STRATEGIES TO MINIMIZE BULLYING AND ENHANCE MOTIVATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Maintaining strong motivation, self-esteem, and self-confidence is crucial for learners to achieve proficiency in English. However, traditional and cyberbullying are significant issues that can undermine learners' motivation, leading to a decline in English learning progress. Henceforth, the present study is projected to investigate the impacts of bullying toward the learners' motivation in learning English. The qualitative research is adopted by specifying a detailed description of both traditional and cyberbullying carried out in English language learning. The discussion related to why the act of bullying might happen in English language learning is also presented. The analysis reveals that experiences of bullying significantly affect EFL learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The study suggests that incorporating educational philosophy can offer effective strategies to reduce bullying and foster greater motivation in English learning environments.

Keywords: *philosophy of education, traditional bullying, cyberbullying learning motivation*

Introduction

For years, the term motivation in English language learning has acquired much attention due to its importance in assisting the learners to become successful English users (Wang, 2009; Su & Wang, 2009; Yan, 2009; Dai, Wu, & Dai, 2015; Vibulphol, 2016; Wichadee & Pattanapichet, 2018; Sari, Rahayu, & Apriliandari, 2018; Uchidiuno, Ogan, & Yarzebinski, 2018). Motivation refers to the central driving force that propels learners toward achieving specific language learning goals (Harmer, 2009). It can be classified into two types: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation often stems from a learner's clear intention to become a proficient English user, as well as their interest in the teacher and learning materials (Harmer, 2009). On the other hand, extrinsic motivation relates to actions taken by learners to avoid negative

consequences, such as punishment, within the learning environment (Brown, 2007).

Motivation can be interpreted from three distinctive points of view. The traditional perspective of motivation draws attention toward the learners who are likely to have a motivation in learning English to be awarded special rewards, such as grades, certificates, scholarship, and praise. The constructivist perspective of motivation emphasizes the language learners' social act and interaction by using English as the language medium. The cognitive perspective of motivation deals with three distinctive theories of motivation, namely drive theory, needs theory, and self-control theory (Brown, 2007). However, it is necessary to notice that learning motivation is likely to reduce due to a certain issue, such as bullying.

Bullying is defined as intentional, abusive behavior repeatedly inflicted by someone in a position of power over a weaker individual (Beane, 2008). Numerous studies have documented bullying among young learners (Morita, 1999; Berthold & Hoover, 2000; Kaufman, 2001; Harris & Petrie, 2003). Above all, as technology development has improved, the act of bullying has also been carried out through the use of mobile phones (Shariff, 2008; Kowalsky, Limber, & Agatston, 2008). Nevertheless, there has been little recognition of the traditional and cyberbullying effects on the learners' motivation in English language learning.

The act of bullying creates such an uneasy concern pertinent to the learners' mental health. The victims of bullying are likely to feel isolated, anxious, and frightened to go to school as the consequences of being bullied. Also, the victims of bullying may concentrate more on avoiding being bullied at school rather than concentrating on the schoolwork. Since bullying is likely to happen at school, there is no doubt that a chance for the learners to get bullied may also occur within the English learning activity. The verbal bullying, as well as any types of bullying, appears within English language learning may affect the English learners' motivation. Since, it is likely for them to feel intimidated, terrified, and embarrassed to show their competencies in English as a result of being bullied.

Hence, the primary aim of the present study is to investigate the effect of bullying on the learners' motivation in learning English. The discussion related to why the act of bullying may happen in English language learning is also critical to be revealed. Furthermore, the perspective of educational philosophy is also portrayed to be implemented within English language learning to minimize the act of bullying and enhance English learning motivation.

The present study is beneficial for English teachers to investigate the effect of bullying toward the learners' motivation in learning English. The teachers can take decisions and suggestions based on the perspective of educational philosophy to minimize bullying. Besides, this study is beneficial to assist the English learners to identify the act of bullying that may happen in English language learning. Thus, the English learners along with the teachers may take several actions to help the victims in enhancing their English learning motivation.

