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

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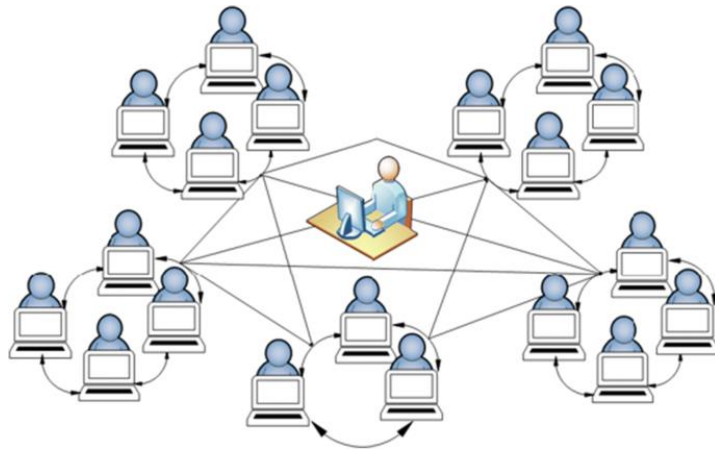
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College of Education
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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

Iman Duw Mohamed Ali Suwassi



March 2022

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

Iman Duw Mohamed Ali Suwassi

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Education (Curriculum and Instruction)

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Cover: Image showing the spiral model of collaborative knowledge improvement: a networked collaborative classroom
(Photo source: SpringerLink)

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Declaration of Original Work

I, Iman Duw Mohamed Suwassi, the undersigned, a graduate student at the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU), and the author of this thesis entitled “*Role of Group Work in Promoting Student to Student Interaction and Motivation in the EFL Classroom*”, hereby, solemnly declare that this thesis is my own original research work that has been done and prepared by me under the supervision of Professor Ali Shehadeh, in the College of Education at UAEU. This work has not previously formed the basis for the award of any academic degree, diploma or a similar title at this or any other university. Any materials borrowed from other sources (whether published or unpublished) and relied upon or included in my thesis have been properly cited and acknowledged in accordance with appropriate academic conventions. I further declare that there is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, data collection, authorship, presentation and/or publication of this thesis.

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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 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 important aspect of teaching especially in the EFL classroom. Group work is equally important for physical and online classes and the importance is acknowledged by the students as well as the teacher. The findings have also shown that collaborative learning allows students belonging to different performance levels to work together for a common goal and hence improve their level of 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 student to student interaction and enhancing student motivation in the EFL classroom; both online and in the physical classroom. Another significant finding from both students 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.

Title and Abstract (in Arabic)

دور العمل الجماعي في تعزيز تفاعل الطلاب مع بعضهم و تحفيزهم داخل الصف الدراسي للغة

الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL)

الملخص

تُعد هذه الأطروحة بالعمل الجماعي والتعلم التعاوني والتدريس في فصل اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة. الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو اكتشاف دور العمل الجماعي والتعلم التعاوني في تعزيز تفاعل الطلاب وتحفيزهم في فصل اللغة الإنجليزية. تم استخدام ثلاث أدوات في هذه الدراسة لجمع البيانات. تم إجراء استبيان، ودراسة استقصائية للطلاب عبر الإنترنت مع 15 من طلاب المدارس الثانوية خلال درس التعلم عن بعد على Microsoft Teams. كذلك تم إجراء مقابلة عبر الإنترنت عن طريق تطبيق زووم (ZOOM) في وقت لاحق مع مدرس اللغة الإنجليزية في المدرسة الثانوية. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن العمل الجماعي هو جانب مهم من التدريس خاصة في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL). تبين كذلك أن العمل الجماعي مهم بنفس القدر في حالة الدراسة وجها لوجه أو عبر الإنترنت حسب ما أقرّ به الطلاب وكذلك المعلم. أظهرت النتائج أيضًا أن التعلم التعاوني يسمح للطلاب الذين ينتمون إلى مستويات أداء مختلفة بالعمل معًا لتحقيق هدف مشترك وبالتالي تحسين مستوى أدائهم. يكون الطلاب أكثر حماسًا لتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية عند العمل بشكل تعاوني في مجموعات. تتمثل أهمية هذه الدراسة في أنها الدراسة الأولى في منطقة الشرق الأوسط وشمال إفريقيا، وتحديدًا في الإمارات العربية المتحدة، لتسليط الضوء على أهمية العمل الجماعي والتعلم التعاوني من حيث تعزيز تفاعل الطلاب مع بعضهم البعض وكذلك تعزيز تحفيز الطلاب في الفصل الدراسي للغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية (EFL)؛ سواء كان التدريس عبر الإنترنت أو في الفصول الدراسية وجها لوجه. هناك نتيجة مهمة أخرى من وجهة نظر كل من الطلاب والمعلم وهي أنه عندما يعمل الطلاب بشكل تعاوني في مجموعات، فإنهم يصبحون أكثر حماسًا للتفاعل والمشاركة أكثر مما سيفعلون عند العمل بشكل فردي.

مفاهيم البحث الرئيسية: العمل الجماعي، التعلم التعاوني، التفاعل، التعلم عبر الإنترنت، التحفيز،

التعاون.

Author Profile



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Special thanks go to my father who supported me throughout my master's journey. His kind and supporting words always lifted my morale and spirit and kept me going. Thank you, dear father, for always believing in me. I hope I have made you proud.

Dedication

To my beloved father who never stopped believing in me

&

To my beloved son, Badr

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|--------|-------------------------------------|
| ADEC | Abu Dhabi Educational Council |
| ADSM | Abu Dhabi School Model |
| ANCOVA | Analysis of Covariance |
| CL | Cooperative learning |
| EFL | English as a Foreign Language |
| ELLs | English Language Learners |
| ESL | English as a Second Language |
| GEMS | Global Education Management Systems |
| GWD | Group Work Dynamic |
| L2 | Second Language |
| MENA | Middle East and North Africa |
| MoE | Ministry of Education |
| NSM | New School Model |
| UAE | United Arab Emirates |

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Overview

Group work is an essential pedagogical tool to be used inside any classroom. Cooperation and collaboration are an important part of our daily routine in work and school settings. Some researchers defined group work saying it is when individuals work together collaboratively; they are dependent on each other and they work towards a common goal. Students put to work in groups should be in small groups; students in groups of perhaps five or fewer. Having large groups of students defeats one of the important goals of using group work and collaborative learning, which is giving the students the opportunity to speak and interact with one another. True, group work is a learning experience involving learners working together in a small group to conduct a task with the goal of providing students with further opportunity to use or practice the language. Moreover, many teachers agree on the importance of group work and collaborative learning, yet not all are familiar with the ways of implementing collaborative learning and how much of an impact it can have on students' motivation towards learning.

