

Emotional Intelligence, Learner Motivation, and Peer Interaction Among Junior High School EFL Learners in Taiwan

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between emotional intelligence, learner motivation, and peer interaction among junior high school English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in Taiwan. Specifically, the study investigated the learners' levels of emotional intelligence, learner motivation, and peer interaction, as well as the significant relationships among these variables. A descriptive-correlational research design with qualitative support was employed. The respondents consisted of junior high school EFL learners from Grades 8 and 9 enrolled in a public secondary school in Taiwan. Data were gathered using a researcher-adapted questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The instruments underwent expert validation and reliability testing and demonstrated acceptable internal consistency. Quantitative data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, while qualitative responses were analyzed through thematic analysis. Findings revealed that the respondents generally demonstrated positive levels of emotional intelligence, learner motivation, and peer interaction. Emotional intelligence was found to be significantly associated with both learner motivation and peer interaction, with stronger and more consistent relationships observed in peer interaction. Qualitative findings further revealed that emotional stability, encouragement, empathy, peer support, and psychological safety contributed positively to learners' participation and engagement in English learning activities. The findings suggest that emotionally responsive and socially supportive classroom environments may contribute positively to learner engagement in EFL contexts. Overall, the study highlights the importance of integrating emotional intelligence into EFL instruction to support both the motivational and interpersonal dimensions of language learning.

Keywords: *Emotional intelligence, learner motivation, peer interaction, EFL, junior high school, Taiwan*



Introduction

In EFL classrooms, language learning is shaped not only by cognitive ability and linguistic competence, but also by learners' emotional experiences within the classroom environment. Although traditional language instruction has often emphasized grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, growing research suggests that emotional factors such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, confidence, and interpersonal understanding significantly influence learner participation, motivation, and classroom interaction. In many EFL settings, learners who struggle with anxiety, fear of making mistakes, or low communicative confidence may become hesitant to participate despite possessing adequate language knowledge.

This study emerged from the researcher's classroom experiences as a Filipino English teacher working with junior high school learners in Taiwan. Within this context, the researcher observed that students' emotional responses frequently affected their willingness to communicate, participate in collaborative tasks, and engage in classroom interaction. Many learners appeared hesitant during English activities, particularly when speaking publicly or interacting with peers, often showing signs of anxiety, self-consciousness, or fear of negative evaluation. These classroom behaviors suggest that learner engagement in EFL contexts involves not only language proficiency, but also emotional readiness and social confidence.

The researcher's position as both a foreign educator and classroom practitioner provided direct insight into how emotional experiences shape learner participation in multilingual and multicultural learning environments. These observations reinforced the need to examine emotional intelligence as a possible factor influencing learner motivation and peer interaction among junior high school EFL learners in Taiwan.

Literature Review

Emotional Intelligence Among Junior High School EFL Learners

Emotional intelligence is commonly understood as the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and express emotions appropriately. Mayer and Salovey (1990) first described emotional intelligence as the ability to process emotional information and use it to guide thinking and behavior. Later, Goleman (1995) expanded the concept by identifying self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills as its major components. In educational settings, these emotional competencies are particularly important because learning is shaped not only by cognitive ability but also by learners' emotional experiences, confidence, and interpersonal relationships.

In EFL classrooms, emotional intelligence becomes especially relevant because students are often required to communicate in a language they are still learning. This may result in anxiety, hesitation, fear of making mistakes, and reduced participation during classroom interaction. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) emphasized that emotions such as enjoyment and anxiety significantly influence learners' willingness to communicate in a second language.



Similarly, Pekrun (2006) argued that emotions affect learners' attention, motivation, participation, and academic performance. Learners who are emotionally aware and capable of regulating their emotions are therefore more likely to remain engaged even during difficult language tasks.

Several studies further suggest that emotional intelligence contributes positively to academic achievement and learner engagement. MacCann et al. (2020) found that emotional intelligence predicts academic performance, particularly in learning environments that require persistence, self-control, and social adjustment. Likewise, Li (2020) reported that emotional intelligence was associated with greater foreign language enjoyment and higher achievement among EFL learners. These findings suggest that emotional intelligence supports not only academic learning but also learners' emotional stability, confidence, and classroom participation.