Methods

This study focused on the bullying problem in English language learning setting. Particularly, it concerned with the act of bullying confronted by English as a foreign language learner. The investigation was carried out qualitatively by reviewing literature which included several processes as illustrated in Figure 1. The analysis led to the occurrence of bullying by composing a detailed description of both traditional and cyber forms carried out in English language learning along with analyzing their causes. In addition, this study also revealed the academically unfavorable impacts of bullying toward the learners. As the final result of the study, several strategies based on the philosophy of education were developed to be embedded within the English language learning as an attempt to minimize the act of bullying among the learners and enhance their English learning motivation.
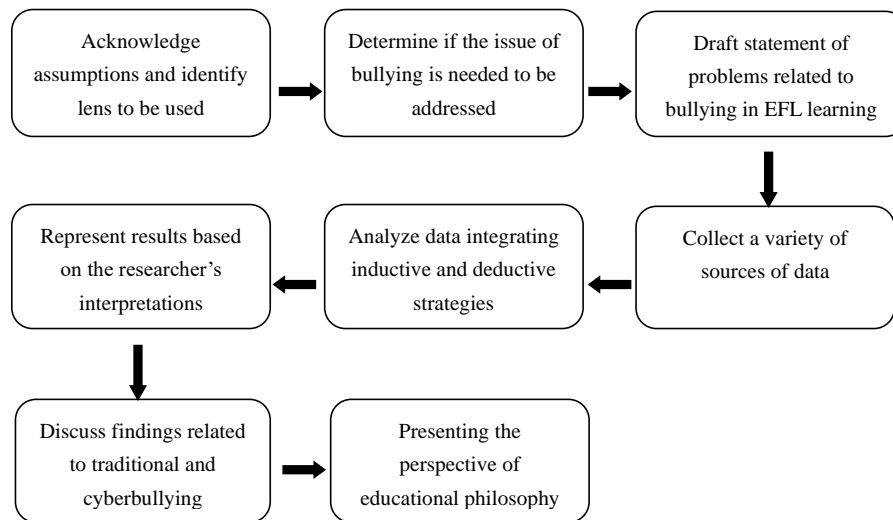
Figure 1. The procedure of the present study

Specifically, the study was carried out by acknowledging the assumption and identifying lens to be used. In this case, the assumption was related to the bullying act in English language learning that was needed to be addressed. Afterward, the statements of problems pertinent to bullying in EFL learning were drafted. Also, various data about bullying from books, research articles, and other works of literature were presented to be analyzed. The data analysis about traditional and cyberbullying in EFL learning as well as their causes were then represented following the researcher's interpretations. Above all, the learning strategies based on the perspective of educational philosophy were suggested to minimize bullying and enhance the EFL learners' learning motivation.

Findings and Discussions

Traditional Bullying in English Language Learning

Generally, bullying is defined as an intensely abusive act performed by a considerably powerful person toward a less powerful person (Beane, 2008). Nonetheless, at the present moment, many people encounter daily exclusion or teasing in which it cannot be included in the characteristics of an extremely abusive act. Although, it is likely for victims of bullying to be terrified and intimidated to go outside particularly schools. As a consequence, the term

bullying is considered to be taken place under several circumstances. Firstly, it is executed aggressively and purposefully causing harm. Secondly, it is conducted repeatedly. Thirdly, it happens in which there is an imbalance of power between the bully and the victim. Moreover, there is no sign of apologizing given from the bully, even though it typically eventuates without any provocation from the victims (Beane, 2008). As an intentionally harmful behavior to the feelings, body, reputation, property, and social status of the victims (Beane, 2008), the act of bullying is likely to be classified into two types, namely traditional bullying, and cyberbullying.

The act of traditional bullying usually involves direct, indirect, social and relational bullying (Waasdorp & Bradshaw, 2015). As the visible act of bullying, the traditional abusive behavior to the victims of bullying is believed to be easily identified. For instance, among the middle school learners, it is likely for the boys to have an experience being hit or kicked by the bullies. Moreover, the abusive actions of hitting or kicking are also performed by the Senior High School learners to the victims of bullying who, in most cases, also attend the same senior high school as the bullies (Harris & Petrie, 2003). Also, the female learners of middle school and high school are likely to have experience of being threatened by the bullies. It is also likely for them to face direct bullying, such as being slapped or kicked.

Within the English language learning, it is revealed that having experience of being traditionally bullied may affect the learning experiences of the victims. For instance, due to being bullied, immigrant learners become passive learners in English language learning. It is revealed that they are bullied due to the lacking of their English language competence. Moreover, the immigrant learners are being excluded from the discussion group in the learning activity. Therefore, their motivation to learn English is also reducing gradually (McKenney, Pepler, Craig, & Connolly, 2006).