Group work has several advantages in the classroom. First, it helps to create engaging communication as teachers no longer play a dominant role in the classroom and helps them overcome the problem of large classes by allowing more students a chance to interact and speak. Second, group work provides students with a sense of flourishing creativity and literacy environment, as they do not need to discuss all classes, but only their small group of mates. Third, group work allows students to be more accountable and self-involved because there is no need for the student to rely on other students to take part in the learning. Moreover, group work plays a major role in enhancing students' motivation and interaction towards learning in the language classroom. A critical point that group work has is that it allows students to be

more independent because they are encouraged to teach others and learn from others.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find the impact of group work and collaborative learning in promoting student to student interaction and motivating students to learn English in the Second Language Classroom. The present study will use a student questionnaire and survey as well as a teacher interview as a qualitative research instrument to find out the perceptions of students and teacher on the implementation of group work and collaborative learning in the English classroom. Moreover, this study aims to discover the students' feedback on group activities and collaborative learning and the parts which students may face difficulties with. This study will also help gain more knowledge about the importance of group work and collaborative learning and their impact on student learning.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study aims to discover the role of group work and collaborative learning in promoting student to student interaction and motivation in the EFL Classroom. The majority of research relevant to this in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region investigated the impact of Group work on student interaction and language acquisition in the EFL classroom, but none addressed all three variables together (group work, interaction and motivation) (see, e.g. Fernández, 2012; Xu & Kou, 2018; Ahlquist, 2019; Alharbi, 2008). For instance, one of the relevant studies that I reviewed in the MENA Region discusses the role of group work in increasing students' motivation and attitude towards reading in an EFL reading comprehension class (see, e.g. Law, 2010). Although this study addresses relevant variables, the findings show that there was no significant shift in the degree of motivation of learners towards reading. Furthermore, not all the relevant

studies reviewed were involved in EFL classrooms. However, the relevant studies did not address the role of group work in promoting student to student interaction and motivation in the EFL classroom. There were no studies conducted in the UAE that focused on how group work promotes student-student interaction and how it enhances motivation. This study will examine whether and to what degree group work in the EFL classroom improves student to student interaction within the groups, which in turn will increase levels of student motivation towards learning in the EFL classroom.

1.4 Research Questions

Guided by the purpose of this study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Does group work promote collaborative interaction in the EFL classroom?
2. Does group work motivate students to interact in the EFL classroom?
3. What is the students' attitude and perception towards implementing collaborative interaction in the EFL classroom?
4. What is the teacher's attitude and perception towards implementing collaborative interaction in the EFL classroom?

1.5 Summary of Subsequent Chapters

Chapter two will cover the literature review regarding group work and collaborative learning. Chapter two will also review previous relevant studies that have tackled the importance of group work and collaborative learning in the classroom. Chapter two will conclude with four research questions. The methodology chapter, chapter three, will discuss the development of education in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) schools and the development of teaching in the UAE. The English Language Teaching methods and curriculum in the UAE contextualizes the data collection, the study's design,

and the methods followed. The research setting, which includes the students and teachers who took part in the study, along with the data collection and procedures used in the study to gather research data, including the student survey and questionnaire, as well as the teachers' interview will be discussed in chapter three. Chapter four will present the study's findings that were obtained from the student questionnaire and survey results as well as the results from the teacher interview. The chapter will then summarize the main findings regarding the student questionnaire and survey and the teacher interview. Finally, chapter five will cover the discussion of the results, the implications of the study, the limitations, recommendations, and the conclusion of the entire research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to Group Work

The focus of the study is on generating group work inside a classroom and using this to motivate student learning. This is important because motivation is often what directs a student towards a goal. According to Wang, Haertel and Walberg (1993) there is a correlation between motivation to learn and student achievement. Many students lack the motivation required of them to succeed in school. Lack of motivation or low levels of motivation can be seen as low levels of effort, distraction, inability to complete a task and high rates of other discipline problems (Goldberg et al., 2001). Because of this, teachers consistently implement strategies to enhance student motivation to learn.

This chapter will illustrate the importance of group work and how it influences student learning and promotes student-to-student interaction and motivation to learn. The problem is that when group work is being done in a classroom, it is not structured correctly and according to student levels. Other times the students in the groups are not all in tune and working as they should be working together. This is what makes this study relevant. This chapter will discuss group work in the L2 classroom and how researchers define it in the first section. I will also focus on the importance of group work and the critical role that the teacher plays in supporting the students in group/pair work activities. The second section will review how group work is implemented in the L2, classroom, and teachers' different methods and strategies to facilitate group work.

2.1.1 What is Group Work and Why is it Important?

Group work is essential inside any classroom. Cooperation and collaboration are an integral part of our daily routine in work and school settings. Brown (2000) states that the term 'group' has a variety of meanings. He defines

group work, saying that when individuals work together, they are dependent on each other and have a common goal. Brown (2001) also explains that group work is a generic term covering various techniques. Two or more students are assigned a task that involves collaboration and self-initiated language. He emphasizes the reality that it implies small-group work; this is, students in groups of perhaps six or fewer. Large groups defeat one of the essential goals of group work: allowing the students to speak. Richards et al. (1985) describe group work as a collaborative experience requiring the cooperation of a specific group of learners. It can be concluded from these definitions that group work is a learning experience involving learners working together in a small team or group to conduct a task to provide students with further opportunities to use or practice the language.

According to Brown (2001), group work has several advantages in the classroom. First, it helps to create engaging communication as teachers no longer play a dominant role in the classroom and helps them overcome the problem of large classes by allowing more students a chance to talk. Second, group work provides students with a sense of flourishing creativity and literacy environment, as they do not need to discuss all classes, but only their small group of colleagues. Third, group work allows students to be more accountable and self-governing because there is no need for the learner to rely on other students to participate in the study. Moreover, group work plays a significant role in helping learners become more interactive and socialize in the language classroom.