For junior high school learners, emotional intelligence is particularly important because adolescence is a period marked by emotional, cognitive, and social development. Learners at this stage may already recognize their emotions, yet still struggle with communication anxiety, peer pressure, and emotional regulation. Self-awareness allows learners to recognize how emotions affect their behavior, while self-regulation helps them manage frustration, stress, and fear of negative evaluation. Motivation encourages persistence and goal-directed learning, whereas empathy and social skills support cooperation, communication, and positive peer relationships. Taken together, these dimensions form an important foundation for learner engagement in EFL classrooms.

Learner Motivation in EFL Contexts

Learner motivation refers to the internal and external forces that encourage students to begin, sustain, and continue learning. In language education, motivation is widely regarded as one of the strongest predictors of successful learning. Dörnyei (2001) explained that motivation influences the amount of effort learners invest in language learning, while Ryan and Deci (2000) emphasized that intrinsically motivated learners tend to demonstrate deeper and more sustained engagement. In EFL contexts, motivation is shaped not only by interest in English but also by learners' goals, confidence, effort, and perceptions regarding the usefulness of the language.

For junior high school learners, motivation is often influenced by classroom atmosphere and emotional experiences. Learners tend to participate more actively when lessons are enjoyable, interactive, and connected to real-life situations. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) noted that positive emotional experiences in foreign language classrooms contribute to greater participation and engagement. At the same time, motivation among adolescent learners is not always stable. Although students may recognize the importance of English for future



communication, education, or career opportunities, they may still struggle to maintain consistent effort and study habits.

Self-efficacy also plays an important role in learner motivation. According to Bandura (1997), learners' beliefs in their abilities influence the amount of effort they exert, how long they persist, and how they respond to challenges. Learners who feel confident in their English abilities are generally more willing to participate, communicate, and recover from mistakes. However, confidence in language learning may vary depending on the skill involved. Some learners may feel comfortable understanding English but still experience anxiety when speaking. This highlights the complex nature of learner motivation, which involves interest, confidence, persistence, goals, and perceived value of learning.

In the present study, learner motivation is viewed not only as a desire to study English but also as learners' willingness to persist, remain engaged, and recognize the importance of English beyond the classroom. Understanding learner motivation is therefore essential in examining how emotional intelligence may support sustained engagement in EFL learning.

Peer Interaction in EFL Classrooms

Peer interaction plays an important role in foreign language learning because it provides learners with opportunities to communicate, collaborate, negotiate meaning, and practice language skills in authentic social situations. In EFL classrooms, interaction with classmates allows learners to use English more actively rather than relying solely on teacher-centered instruction. Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction, particularly when learners work collaboratively within supportive environments. Through peer interaction, learners are exposed to different ideas, feedback, and communicative experiences that contribute to both language development and social learning.

In adolescent classrooms, peer relationships also influence learners' confidence, participation, and emotional comfort during classroom activities. Learners who feel accepted and supported by classmates are generally more willing to communicate and participate in English tasks. Conversely, learners who experience fear of judgment, embarrassment, or exclusion may hesitate to express themselves despite understanding the lesson. MacIntyre et al. (1998) explained that willingness to communicate is influenced not only by linguistic ability but also by confidence and emotional factors within the classroom environment. This suggests that peer interaction is closely connected to learners' emotional experiences during language learning.

Collaborative learning activities such as pair work, group discussions, role plays, and presentations further demonstrate the importance of peer interaction in EFL classrooms. These activities encourage learners to exchange ideas, solve problems together, and practice communication skills in less threatening situations. Swain (2000) argued that collaborative dialogue allows learners to develop language more effectively because interaction encourages



negotiation of meaning and active participation. In this sense, peer interaction supports not only language acquisition but also social participation and classroom engagement.

Peer interaction also contributes to learners' sense of belonging and inclusion. When learners feel emotionally safe and socially connected, they are more likely to engage actively and participate confidently in classroom activities. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) highlighted that supportive classroom relationships and positive emotional experiences contribute significantly to learner participation and communicative confidence. Thus, peer interaction in EFL classrooms should not be viewed merely as group work or communication practice, but as a social and emotional process that shapes learners' engagement, confidence, and learning experiences.

