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Master Thesis Defense

Entitled

ROLE OF GROUP WORK IN PROMOTING STUDENT TO STUDENT INTERACTION AND MOTIVATION IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

by

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Date & Venue

12:00 PM

Monday, 4 April 2022

Online: Link (<https://bit.ly/356Ga1M>)

Abstract

This thesis is concerned with group work and collaborative learning and teaching in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom in the UAE. This study aims to discover the role of group work and collaborative learning in promoting a student to student interaction and motivation in the English Language Classroom. Three tools were used in this study to collect data. An online student questionnaire and an online student survey were conducted with 15 high school students during a distance learning lesson on Microsoft Teams. The third tool was an online interview conducted via Zoom with the high school English Teacher. The study findings have revealed that group work is an essential aspect of teaching, especially in the EFL classroom. Group work is equally critical to physical and online classes, and the students and the teacher acknowledge the importance. The findings have also shown that collaborative learning allows students from different performance levels to work together for a common goal and improve their performance. Students are more motivated to learn English when working collaboratively in groups. One of the study's significance is that it is the first study in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, specifically in the UAE, to highlight the importance of group work and collaborative learning in terms of promoting a student-to-student interaction and enhancing student motivation in the EFL classroom; both online and in the physical classroom. Another significant finding from both student and the teacher's perspectives is that when students work collaboratively in groups, they get more motivated to interact and engage more than they would when working individually.

Keywords: Group work, collaborative learning, interaction, online learning, motivation, collaboration.