In a study about Task, Group, and Task-Group Interactions, Long (1990) mentions a few pedagogic advantages that group work has (including pair work). He states that (1) group work increases the amount of language practice opportunities, (2) group work facilitates individualized instruction allowing students to work at their pace, (3) group work can assist in enhancing

the affective climate in the classroom, the intimacy of the small group putting often being particularly valuable linguistically insecure students and finally, and (4) group work can help motivate learners due to the pedagogic variety it brings to a lesson.

Thomas (1995) concludes that student-student interactions are more effective than teacher-student interactions in helping learners to gain L2. Moreover, Richards (2005) argues that groups encourage learners to negotiate more, as a more comfortable atmosphere allows them to communicate with others without feeling any pressure. In L2 classrooms, grouping is considered to be very effective in teaching for several reasons: it increases the time that students can speak the target language and it also decreases the time that students spend listening to other students interacting with the teacher; it avoids the stress that some students feel from speaking and interacting with the teacher in front of the whole class; and it gives the teacher more opportunities to discuss with students the structure of the task (Foster, 1998).

A critical point that group work has is that it allows students to be more independent because they are encouraged to teach others and also to learn from others. In contrast, in teacher-led situations, students are more dependent because the teacher does most of the talking. To sum up, several researchers (Brown, 2001; Foster, 1998; Ghaith & Yaghi, 1998; Harmer, 2001) have claimed that group work is efficient in L2 classrooms because it allows learners to practice the language with their group members.

Schools and teachers are applying group and pair work in their classrooms, but is what they are using structured well and aligned with the curriculum and caters to the student's needs? Does group work motivate students and get them engaged in the lesson? Many questions and concerns need to be focused on to ensure the proper group work structure. Gillies et al. (2007) mention the Social Pedagogic Research into Group Work project (SPRinG), which

focuses on three main concerns of group and pair work: Relationships are essential for productive group work, successful group work requires an efficient learning setting and teachers need to organize and support group work experience.

The SPRinG method is often focused on the belief that group work must be viewed strategically in the broader sense of the classroom as a whole. This involves the following three major dimensions: (a) classroom level considerations such as layout, furniture and seating arrangements and class size; (b) group characteristics such as size and number, structure and stability; and (c) group work activities and the manner in which they are implemented and used to promote learning within a lesson and curriculum. The goal is to implement group work into both classrooms and curriculum. One common obstacle teachers face with integrating group work into the lesson is not having enough time to accumulate while finishing the curriculum in time. We mustn't examine small group learning independently of the curriculum and the classroom culture but integrate it into the curriculum and make it part of the lesson. This way, we ensure that the lesson is delivered whilst allowing time to involve group/pair activities in the classroom (Slavin et al., 2003; Webb & Palincsar, 1996).

We can all recognize that students need the skills to interact efficiently through listening, explaining and sharing ideas. However, successful group work often relies on students learning to trust and respect each other and possess the skills to organize and coordinate their group work, make thoughtful group decisions, reach compromises and avoid petty disputes (Galton, 1990).

Dudley-Marley and Searle (1991) show that the language presented by the teacher can be reproached by students later, under similar tasks. Students can

then take the teacher's delivered knowledge to match communicative and cognitive demands. In this study, Dudley-Marley and Searle suggest that students show engagement in group work after the teacher has delivered knowledge in the L2 classroom.

Christie (1999) claim that group work in the language classroom improves the quality of learning if teachers scaffold basic ground rules when achieving this type of work inside the language classroom. Some of the ground rules used by Christie and Martin in their research were: (a) all relevant information is shared; (b) the group seeks to reach agreement; (c) the group takes responsibility for decisions; (d) reasons are expected to be provided by the group; (e) challenges are accepted; (f) alternatives are discussed before a decision is taken; and, (g) all in the group are encouraged to speak by other group members.

Students interacting and working together with understanding is a major aspect and part of group work in an L2 classroom, but teacher support and feedback is essential throughout this process. One approach in which the teacher can ensure well-structured group work is to reduce the amount of classwork on one learner individually while maintaining the lesson's objectives and assuring the task is challenging for the students by scaffolding the activities and group structure and experiences. When it comes to promoting group work, Palincsar and Herrenkohl (2002) and Tolmie et al. (2005) suggest that scaffolding has not been thoroughly studied but may require modifying and structuring the group work layout and the task. Teachers may carefully plan lessons in order to promote group learning and enable feedback on group activities. The teacher must substitute some direct teaching with time to observe and evaluate student work and group interaction and provide them with feedback.

Multiple studies have shown that different interactions promote various types of learning and thus contribute to different cooperative learning tasks (Chan et al., 1992; King, 1994; Webb & Palincsar, 1996). Even though different interactions in the L2 classroom contribute to various cooperative learning tasks and pair work, learners rarely know how to engage spontaneously and effectively in group and pair work. Teachers need to guide learners and support them during group and pair work (Bell, 2004; Britton et al., 1990; Cohen, 1994; King, 1994; King & Rosenshine, 1993; Kuhn, 1991). Slavin (1995) explains that there is an apparent change in student performance when students work in groups with organized goals. Group work would require clear objectives and cover subjects that are important to students. Overall, two factors must be present if cooperative learning is to be efficient: group outcomes and individual responsibility. (Slavin, 1995, 2009; Rohrbeck et al., 2003; Webb, 2008).

In the following part, I will be discussing how group work is implemented in L2 classrooms and how teachers' support and guidance are necessary throughout the entire process.

2.1.2 Implementation of Group Work in the L2 Classroom

Studies by Vedder (1985) and Webb et al. (1986) reveal that even though guidance is provided to work on a task, learners usually prefer to communicate with each other at a particular step-by-step level rather than at an abstract, planned level, unless the teacher interferes with clear directions about how to collaborate. For this purpose, teachers in the L2 classroom need to establish different methods of structuring and managing interaction within groups such that learners are expected to engage in methods that activate the cognitive process suitable to the learning task. Such methods allow learners to perform assigned tasks, follow a sequence of activities, based on the task

at hand or sometimes even engage in a particular pattern of dialogue (Dansereau, 1988; King, 1994; Palincsar & Brown, 1984).