Furthermore, it is also discovered that several English learners have experienced being humiliated and insulted pertinent to their English level of competence. In addition to being treated with disrespect, the English learners, who are also the immigrant learners, are unable to rise against the bullies due

to the language barriers. As a consequence, the experience of being psychologically abused causing the victims to possess poor self-esteem and motivation in learning English (Lim & Hoot, 2015).

In most cases, the victims of bullying tend to be considerably less proficient English learners. However, it is also notable to state that the more knowledgeable English learners also can have some experiences in being bullied. Generally, female learners are likely to verbally bully other English learners due to the victims' high knowledge and skill in English (Bennett, 2009). In some cases, the female English learners verbally attack, insult, criticize, as well as intimidate the victims' personality, emotional instability, and academic level. It causes the victims to have low self-esteem within the English language learning.

In addition, female learners also tend to declare a special group comprising several English learners. They exclude other learners, as well as encourage and persuade the members of the group to not socialize with a particular learner in the English class (Beane, 2008). That is to say, the English female learners are likely to carry out an abusive act to cause psychological pain to the victims.

Above all, the traditional bullying, which is related to social and relational bullying, is also believed to take place within the English language learning. For instance, several English learners carry out gestural bullying by sneering and laughing at other learners' inadequacy to pronounce certain words in English. Also, there is a chance in which the victims of bullying receive hurtful opinions and comments as well as inappropriate jokes pertinent to their race and language accent in speaking English. The surprising thing is that some of the acts of traditional bullying occur during the English learning activity in front of the other learners as well as the teachers (Bennett, 2009). Those acts are likely to harm the learners' self-confidence and desire to be the ideal English learners.

Becoming the victims of traditional bullying undeniably affects the motivation of learning English. It is likely for the English learners to fail in taking the advantages of the self-determination. This is because of the

significant intention to be a competent English learner or English user gradually diminishes due to being bullied. Moreover, it is also probable for the feeling of enjoyment in learning English to decrease due to being excluded from the English discussion group in the classroom. In a nutshell, there is a huge possibility for the victims of traditional bullying in English language learning to possess a low motivation in learning English. The possibility arises as a consequence of being directly, indirectly, socially, as well as racially bullied by the notably more powerful English learners.

Cyberbullying in English Language Learning

There is also the act of cyberbullying as another type of bullying. It is likely to be carried out by sending insolent electronic messages through mobile phones or social media (Hunter, 2012). Similarly, the occurrence of cyberbullying may appear directly and indirectly. Direct cyberbullying involves the act of sending disrespectful messages, posting a vicious picture, making a disturbing call, and delivering a threatening email. On the other hand, indirect cyberbullying involves the acts of instructing other people to bully the victims in the social media, hacking the victims' social media (Kowalsky, Limber, Agatston, 2008), as well as ignoring a particular person in the chat rooms (Hunter, 2012).

As the abusive behavior carried out through the use of mobile phones, the acts of cyberbullying are classified into several kinds. Those are flaming, harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing and trickery, exclusion, as well as cyberstalking (Kowalsky, Limber, Agatston, 2008). Flaming, generally, appears within a chat room or a discussion group in which there are two or more people include in a heated argument. It creates an imbalance situation for a particular individual. Within the English language learning, flaming occurs in a chat room in which there are two or more learners verbally insulting each other's knowledge and skill in English. It usually gives rise to the use of swearing and malicious languages.

By contrast, in addition to be a longer-term than flaming, harassment is one of several kinds of cyberbullying in which there is only one target being

bullied without giving a chance for the victims to defend themselves. In the English language learning, the cyber harassment includes the act of sending insulting messages through email, chat rooms, or discussion groups to particular English learners pertinent to their lack of proficiency in a speaking task.

Moreover, another kind of cyberbullying is denigration as it is believed to be an abusive behavior in which the bullies send false information about the victims. It includes posting several photos portraying the victims in sexual or harmful manners (Kowalsky, Limber, Agatston, 2008). Creating a social media account to simultaneously leave harassing and mean comments to a certain English learner who is identified as the "slow-learner" in the classroom is also included in the act of denigration.