Emotional Intelligence, Learner Motivation, and Peer Interaction

Existing literature suggests that emotional intelligence, learner motivation, and peer interaction are closely interconnected within the language learning process. Emotional intelligence influences how learners manage emotions, respond to challenges, interact with others, and sustain engagement in classroom activities. These emotional competencies may strengthen both learners' internal motivation and their ability to participate effectively in social interaction. In EFL contexts, where communication anxiety and fear of making mistakes are common, emotional intelligence appears particularly relevant in supporting learner participation and classroom engagement.

Several studies have shown that emotionally intelligent learners tend to demonstrate stronger motivation and greater willingness to engage in learning tasks. Learners who are capable of regulating emotions and maintaining confidence are generally more persistent and goal-oriented in language learning. Li and Xu (2019) found that emotional intelligence was positively associated with foreign language enjoyment, suggesting that emotionally aware learners are more likely to experience positive learning emotions that sustain participation and motivation. Similarly, MacCann et al. (2020) emphasized that emotional intelligence contributes to academic performance by supporting self-regulation, persistence, and emotional adjustment.

At the same time, emotional intelligence also appears closely connected to peer interaction. Learners who possess empathy, social awareness, and communication skills are often more capable of cooperating with classmates, respecting diverse opinions, and participating in collaborative activities. Positive peer interaction becomes especially important in EFL classrooms because language learning frequently requires communication, teamwork, and shared participation. Learners who feel emotionally supported and socially accepted are generally more willing to communicate and express themselves in English.

Research further suggests that motivation and peer interaction influence one another within classroom settings. Learners who experience supportive peer relationships often become more motivated to participate, while motivated learners are more likely to engage actively in collaborative activities. This interaction reflects the social and emotional nature of language learning, particularly among adolescent learners. Emotional intelligence may therefore



function as an important foundation connecting learners' emotional experiences, motivational processes, and interpersonal relationships within the EFL classroom.

Taken together, the literature indicates that emotional intelligence may contribute to stronger learner motivation and more positive peer interaction, both of which are essential in sustaining learner engagement in language learning. However, despite the growing literature on these variables, limited studies have examined how they interact simultaneously among junior high school EFL learners in Taiwan. This gap highlights the need for further investigation into the emotional and social dimensions of learner engagement in EFL contexts.

Learners' Perspectives on Emotional Intelligence in EFL Learning

Recent studies suggest that learners' emotional experiences significantly influence how they participate and engage in foreign language learning. In EFL classrooms, students often associate confidence, encouragement, emotional safety, and peer support with positive learning experiences. Emotional intelligence becomes particularly important because learners frequently encounter anxiety, hesitation, fear of mistakes, and pressure during communication activities. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) emphasized that learners' emotional experiences affect their willingness to communicate and participate in classroom interaction. Similarly, Li (2020) reported that positive emotions such as enjoyment and confidence contribute to stronger engagement and language learning achievement.

Research further suggests that learners themselves recognize the importance of emotional support in sustaining motivation and participation. Learners who feel emotionally safe and socially accepted are generally more willing to express ideas, cooperate with peers, and remain engaged in classroom tasks. Emotional intelligence therefore appears not only as a psychological construct but also as a lived classroom experience that shapes learners' confidence, participation, and interpersonal interaction. Understanding learners' perspectives is important because it provides deeper insight into how emotional experiences influence engagement beyond what quantitative measures alone can explain.

Models to Enhance Learner Engagement in Junior High School EFL Classrooms

Learner engagement in EFL classrooms has increasingly been viewed as both an academic and socio-emotional process. Traditional language instruction often focuses heavily on grammar, vocabulary, and performance outcomes, while giving less attention to learners' emotional experiences and interpersonal relationships. However, recent educational perspectives emphasize that learners participate more actively when they feel emotionally supported, socially connected, and psychologically safe within the classroom environment.

Several scholars have highlighted the importance of emotionally responsive and collaborative learning environments in sustaining learner engagement. Ryan and Deci (2000) explained that learners are more motivated when they experience autonomy, competence, and social connection. Likewise, Vygotsky (1978) emphasized that learning develops through meaningful interaction and collaborative participation. These perspectives suggest that



learner engagement may be strengthened when emotional intelligence, motivation, and peer interaction are addressed simultaneously within classroom instruction.