The way group work is implemented in the L2 classroom can vary. It should be implemented in a way that promotes L2 learning. Foster (1998) involved adult ESL learners engaged in pair and group work and found that her students rarely resorted to such strategies. To explain the results, Foster maintained that, as in ordinary social interaction between native speakers, the L2 learners appeared not to be correcting each other so as to avoid a threat to face. Moreover, Aline and Hosoda (2009) supported Foster's position, as their study conducted in a Japanese university setting, revealed that peers rarely provided linguistic support or corrected others in their groups. On the other hand, other studies proved that if group work is scaffolded in a proper manner and students were offered appropriate instruction and feedback, then group work will promote student-student interaction and motivate students to learn in an L2 classroom. In other instances, pairs/groups within the same classroom have been shown to differentially engage students in linguistic scaffolding (Storch, 2001; Swain & Lapkin, 1998).

There are several ways in which group work is implemented in the L2 classroom. These ways of implementation each has a purpose to motivate students into getting more engaged and interacting with their group mates during group/pair tasks and assures the delivery of the goal or objective of the lesson to the students. Some of these techniques of implementation are game, project, jigsaw and think pair share.

Game: One of the common techniques of group work implementation is gaming or games. According to Perry (2018), using games to implement group work promotes higher levels of student engagement and motivates learning. One way of doing this is by grouping students into several groups. Each group is given a set of procedure text. Each group member receives one

card including one of the steps. The students are then expected to look for their partners depending on the sequence of steps in the text of the process. The students do this by reading the terms printed on their cards aloud. Then the students are required to go to the front to demonstrate what they did in the game. The teacher measures the students' understanding of the text and guides them on producing the conclusion from what they have learned. Thereafter, more exercise is provided to improve their comprehension on procedural texts. Using game in the classroom allows students to naturally use the target vocabulary in real-life scenarios. Game makes the classroom more enjoyable and therefore students appreciate studying and enjoy learning. Training will take place faster as this occurs.

Project: Harmer (2001) suggests using projects as a group strategy for students in the L2 classroom. Students are required to perform a survey on, for instance, 'why people smoke'. Students are placed into groups of 4 or 5. They are required in groups to construct a questionnaire. The questions in the questionnaire will include the smoking behaviors of respondents, the varieties of tobacco they consume, the amount of tobacco they consume a day, their motives for smoking, the kinds of illnesses they experience, the sum of money they spend on smoking, their thoughts towards smoking in public spaces and in public transport, etc. Students are then told to interview people who smoke in coffee shops, markets, or any other public places to collect data using the questionnaire. The groups review the information they gathered and write a report. Afterwards, each group delivers the survey report to the class orally utilizing the power point for classroom discussion. This project may demand involvement and commitment from the students, according to Harmer (2001). It takes around two weeks to complete in an intermediate class. The number of respondents may be about 20 or more.

Jigsaw: Clarke (1994) demonstrates that Jigsaw practice allows learners to build their own learning. Teachers place students in groups of four or five. Each group member has a number, e.g. students 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 (if one group consists of five students) each of which has been assigned with a particular text. Then, students return to their original groups and instruct other group members who have particular texts. Members of the group will collaborate and work together as a team to reach a shared purpose and each individual relies on the other. Through this, students are motivated, engaged and are interacting with other learners in the class. Clarke (1994) explains that every member of the group is skilled in subject matter and has important knowledge to offer his classmates.

Think Pair Share: Azlina (2010) discusses another collaborative technique used in group and pair learning. In this technique the instructor gives out parts of the text to the learners. There's a text in every session that can be argued. A text is split down into two sections. The students acknowledge different parts of the letter. Then, the teacher asks students to take the specific stage in learning and seek to grasp it. The teacher observes and guides the pairing process that the students do independently. The students then do the pairing stage in pairs. They get back to their pairs that have the same text, then start the thinking and sharing stage. The teacher supervises and monitors the Pairing process in pairs. When required, the teacher assists the students with vocabulary problems. Next, the students share step by step, but with different pairs. To share the information from their texts, they need to switch to the other pairs that have a different text. Additionally, they also need to pay attention to the description of their new pairs. They should even question other students, if the description is not entirely clear, particularly the complete text ideas. The students then consider the answers during the explanation of certain activities.

Azlina (2010) explains that this ensures the students have to analyze what they have already read. The teacher observes and manages the sharing process that is done in pairs and in groups and provides required support, specifically on comprehension. Then they have to return to their own pairs and address what they've received from the step of sharing. Each pair's representative reports the result of discussion, other students can provide comments and opinions. The teacher should explain more about the characteristics of the text, as well as the ideas to enrich the comprehension of the material by analyzing the text further with the students and providing students with critical thinking questions to solve in their groups. This allows students to exchange and share their ideas with group mates which enables students to assess new ideas, clarify or rearrange them before presenting their work to the whole class. This technique will also give the students the chance to assess their knowledge and measure how much they do know and do not know.

Furthermore, in Student-Student group work/interaction, Mori (2002), Mondada, and Doehler (2004) discuss how learners, when working together, understand and carry out tasks discursively in the L2 classroom. Their studies demonstrate that tasks in the L2 classroom are interpreted by learners in a different way and that student-student interaction during group work can lead to distinctive outcomes among learners.

Asner-Self and Feyissa (2002) found another creative way to help students whose native language was not English was to use poetry in groups, which provided students an environment to talk about delicate issues and practice their English as well. Another study by Swain and Lapkin (2000) showed that collaborative dialogue in the L2 can mediate L2 learning. This collaborative dialogue is a learner problem-solving and knowledge-building strategy and by engaging in this dialogue, they are able to co-construct their L2 and build on their knowledge of it.

Implementation of group work in L2 classroom helps and allows students to practice the skills they have learned. When students are given the opportunity to discuss and share what they have heard, read, or written with their group members, they will be able to apply and listen to new language (Escamilla et al., 2013, p. 149). Littlewood (2011) adds that group tasks and activities give students the chance to not only communicate with their current knowledge of the language, but also expand that knowledge. Moreover, Brown (2007) conveys that group work tasks and activities are designed to cater communicative interaction, which then leads to L2 learning because language is learned as an integrated system. Well-structured group learning helps students to see how the language functions as a whole by engaging in activities that enable them to solve problems, discuss papers or books, exchange thoughts, tell stories, explain cultural differences, etc.