Furthermore, as a more treacherous kind of cyberbullying, the act of impersonation is defined as a high-risk behavior in which the bullies are likely to steal the English learners' social media password and pretend to be the victims. The bullies use the victim's social media in sending offensive and unpleasant messages to other learners as well as to the English teachers. Additionally, pretending to be a particular English learner in an internet-based English test and causing a test failure for the victim are also considered to be the act of impersonation.

Outing and trickery are also included in several kinds of cyberbullying. Trickery is believed to be the act of tricking English learners to disclose their personal information to be shared with other learners. In English language learning, the act of outing and trickery takes place in a form of sharing the lowest score of an English test possessed by a particular learner by posting the picture of the test in social media to make the victim feels ashamed and embarrassed.

The act of exclusion is also incorporated into one of the several kinds of cyberbullying. In the act of exclusion, the victim of bullying is likely to be excluded from the social group. In the English language learning, the exclusion may occur if there is an English learner who is not included, or is considered to be "invisible", within the English discussion group and chat rooms.

The last kind of cyberbullying, which is the cyberstalking, is believed to be the act of using electronic communication and media to stalk the victim by sending threatening messages repeatedly. In the English language learning, the cyberstalking occurs in a form of sending threatening messages frequently to particular English learners since the bullies notice that the victims are likely to not aid the bullies in completing an English task.

The acts of cyberbullying within the English language learning, namely flaming, harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing and trickery, exclusion, and cyberstalking, are believed to affect the motivation of English language learners. One of the negative impacts of cyberbullying is pertinent to the academic achievement of the victims (Faucher, Jackson, & Cassidy, 2014). That is to say, the English learner who is being cyberbullied tends to associate with poor grades due to the escalated depressions (Vaillancourt, Faris, & Mishna, 2017).

Additionally, the act of cyberbullying within the English language learning is also considered to be the primary factor of the language anxiety intensification as well as self-esteem reduction. For instance, the learners' motivation to learn English is believed to remarkably diminish as it is reported that the learners' desire to socialize in the English discussion group has gradually reduced due to being cyberbullied. In addition, the intention of the English learners to be a skillful English learner and user tend to decrease as well since the desire to involve in the English learning activity diminishes as they are frightened to be insulted due to their accent or English competence (Peker, 2016).

To sum up, the act of cyberbullying is believed to have a contribution to the decreasing motivation of English learners. That is to say, due to being cyberbullied, the desire of the learners to be involved in an English learning activity is likely to reduce since the learners are anxious to be bullied by other learners. Also, it is possible for the act of cyber flaming, harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing and trickery, exclusion, as well as stalking, to create a situation in which the victims of cyberbullying are unable to rise against the bullies which result to poor academic achievement.

Strategies to Minimize Bullying based on the Philosophy of Education

The consequences of traditional and cyberbullying are believed to negatively affect the motivation of English language learners. Therefore, English teachers must assist the learners physically and mentally to minimize the act as well as the effects of traditional and cyberbullying. Nevertheless, before employing any programs or strategies to minimize the act and the effects of bullying, it is considered crucial for the teachers to provide a comprehensive questionnaire to be completed by the English learners. The questionnaires are used to disclose a piece of vital information related to the frequency of bullying, the location of the abusive behaviors that occur, the types of bullying carry out, as well as the effects of bullying toward the victims. Moreover, it is also important to evaluate and assess the questionnaire to reach a better understanding of the negative impacts of any types of bullying encountered by English learners. Evaluation of the questionnaires is crucial to plan and conduct a suitable English learning activity for the sake of minimizing the possibility of carrying out the act of abusive behavior (Bennett, 2009). One of the strategies to minimize the act of bullying is through embedding the sense of philosophy of education within the English language learning.

The philosophy of education is a branch of philosophy that aims to gain a deeper understanding of education by interpreting it through broad philosophical concepts. This conceptual framework can then serve as a foundation for shaping educational objectives and policies. As philosophy has evolved over time, so too has educational philosophy, adapting to contemporary developments. Some of the most widely recognized educational philosophies among scholars today include idealism, pragmatism, perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, critical pedagogy, and existentialism.

