered by teacher educators as the findings revealed that there were substantially fewer instances of autonomy-related themes in informing their remotivational strategies compared to other facets of SDT. Likewise, experienced teachers' awareness in regard to higher layers of EST needs to be raised as such teachers' perceptions were more inclined towards the microsystem and mesosystem layers and showed less tendency towards the upper layers of EST in informing their remotivational strategies.

In this study, only teachers' perceptions were sought via semi-structured interview content. Future research on the actual practice of remotivational strategies is recommended as previous investigations (Ha & Murray, 2023; Wang et al., 2020) have revealed incongruence between teachers' perceptions and their practices. Other investigations may compare teachers' remotivational strategies across private and public educational contexts as previous studies (Ghasemi, 2022; Simpson et al., 2022) have demonstrated contextual variations as factors contributing to teachers' perceptions. Future research may draw on other extant theoretical frameworks related to motivation such as motivational self-system to enrich the literature in terms of teachers' remotivational strategies in the light of EST.

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Appendix

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

- Have you ever thought about how you usually remotivate your learners?
- What do you think about remotivating your learners in general? What does remotivating your learners entail?
- What strategies do you use to remotivate your learners related to the immediate classroom setting and the objects in this context?
- What strategies do you use to remotivate your learners related to the situations beyond the classroom?
- What strategies do you use to remotivate your learners related to the interconnection between the classroom setting and the situations beyond the immediate classroom setting?
- What strategies do you use to remotivate your learners related to the creation of a culture of remotivating your learners encompassing the immediate classroom setting, the situations beyond the classroom, and the interconnection between the classroom setting and the situations?
- Do you use strategies which help learners develop a sense of autonomy?
- Do you use strategies which help learners develop a sense of relatedness so that they help learners in experiencing closeness and mutuality in interpersonal relationships?
- Do you use strategies which help learners develop a sense of competence in learners in a way that they assist learners in experiencing personal effectiveness?