2.2 What is Collaborative Learning?

Collaborative learning is a concept in which students are paired or grouped for the purpose of reaching an academic goal. This concept has been researched widely as well as advocated in the professional literature. “Collaborative learning” as a term refers to a method of instruction in which students with varied performance level perform in small groups for achieving a common goal. In this way, students are not only responsible for their own learning but also for the others in the group. Hence, when one student succeeds, it helps the other students to succeed as well. It is claimed by the promoters of collaborative learning that the active and dynamic exchange of ideas within the group is not only good for creating interest in the participants but also a way of promoting critical thinking. As put forward by Johnson and Johnson (1986), evidence suggests that there is a high level of thinking and longer retention of information in teams that work cooperatively in comparison to those students who tend to work individually and quietly. With

shared learning, students enjoy the opportunity to be responsible for their own learning, engage in meaningful discussions, listen to other's perspective and hence be able to think critically (Totten et al., 1991)

Even though these advantages are advocated by the researchers, the majority of research studies on the topic of collaborative learning have been conducted at the levels of primary and secondary education. There is a need for emphasizing the effect of noncompetitive collaborative learning and group work in the literature of higher education.

2.2.1 Collaborative Learning in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classroom

When a student/learner is learning a second or foreign language, they have to learn the language's structure as well as its use in the suitable situations. For example, when a Spanish native learns English, he/she may have a habit of putting the adjectives after nouns whereas in English, it needs to be done in reverse order. When the learners belong to diverse backgrounds, it is important that the teacher creates a pleasant atmosphere for learning where learners feel welcome, happy, empowered and ready to learn the subject being taught. In a classroom, the smallest of thing done by a teacher to reach their ELLs (English Language Learners) can make a significant variance when learners are learning a new language as well as navigating a different culture at the same time. A supportive environment is therefore needed in English classrooms, especially for ELLs. For ELLs, two practices are important in order to improve the language, i.e., dedicate time for learning and then practicing what they have learned. In a group interaction, the learners use English for explain their concepts and contributing to the work in their structured activities. This interaction allows the teacher to gauge the level of learning and the progress of the learner in the English language. (Rao, 2019)

Some of the common problems faced by non-native speakers are lack of vocabulary, understanding of new word's meaning and pronunciation and being able to memorize the word with its pronunciation and correct spelling. Students when working individually hardly participated in their oral lessons despite knowing the correct answers because they consider themselves as less capable than their peers. On the contrary, during a collaborative task when the learners witness other learners also struggling with the new words and sentence structure etc., it helps to eliminate their fear of judgment and encourages participation (Kamala & AbdulAziz, 2020).

Fareh (2010) researched 122 different groups of different sizes for collaborative learning. The evaluation of results pointed out that there is an extraordinary percentile gain for groups up to four but when the group size expands, it can go into negative. Moreover, it was also mentioned that at least four channels of communication for collaboration have to be present for successful results. These channels include student-teacher, student-student, student-parent and between the teacher and other members of staff.

Huang et al. (2012) conducted research on the effect of collaborative learning in a social and dialogical point of view on collaboration of seventh grade students in their EFL classrooms in a Colombian school. It was revealed by the findings that accepting collaborative learning as a structure of knowledge may help to highlight the chances of modifying the traditional teaching and learning practices and endorse the power of students.

2.3 Summary

To conclude, Group work is an important aspect of the L2 classroom to attain language learning. Many researchers have agreed that group work is used to promote student-student interaction and motivate students to learn in the L2 classroom. Group work is implemented in various ways using techniques to ensure that students are being motivated when learning. Some of these

techniques mentioned are game, project, jigsaw and think-pair-share. Implementation of group work in L2 classroom helps and allows students to practice the skills they have learned as well as assess their knowledge and understanding by sharing ideas with their group members. When students are given the opportunity to discuss and share what they have heard, read, or written with their group members, their outcome is furthermore progressive. Moreover, Collaborative learning is a concept in which students are paired or grouped for the purpose of reaching an academic goal. During collaborative learning students with varied performance level perform in small groups to achieve a common goal. In this way, students are not only responsible for their own learning but also for the others in the group. Hence, this motivates students to work together towards achieving the same goal.

In the following section, I will review past studies on group work and how it promotes student-student interaction and student motivation in the L2 classroom. I will also review student motivation and interaction in relation to group work. First, I will look into major studies in international contexts. Following that, I will look into studies in the region as well as in the UAE.

2.4 Previous Studies on the Role of Group Work in Promoting Student to Student Interaction and Motivating Students in L2 Classroom

Most of the studies that examined group work and its role in promoting student interaction and motivation showed positive outcomes in regard to student to student interaction and motivation but did not necessarily affect all students to participate and become engaged in group and pair work tasks and activities. In the section below I will review international and regional studies that have tackled group work in terms of promoting student interaction and motivation in the classroom.

2.4.1 International Studies on the Role of Group Work in Promoting Student to Student Interaction and Motivation in the L2 Classroom

Hernández (2010) conducted a study in Marquette University, Wisconsin, to investigate how motivation and interaction shape the speaking proficiency of studying abroad (SA) and classroom or at home (AH) language learners. Hernández led a motivation questionnaire, language contact profile, and pretest and posttest simulated oral proficiency interview. Participants were 44 Spanish language learners in one of two contexts: SA or AH. The SA group consisted of 20 undergraduates (16 females and 4 males) from a large, private university in the United States who participated in a semester long SA program in Spain. The AH group consisted of 24 undergraduates (19 females and 5 males) who had enrolled in at least one upper-division Spanish course at the home institution. Students in both the SA and AH groups completed a questionnaire. The findings suggest a positive relationship between student motivation, interaction with the target language culture, and the development of speaking proficiency in both SA and AH learning contexts.

Law (2010) investigated the effects of cooperative learning on enhancing fifth graders' achievement goals and reading proficiency. He also investigated the effect of cooperative learning on motivation. In nine classes from three primary schools, the participants were 279 Grade 5 Hong Kong students (141 boys and 138 girls) with about 30-35 students in each class. This study investigated the relationships between motivation variables of Chinese students and reading success of students, and the effects of cooperative learning incorporated with specific guidance from teachers on the achievements of reading comprehension of fifth graders. The two experimental situations illustrated the cognitive support of teachers in encouraging students to comprehend a text through activities both teacher-led and student-led. Post-test data included a reading understanding test and three questionnaires analyzing the target orientations of students, initial standard of

relative autonomy, and impressions of instructional activities. Findings show that in the reading comprehension test, students in the jigsaw group outperformed students in both the drama group and the control group. The effects of performing group work activities with well-planned feedback from teachers are discussed. The results suggest that the higher-order reading output of students could be strengthened by participating in cooperative learning activities by their teachers with well-planned scaffolding.