Integrating educational philosophy into English learning activities is seen as an effective strategy to reduce bullying. For example, teachers can adopt instructional methods rooted in the philosophy of idealism. Idealism primarily values the human spirit, mind, and soul as central elements of life (Murtaufiq, 2014). The main goal of idealism is to foster the development of the mind and

self. Therefore, education should prioritize nurturing learners' potential, including their intellectual, aesthetic, moral judgment, self-realization, responsibility, and self-discipline. According to idealism, while learning is a product of students' engagement, the process can be enhanced through environmental stimuli. Recommended classroom methods include questioning and discussion, lectures, and both individual and group projects. Teachers should create opportunities for learners to analyze, explore, synthesize, and engage in meaningful learning experiences. Moreover, the learning process should promote the accumulation of knowledge and ideas aligned with moral evaluation. This encourages students to reflect on bullying from different perspectives, shaping a diverse and inclusive learning environment. Such diversity is believed to stimulate risk-taking in learning, while ensuring that all students reach comparable levels of English proficiency. By fostering collaboration, learners are more likely to support one another in understanding course material and completing language tasks and exercises (Peker, 2016).

In addition to idealism, the philosophy of pragmatism, which asserts that the meaning of a proposition or idea is found in its practical outcomes (Murtaufiq, 2014), can also be integrated into English learning activities to reduce bullying. Pragmatism emphasizes that the aim of education is the holistic development of learners, achieved through experience, self-directed activities, or learning by doing. According to pragmatism, the curriculum should provide learning materials that include diverse projects and activities aligned with students' needs, abilities, interests, and socio-economic backgrounds. Education, in the pragmatist view, is a social process and the shaping of human experiences. Pragmatists thus advocate for learners to be the focal point of the educational process. By organizing learning activities that place students at the center, teachers can encourage learner autonomy in language acquisition, taking on the role of facilitator in the learning process.

Perennialism can also be incorporated into English learning activities. This philosophy holds that critical and significant ideas that have persisted for centuries remain relevant today. As such, perennialists argue that these timeless ideas should form the core of education (Murtaufiq, 2014). They view schools

as institutions designed to cultivate and enhance human intellect, given that humans are rational beings. Consequently, intellectual development is prioritized in education. Perennialists also see education as a repetitive process grounded in eternal truths (Rukiyati & Purwastuti, 2015), with school curricula focusing on the foundational knowledge of Western Civilization's great works. Additionally, the teacher is regarded as an unquestionable authority and expert. In summary, perennialism emphasizes cognitive lessons that foster rational thinking, as well as the study of moral, aesthetic, and religious principles to nurture ethical attitudes and morality in learners. By cultivating these ethical and moral qualities, a harmonious environment is created among students, making acts of bullying less likely due to the established norm of tolerance.

The philosophy of essentialism is also regarded as important to incorporate into English learning activities. Essentialism focuses on intellectual and moral standards that must be taught within educational institutions (Rukiyati & Purwastuti, 2015). Essentialists emphasize both the authority of the teacher and the value of learning. They believe that individuals require skills, knowledge, and attitudes that align with real-world conditions. As a result, schools are responsible for organizing and delivering the accumulated knowledge of humanity in a structured and coherent manner. Essentialists also prioritize helping learners address immediate and pressing issues, focusing on the most effective methods of problem-solving. This enables students to tackle both personal and social problems and apply their learning to real-world situations. In particular, essentialism can help address the issue of bullying, both within and outside of school. One practical approach to problem-solving is to engage English learners in peer support groups, where they can participate in counseling sessions. These sessions provide valuable opportunities for students to communicate with one another, build personal relationships, and develop awareness of bullying behaviors (Bennett, 2009).

Progressivism is another educational philosophy that can be integrated into English learning activities. Unlike traditional approaches, progressivism does not favor a pre-designed curriculum aimed solely at transmitting knowledge to learners. Instead, progressivists argue that the curriculum should

be shaped according to students' interests (Murtaufiq, 2014), making learning more dynamic, engaging, and diverse. Progressivists emphasize the learning process itself—how students acquire knowledge—over the content itself. As a result, learning is often structured around group projects, where the teacher serves as a facilitator, and students collaborate based on their shared experiences. These projects aim to overcome social barriers related to class, race, or belief. For instance, implementing a Bullying Project could help reduce both traditional and cyberbullying among English learners (Peker, 2016). Through such a project, the teacher could have students perform a role-play about bullying, allowing them to illustrate the negative effects of bullying and demonstrate ways to prevent or reduce both traditional and cyberbullying.