In junior high school EFL settings, emotionally supportive practices such as encouragement, reflective activities, collaborative tasks, and low-anxiety communication opportunities may help learners participate more confidently and meaningfully. Thus, models that integrate emotional, motivational, and social dimensions of learning may provide more responsive approaches to enhancing learner engagement in EFL classrooms.

Method

Sample

The respondents of the study consisted of junior high school EFL learners from Grades 8 and 9 enrolled in a public secondary school in Taiwan. The participants were aged approximately 13 to 15 years old and were enrolled in the researcher's English classes during the conduct of the study. A total of 50 students participated in the survey questionnaire, while 10 students were selected from the same group of respondents for the semi-structured interviews.

Purposive sampling was employed in selecting the participants to ensure that the respondents could provide relevant information regarding emotional intelligence, learner motivation, and peer interaction within the EFL classroom context. The inclusion of both quantitative and qualitative participants allowed the study to obtain both measurable patterns and deeper insights into the learners' emotional and classroom experiences.

Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-adapted questionnaire composed of four parts: respondents' profile, emotional intelligence, learner motivation, and peer interaction. The emotional intelligence scale covered the dimensions of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The learner motivation scale included interest in English learning, goal orientation, effort and persistence, self-efficacy in language learning, and value and relevance of English. Meanwhile, the peer interaction scale examined communication and expression, cooperation and teamwork, respect for diverse opinions, willingness to participate in group tasks, and sense of belonging and inclusion. All items were measured using a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Rarely) to 4 (Always). In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain deeper insights into the learners' perspectives regarding emotional intelligence, learner motivation, and peer interaction in the EFL classroom.

Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design with qualitative support. The descriptive-correlational approach was used to describe the respondents' emotional intelligence, learner motivation, and peer interaction, as well as to examine the relationships among these variables without manipulating them. Specifically, the study utilized the correlational component to determine whether significant relationships existed between



emotional intelligence and learner motivation, and between emotional intelligence and peer interaction among junior high school EFL learners in Taiwan.

To support and enrich the quantitative findings, semi-structured interviews were also conducted to gather the learners' perspectives and experiences regarding emotional intelligence in the EFL classroom. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data provided a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the emotional, motivational, and social dimensions of learner engagement. Overall, the design was deemed appropriate because it allowed the study to examine existing classroom conditions while also exploring the learners' personal experiences within the EFL learning context.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher strictly adhered to established ethical standards in the conduct of this study. Prior to the data gathering process, formal written communication was sent to the school authorities to request permission to conduct the research. Approval was granted by the school administration, allowing the researcher to proceed with both the pilot testing and the actual data collection within the school setting.

Informed consent was obtained from all respondents as well as from their parents or guardians, considering that the participants were minors. The respondents were clearly informed of the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and the voluntary nature of their participation. They were also assured that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point without any negative consequences.

Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout the study. The identities of the respondents were protected by using codes instead of real names in all data records, interview transcripts, and research reports. All collected data were used solely for academic purposes and were stored securely to prevent unauthorized access.

In compliance with the Data Privacy Act of Taiwan, the researcher ensured that all personal information was handled with strict confidentiality and used only for the purposes of this research. No identifying information was disclosed, and all data were processed in accordance with ethical guidelines for the protection of participants' privacy and rights.

Furthermore, special consideration was given to the emotional well-being of the respondents, particularly because the study involved emotional intelligence. The researcher ensured that all questions were appropriate to the respondents' age and level and did not cause discomfort, distress, or psychological harm. The interviews were conducted in a supportive and respectful manner to ensure that participants felt safe and comfortable in expressing their thoughts.



Statistical Treatment

The gathered quantitative data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools to answer the specific problems of the study. To determine the level of the respondents' emotional intelligence, learner motivation, and peer interaction, the mean and standard deviation were utilized. The mean was used to identify the average responses of the learners across the different dimensions, while the standard deviation was used to determine the consistency or variation of responses.