Fernández (2012) conducted a study on a group of Spanish students in the University of Washington to examine the benefits of collaborative writing tasks. The focus of the study was on the effects of group work and pair work on writing tasks. The participants were a total of 111 students, 83 were female and 28 were male and their ages ranged from 18 to 30. All participants were English native speakers or had a native like English background. Students served either in groups, in couples or in pairs. Students had to focus on the use of Spanish past tenses and complete a writing task specifically designed for the purposes of this study. Each pair and group received a set of 15 pictures. Students then rearrange these pictures in order to create a story, to set the story in the past in order to use past tenses, and to write the story. The findings of the study showed that the texts written by the groups obtained better accuracy scores than those written by the pairs on all the measures. Moreover, the comparative analysis of the texts written in groups and those written individually provided very similar results. However, contrary to expectations, no significant differences in terms of accuracy were found between the texts written by the pairs and those written by the individual students.

Poupore (2018) investigated group work dynamics in L2 interactive Tasks. In order to affect the evolving Group Work Dynamic Structures, the study aimed to define how different factors interacted. The participants were a class

of 10 Korean students consisted of 7 females and 3 males with the age range of 24 to 33. A Group Work Dynamic (GWD) measuring instrument was designed as part of the original study in order to obtain a comprehensive account of a group's social dynamic. A list of characteristics and behaviors that were thought to influence GWD, both positive and negative and both verbal and nonverbal, was formulated based on different sources, including the fields of small group communication, nonverbal communication and cooperative learning. The findings show that the task work Group 1 (both groups were compared thoroughly and analytically) students repeatedly reported being more motivated and in a more positive emotional state in comparison to the task work Group 2 students. Throughout many areas, the outcomes shown by Group 1 reflect the optimum combination and interaction of elements for a positive GWD. The Group 2 outcomes reflect the interplay of variables leading to a poor GWD. This group showed a large amount of negative behaviors in comparison to GWD characteristics. Motivationally, they enjoyed the task more, were more interested, gave more effort, and had a greater sense of success. From a dynamic perspective, moreover, while group 1 demonstrated an upward trend in their interest level, group 2 remained stagnant.

Xu and Kou (2018) investigated the effects of group work and interaction strategies on students' oral performance in Chinese EFL classrooms. The study was carried out in Huazhong University of Science and Technology in Wuhan, China. The participants were 72 second year non-English-major university students. They were all native speakers of Chinese and had studied English for 11 years since the third grade in primary school. A total of 72 students were divided randomly into 18 groups of 4 each. This study was part of a large-scale national research project which investigated interaction patterns of group work. Findings of the study show that these Chinese university EFL learners used all four types of interaction strategies in general

with low frequency, but the frequency of each type of strategy varied. During a 20-min discussion, the most commonly used strategy was asking follow-up questions, and the least frequently used strategy was repair. The Findings offer more empirical evidence, both from the conventional interactionist approach (Long, 1983) and sociocultural theory (Lantolf, 2000), of the association between group interaction and language performance. These findings lead us to infer that the more students used interaction strategies, the better oral performance they received, even though these EFL learners did not use these high-frequency interaction strategies.

In a study about *Motivating Teens to Speak English through a Group Work in a Storyline project*, Ahlquist (2019) explored the impact of collaboration to motivate students in a variety of English speaking and writing tasks. The participants were 60 Swedish students, aged 15-16. Students had to work in small groups to collaborate on tasks to develop the story. Regardless of competence, students reflected on the following aspects of their growth in the spoken language: Learning new words; being able to communicate in English; being willing to communicate in English; speak in front of the group and do so more securely. Discussions encouraged students to think about and analyze the use of words and how to use them. With regard to speaking, the teachers found in the second week that the majority of students were excited by the work of Storyline and talked more in their groups. The fact that the majority of students were involved became clear in how the more reluctant students were gradually more proactive. Overall, findings of this study showed a number of benefits, the most important of which was an increase in their motivation to speak English and enhanced their self-confidence. The students had not worked together before and there were homogeneous group skills. As parts of their progress in the spoken language, students reflected on the following regardless of competence: learning new words; becoming able

to talk in English; daring to speak in front of the group; and being more confident in doing so.

2.4.2 Regional Studies on the Role of Group Work in Promoting Student to Student Interaction and Motivation in the L2 Classroom

Very few studies in the gulf region have investigated the impact of group work on promoting student-student interaction and motivation for learning in the L2 classroom, compared to studies in international contexts. Indeed, the influence of group work on fostering student-student interaction and motivation for learning in the L2 classroom has been explored by a few studies in the field, as seen below. Alharbi (2008) explored the effects of using cooperative learning (CL) in English as a second language reading comprehension performance and how it increases the second language of the students, their attitudes towards cooperative learning, and their motivation to read. The study included sixty EFL Saudi high school students from the Third Secondary School in Arrass City and was divided into two classes (experimental group vs. control group). A pretest-posttest control group design was used. In order to test the differences between the experimental and the comparison group, data was evaluated using a one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). The results of this study found that there was no major shift in the degree of motivation of learners to learn between experimental and comparison groups.

However, there were considerable differences in reading comprehension success between the two classes and in the attitudes of students to cooperative learning, which influenced the experimental group. The findings showed that there were substantial differences between the control group and the experimental group in reading comprehension in favor of the latter. The teacher involved in this research found that when reading the given texts, there is an increase in student comprehension of passages. Students learned

more from this approach than the traditional method when the experimental group shared their concepts, opinions, and meanings together. They quickly understood the new vocabulary while they were working in groups as they read and studied its meaning. It allowed weaker students to be more sociable and to become more academically competitive while cooperating with other students. In addition, due to the enthusiasm of the participating students and the increase in their test scores, the researchers found that CL intervention in the reading course was a success. Finally, with each variable, the researcher addressed educational consequences and recommended some implementation suggestions and more studies.

The study by Ahmadpanah et al., (2014) investigated the impact of cooperative learning on a) the cognitive skills of children and (b) the acquisition of knowledge of Science Topics in Iran. The study was performed between October and December 2012 at an elementary school in Ilam town (Iran). The interference and control group were randomly allocated to one hundred and twenty male fifth graders. Two raters separately measured the intellectual performance of students in experimental science and social skills before and 2 months after completion. The text content was individually studied by students in the control group, while students in the experimental group were instructed cooperatively using the Jigsaw approach. The experimental group demonstrated a slightly higher increase in social skills over time relative to the control group. While both groups enhanced their awareness, over time, the experimental group gained a much wider and deeper understanding of the topics. The findings show that cooperative learning approaches boost both social skills and knowledge acquisition at elementary school level.