Critical pedagogy is another important educational philosophy that should be embedded in English learning activities. This philosophy views education as a moral and political practice that challenges existing knowledge, values, citizenship, perspectives, and visions of the future. Critical pedagogy emphasizes the need for learners to develop a critical consciousness to confront the material and symbolic structures that sustain cultures of corruption, greed, and injustice (Giroux, 2010). Education is often linked to critical pedagogy (Giroux, 2010) because teaching is seen as a process of shaping learners into agents of change. In other words, schools do not merely impart knowledge; they equip students with the skills necessary to act as critical participants in society. Furthermore, schools should encourage learners to take transformative actions, which involves taking risks, pushing for institutional reforms, and resisting oppression both within and beyond school environments. To reduce bullying in the context of English language learning, teachers can ask students to deliver presentations on different types of bullying and devise strategies or policies to prevent it.

Existentialism is another educational philosophy that can be incorporated into English learning activities. It is characterized by a perspective that emphasizes individualism and subjectivity in understanding life (Rukiyati & Purwastuti, 2015). Existentialists believe that individuals are the creators of their own essence, meaning they define their values through freedom of choice

and personal preferences. Thus, the most important knowledge for learners is their understanding of life and the choices they make. From an existentialist viewpoint, education should cultivate a heightened awareness in learners, encouraging them to recognize their ongoing creativity and freedom in making decisions. Additionally, existentialism posits that the subjects taught in education are simply tools for realizing individual subjectivity. In other words, students can only truly learn when they possess a strong desire to choose and assign meaning to the subject matter.

Moreover, it is crucial to emphasize the significance of praise and rewards in boosting English learners' extrinsic motivation. Offering consistent positive feedback or rewards, such as golden stars, is believed to enhance learners' motivation by allowing them to gauge their progress through the grades and rewards they receive. Additionally, providing rewards serves as a clear indication that teachers have confidence in their students' English abilities. This affirmation can further motivate learners to improve their English skills. Consequently, when learners focus on developing their competence in English, the likelihood of bullying decreases, as attention shifts toward personal growth and achievement.

Philosophy and education are intrinsically linked, as philosophy provides foundational principles that should be integrated into educational practices. Furthermore, incorporating educational philosophy into learning activities offers significant benefits, as it encourages students to engage with critical issues, such as bullying, in a thoughtful, open-minded, and reflective manner. This approach helps learners develop a deeper understanding of these essential topics. Philosophy and education are fundamentally interconnected, as philosophy offers guiding principles that should inform educational practices. Integrating educational philosophy into learning activities is beneficial, as it encourages students to confront important issues, such as bullying, with a critical, open-minded, and reflective perspective. This method fosters an environment where learners can thoughtfully analyze and engage with these significant topics, enhancing their overall comprehension and moral reasoning.

Conclusion

Experiencing both traditional and cyberbullying has a detrimental impact on English language learners. It often leads to feelings of insecurity and anxiety about their English proficiency. The consequences of traditional bullying can diminish learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to engage in language learning. Additionally, the effects of cyberbullying can be even more severe, potentially causing mental health issues and contributing to poor academic performance.

Providing a comprehensive questionnaire is expected to be able to evaluate and assess crucial information pertinent to the types of bullying encountered by English learners. Embedding the perspective of the philosophy of education is considered able to minimize the act of bullying within the English language learning. Additionally, identifying the learners' strengths and weaknesses, designing a relevant English learning content, arranging group learning, employing audio-visual English learning materials, giving praise and rewards, as well as conducting an Anti-Bullying project are regarded as the essential strategies to be conducted in the English language learning. It is probable for those learning activities to assist the learners in acquiring self-esteem, self-confidence, and motivation in becoming proficient English learners. Although the act of bullying cannot be prevented instantly; however, the philosophy of education and the proposed strategies may aid the learners both physically and mentally to develop their motivation in learning English.

This study aims to examine the impact of bullying on learners' motivation in English language learning. A key limitation of this research is its exclusive focus on English, suggesting that future studies should encompass other academic disciplines. Furthermore, this study addresses educational philosophy only in a general context. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that subsequent research include the national philosophy of education, exploring its application within educational practices tailored to the unique characteristics of each nation.

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