To examine the significant relationship between emotional intelligence and learner motivation, as well as between emotional intelligence and peer interaction, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) was employed. This statistical measure was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables. For the qualitative component of the study, the interview responses were analyzed using thematic analysis. The responses were transcribed, coded, categorized, and organized into recurring themes in order to identify meaningful patterns related to the learners' perspectives on emotional intelligence, learner motivation, and peer interaction in the EFL classroom. All quantitative data were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26.

Results and Discussions

The study examined the emotional intelligence, learner motivation, and peer interaction among junior high school EFL learners in Taiwan and explored how these variables contribute to learner engagement in English language learning. Results showed that the respondents generally demonstrated positive levels of emotional intelligence across the dimensions of self-awareness ($M = 3.28$), self-regulation ($M = 3.11$), motivation ($M = 3.46$), empathy ($M = 3.34$), and social skills ($M = 3.18$), all verbally interpreted as "Often." Among these dimensions, motivation obtained the highest mean score, indicating that the learners generally remained emotionally invested and interested in learning English. In contrast, self-regulation and social skills received comparatively lower mean scores, suggesting that while learners were motivated, some still experienced difficulties in managing emotions and communicating confidently during classroom interaction.

In terms of learner motivation, the respondents also demonstrated generally positive results across interest in English learning ($M = 3.23$), goal orientation ($M = 3.29$), effort and persistence ($M = 3.08$), self-efficacy in language learning ($M = 3.31$), and value and relevance of English ($M = 3.47$). The highest mean score was observed in value and relevance of English, indicating that the learners strongly recognized the importance of English for their future goals and opportunities. However, effort and persistence obtained the lowest mean score among the motivational dimensions, suggesting that although learners valued English, maintaining consistent study habits and sustained effort remained challenging for some students.



Similarly, the findings on peer interaction reflected generally positive classroom relationships. The respondents reported favorable levels of communication and expression ($M = 3.17$), cooperation and teamwork ($M = 3.36$), respect for diverse opinions ($M = 3.42$), willingness to participate in group tasks ($M = 3.21$), and sense of belonging and inclusion ($M = 3.30$). Respect for diverse opinions obtained the highest mean score, indicating that the learners generally maintained respectful and cooperative relationships in the classroom. Nevertheless, communication and expression received the lowest mean score, suggesting that some learners still experienced hesitation and anxiety when communicating spontaneously in English.

Correlation analyses further revealed that emotional intelligence had significant relationships with both learner motivation and peer interaction. Several dimensions of emotional intelligence demonstrated moderate positive correlations with learner motivation variables, particularly in effort and persistence, self-efficacy, and goal orientation. Notably, emotional motivation showed significant relationships with goal orientation ($r = 0.580$, $p = 0.000$), effort and persistence ($r = 0.630$, $p = 0.000$), and self-efficacy in language learning ($r = 0.650$, $p = 0.000$). The findings suggest that emotionally motivated learners are more likely to remain persistent, confident, and goal-oriented in learning English.

Stronger and more consistent relationships were observed between emotional intelligence and peer interaction. Self-awareness showed a significant positive relationship with communication and expression ($r = 0.640$, $p = 0.000$), while self-regulation was significantly associated with willingness to participate in group tasks ($r = 0.610$, $p = 0.000$). Motivation also demonstrated strong relationships with respect for diverse opinions ($r = 0.610$, $p = 0.000$) and communication and expression ($r = 0.580$, $p = 0.000$). These findings indicate that emotional competencies are closely connected to learners' communication, cooperation, participation, and sense of belonging within the EFL classroom.

The qualitative findings further strengthened these results by revealing how learners themselves interpreted the role of emotional intelligence in their classroom experiences. The learners consistently associated emotional intelligence with emotional stability, encouragement, confidence, empathy, psychological safety, inclusion, and supportive peer relationships. Many respondents explained that they became more motivated and more willing to participate when they felt emotionally supported, respected, and comfortable interacting with classmates. Emotional intelligence was therefore viewed not only as a personal emotional skill, but also as an important factor shaping classroom relationships and learner engagement.