Al-Tamimi and Attamimi (2014) examined the efficacy of cooperative learning (CL) in English language classrooms to strengthen the speaking

skills and attitudes of Yemeni students. The quasi-experimental study with a non-equivalent control group pre-test post-test design was implemented in this study. The participants were one class with 30 students selected as a control group, and the other class with 30 students was used as an experimental group. There were primarily two research tools used in the study. The first was a speaking exam that was used as a pre-test and post-test to assess the success of English-speaking students. The second instrument was a questionnaire which was used before and after the experiment to test the attitudes of students towards CL. Using simple and descriptive statistical techniques including mean ratings, standard deviations, paired sample t-test, and effect scale, the data was evaluated. After the implementation of cooperative learning methods, the findings showed a remarkable improvement in the speaking ability and attitudes of the students.

A significant difference in the outcomes between the experimental and control groups was demonstrated by the success of the experimental group after being subjected to CL activities. Since the CL approach was adopted as a teaching technique in speaking skill classrooms, the experimental group demonstrated a positive score difference and/or progress. Whereas there was no significant difference between the results of the pre- and post-tests of the speaking skills in the performance of the control group exposed to traditional methods of learning speaking skills. Compared to the participants in the control group who were introduced to the traditional approach, the participants in the experimental group showed a more positive attitude about speaking skills. In line with the results, the researchers proposed that teachers can benefit from applying CL in English classrooms, which can improve the speaking skills and attitudes of students in turn. The results of this study show promising results both in terms of the oral success of Yemeni EFL students and attitudes towards the use of CL as a new instructional tool in Yemeni English-speaking classrooms.

2.4.3 Summary and Evaluation

From this review, we can see that a number of studies have examined students' group work and interaction and its relationship to motivation. There were a number of studies in international context, but very few studies in the region. Researching these past studies have resulted in advancing our knowledge in terms of understanding that Group work: (a) motivates students to speak English in the EFL classroom, (b) improves accuracy scores in writing tasks, (c) shows a positive relationship between student motivation, interaction and the development of speaking proficiency, (d) strengthens higher order reading, and (e) promotes student motivation and self-confidence. On the other hand, the past studies reviewed both internationally and regionally show us that most teachers struggle in the EFL classroom with issues like (a) students lack of motivation to read, (b) students lack of interest in the EFL classroom when working individually, and (c) low the level of interaction as English subject lessons are known to be dense and somewhat boring to students. Some of the international past studies focus on group work and its effects on student interaction, while other studies focus on the impact of group work on motivating students learning, yet no studies were found to measure all three variables together; group work, interaction and student motivation.

Moreover, two of the past studies in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region investigated the impact of group work on student interaction and language acquisition in the EFL classroom, but neither addressed all three variables together. On the contrary, one of the past studies that I reviewed in the MENA Region discusses the role of group work in increasing students' motivation and attitude towards reading in an EFL reading comprehension class. Although this study addresses relevant variables, the findings show that there was no major shift in the degree of motivation of learners towards

reading. Furthermore, not all the past studies reviewed were involved in EFL classrooms.

However, what the past studies did not address is the role of group work in promoting student to student interaction and motivation in the EFL classroom. There were no studies conducted in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) that focus on how group work promotes student-student interaction and how it enhances motivation. We still need to know how group work promotes student –student interaction which will then lead to student motivation in the EFL classroom in UAE Public High schools. This study will therefore examine whether and to what degree group work in the EFL classroom improves student to student interaction within the groups, which in turn increases the levels of student motivation towards learning in the EFL classroom.

2.5 Research Questions

Based on the literature reviewed and guided by the purpose of this study, the following research questions were formulated for this study:

1. Does group work promote collaborative interaction in the EFL classroom?
2. Does group work motivate students to interact in the EFL classroom?
3. What is the students' attitudes and perceptions towards implementing collaborative interaction in the EFL classroom?
4. What is the teacher's attitude and perception towards implementing collaborative interaction in the EFL classroom?

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The methodology chapter will give an outline of the context of the study and the research design used in this study. It will give a detailed overview of how the research was carried out. The first section of this chapter will discuss the development of education in schools of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In addition, the chapter will address the development of teaching in the UAE, as well as the English Language Teaching methods and curriculum in the UAE. The chapter will then focus on the significance of group and pair work in the English language. The research setting, which includes the students and teachers who took part in the study, will be described in the next section. Finally, the chapter will explain the data collection procedures used in the study to gather research data, including the student survey and questionnaire, as well as the teacher's interview.

3.2 Development of Education in the UAE

The United Arab Emirates' education system was formed in 1952 by the country's ruler, late Sheik Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan. There were few schools in the area prior to 1952. In the 1960s and 1970s, the UAE's education system began a construction program in which schools were built in huge areas to ensure that all students could attend school. Despite the fact that the country's first university was only founded in 1976, worldwide branch campuses of famous universities, including the flagship institutions of New York University and Sorbonne University, are now widespread. In the past, schooling was informal and primarily for boys, with the teacher being an imam associated with the local mosque, as opposed to now, when the UAE has the world's largest number of English-medium international schools (Warner & Burton, 2017).

In the world of today, providing quality education is more important than ever whereby schools tend to take additional responsibility for their students' wellbeing and as the burden to compete in international market seems to intensify for the youth of today. H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai established the Mohammed bin Rashid Smart Learning Initiative in 2012, which included all state schools in an effort to create a new educational environment. Smart classrooms in all schools, the distribution of tablets to all students, and the installation of high-speed 4G networks in all state schools were all part of this effort. In the year 2018, the UAE Ministry of Education (MoE) set aside a budget of 10.4 billion dirhams for public and higher education to expand the country's educational system and make it fit with future demands by instilling the notion of sustainable education. Besides teaching traditional skills and content, the schools as well as the teachers are expected to prepare their students for a diverse and interconnected work that has increasingly multifaceted issues (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2020). The education sector in the United Arab Emirates is one of the fastest developing in the area. As of the academic year 2016-17, there were approximately 1.03 million students enrolled in both public and private schools. The UAE's overall number of students in schools and institutions increased to over 4% through 2020 and 2021. This is important particularly for the UAE, provided its rapidly changing economy and multicultural population.