Taken together, the findings suggest that learner engagement in EFL classrooms is influenced not only by cognitive ability or instructional delivery, but also by emotional experiences, social relationships, and classroom climate. The study highlights the importance of emotionally responsive and socially supportive teaching practices that encourage confidence,



participation, persistence, and meaningful classroom interaction among junior high school EFL learners.

Conclusions

While the findings provide important insights into the relationship between emotional intelligence, learner motivation, and peer interaction among junior high school EFL learners in Taiwan, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study focused only on learners from one public secondary school in Taiwan; therefore, the findings may not fully represent learners from other educational settings or cultural contexts. The study also relied mainly on self-report questionnaires, which may have been influenced by the respondents' personal perceptions and emotional conditions during data collection. In addition, the use of purposive sampling and the relatively limited number of participants may affect the broader applicability of the findings. Since the study employed a descriptive-correlational design, the results describe existing relationships among variables but do not establish causation. Future studies may involve larger and more diverse populations, multiple school settings, classroom observations, and longitudinal or experimental approaches to further examine the role of emotional intelligence in EFL learning.

The findings of the study suggest that emotional intelligence is meaningfully associated with learner motivation and peer interaction among junior high school EFL learners in Taiwan. The respondents generally demonstrated positive but still developing emotional competencies, particularly in motivation, empathy, and self-awareness, while self-regulation and communicative social skills appeared comparatively less developed. The learners likewise showed generally positive motivation toward learning English, especially because they viewed the language as valuable and relevant to their future goals and experiences. However, maintaining consistent effort and long-term persistence appeared more challenging than simply recognizing the importance of English. In terms of peer interaction, the respondents generally maintained respectful, cooperative, and inclusive classroom relationships, although active participation and communicative confidence in English were less consistently demonstrated. The study further revealed that emotional intelligence was significantly associated with both learner motivation and peer interaction, with stronger and more consistent relationships observed in peer interaction. Qualitative findings reinforced these results, as learners frequently connected emotional stability, encouragement, empathy, peer support, and psychological safety with greater willingness to participate and remain engaged in classroom activities. Overall, the study highlights the important role of emotional intelligence in supporting learner engagement, confidence, persistence, and meaningful classroom interaction in EFL learning contexts.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that EFL teachers adopt more emotionally responsive, learner-centered, and socially supportive instructional practices that strengthen learners' emotional intelligence, motivation, and peer interaction within the classroom. In line with the proposed model, teachers are encouraged to intentionally develop learners' self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and



social skills through reflective activities, emotional check-ins, collaborative learning experiences, guided communication tasks, and low-anxiety classroom participation opportunities. Since the findings revealed that emotional intelligence is strongly connected to both learner motivation and peer interaction, particularly in the social and communicative dimensions of learning, teachers should create emotionally safe classroom environments where learners feel respected, included, encouraged, and psychologically secure in expressing themselves in English. Greater emphasis may likewise be placed on meaningful and engaging instruction by connecting lessons to learners' real-life experiences, future goals, interests, and social interaction to strengthen sustained motivation, confidence, and participation. In addition, school administrators and curriculum developers are encouraged to integrate socio-emotional learning components into EFL programs and provide professional development opportunities focused on emotional intelligence, learner engagement, classroom belongingness, and inclusive teaching practices. The findings of the study suggest that supportive classroom relationships and emotionally positive learning environments contribute significantly to learner participation and engagement; therefore, schools may benefit from implementing programs that promote empathy, cooperation, respectful communication, and peer support among learners. Collaborative learning environments should also be intentionally strengthened to encourage shared participation, active communication, and positive peer interaction within the EFL classroom. Furthermore, future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies using larger and more diverse populations in order to improve the generalizability of the findings and further examine the role of emotional intelligence across different EFL contexts and educational levels. Longitudinal, experimental, and intervention-based studies may also be conducted to explore possible causal relationships among emotional intelligence, learner motivation, peer interaction, and learner engagement. In addition, future studies may incorporate multiple data sources such as classroom observations, teacher assessments, and performance-based measures to gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of learners' emotional and social experiences in language learning. Overall, these recommendations aim to support the development of more emotionally intelligent, socially connected, and actively engaged EFL learners through learning environments that value both academic achievement and socio-emotional growth.

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