Education is now a primary priority for the country's leaders. One study mentions that a high-quality education system is critical not only for the country's economic development, but also for the security and maintenance of the Gulf countries' strategic stability (Mawgood, 1991, p.11). The Ministry of Education is striving to continue the process of building and significantly modifying educational frameworks and streams in accordance with modern

educational philosophy. With the launch of the Emirati School, the ministry established this philosophy, which is based on the best international systems and pioneering and successful experiences within a national and sharing pattern and framework with all leading government and private educational institutions throughout the UAE.

3.3 Development of English Language Teaching in the UAE

The UAE's history of foreign language teaching, particularly English as a Foreign or Second Language (EFL/ESL), dates back to the establishment of the UAE Ministry of Education (MoE) in 1971. Prior to it, there was no structured education system under the British, such as a ministry or directorate of education. One of the first orders of business for the UAE was to establish a Ministry of Education (Suliman, 2000). The first English language curriculum was introduced from the neighboring Emirate of Kuwait at the time of the foundation (Suliman, 2000). In the UAE and the Persian Gulf region, the importance of English as a Second Language (ESL) is reflected in school curricula (Al Kitbi, 2006; Al Sayegh, 2004; Kharma, 1998). With the exception of Emirati/Islamic Studies and Arabic, all government university departments, such as engineering or medicine, teach in English. English is also the language of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, which will drive the future employment market and which the UAE government has set as a goal for expanding society's knowledge capacity.

In their reform efforts to promote English language education in schools and teach scientific topic subjects through the medium of English, UAE's MoE schools are following global trends. More Emiratis are sending their children to private K–12 schools to learn English before going to university (Al Hameli & Underwood, 2014).

Since 1992, English has been an important part of the K–12 curriculum. When the UAE was established in 1971, the government took over 47 schools in the region that had been established by diverse political interests. Suliman (2000) writes that five separate curriculums were employed in these schools, with the curricula, teachers, and textbooks provided free of charge by the governments of Kuwait, Egypt, Qatar, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. With the addition of English in middle school in 1971, these schools integrated art and physical education into the traditional curriculum of religion, Arabic, social studies, math, and science.

From 1971 to 2000, according to Suliman (2000), the English curriculum went through three phases. First, the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education's Longman series was used without any modifications. Second, Longman created the Crescent series especially for the United Arab Emirates, and third, the National Curriculum was implemented in 1990. When this was implemented, instructors' options were limited, and they were expected to stick to the required/prescribed textbook (Clarke & Gallagher, 2008; Ridge et al., 2017).

Layman (2011) writes that in 2007, the Ministry of Education announced a new educational project known as "Madaras Al Ghad," or "Schools of the Future," which aimed to improve students' English skills once again. While student-centered learning and textbooks were introduced in Madaras Al Ghad schools, assessment remained the same, implying that teacher-centered and textbook-based teaching methods remained in place (Ridge et al., 2017). English was used as the language of teaching for math and science at 38 schools around the UAE as part of this project (Ridge et al., 2017). Jonny (2015) states that due to excessive costs and poor exam scores, these schools were closed down in 2015.

Pennington (2015) writes in 2009/2010, the emirate of Abu Dhabi introduced the "New School Model," (NSM), which was later renamed the "Abu Dhabi School Model" (ADSM) in 2015 (Ridge et al., 2017). This new school model is now known as the Emirati School Model, and it is utilized by all MoE schools in the UAE. This program placed a greater focus not just on English in the curriculum, but also on English as a medium of teaching. Its requirement included bilingual education, a decrease in the number of subjects taught from 13 different subjects to 8, focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) and twenty-first-century skills (Pennington, 2015).

Thorne (2011) mentions that among the many overlapping reforms in Abu Dhabi in conjunction with the NSM was the establishment of the Public Private Partnership (PPP), an initiative in which the Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) hired for-profit and nonprofit private school providers and educational management consultancies such as Beaconhouse, CfBT Education, Mosaica, and Nord Anglia to run over 176 MoE schools in the emirate of Abu Dhabi after a competitive process. Hamilton (2010) added that at the same time as part of the NSM Program, ADEC recruited approximately 940 native English-speaking certified instructors from the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom to teach in schools. Moreover, the UAE government created the Institutes of Applied Technology (IAT) in 2005 to provide English-language career-based technical education. IATs are a non-profit organization that manages fourteen Applied Technology High Schools (ATHS) in the UAE. They are financially and administratively independent of the Ministry of Education.

Aldar Academies was founded in 2007 by Aldar, an Abu Dhabi government-owned property developer, after they were given a government school to remodel and modernize. It currently provides a British curriculum in English

to 6554 students in seven primary schools, with 950 teachers (Pennington, 2017a, 2017b).

However, the major groundbreaking advancement in English instruction in the UAE is the extraordinary development in the private English-medium school area (Godwin, 2017). The current number of private schools in the nation is 567 (Reports and Statistics, 2018), practically equivalent to that of government funded schools, which number 659. One such illustration of these non-public schools is the Dubai-started Global Education Management Systems (GEMS). GEMS was set up by a Dubai businessman from India whose schools give private schooling to both the low paid working families and the "first class." (Kerr, 2013). GEMS as of now has 49 schools in the United Arab Emirates, with 5 unique educational plans, including British, Indian, and American, from the beginning of one school in 1980 and roughly 10 schools in 2001.

To conclude, Zaman (2018) mentions that the government recently agreed to endorse new non-public schools with annual fees ranging from AED20,000–30,000, and there is discussion of providing UAE residents with vouchers for their children to attend private schools of their choice. Also, ADEC no longer exists as a different Abu Dhabi government element yet has been subsumed as an office in the MoE presently alluded to as Abu Dhabi Education and Knowledge Department (ADEK), whose job will be directing both private and public K–12 schooling (Masudi, 2017).

3.4 Importance of Group Work in English Language Teaching in the UAE

As reported in chapter two and below, group and pair work are an established teaching and learning strategy in the English Language classroom. Given all that, the UAE English curriculum has paid special attention to group and pair

work in the English Language Classroom. Part of the development of English Language Teaching in the UAE curriculum is the use of pair and group work in the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom as a standard and favored teaching strategy. In the Ministry of Education curriculum implemented in public schools and a few private schools, most of the activities in the books are featured around group and pair work. This shows the importance of group/pair work and how much the UAE curriculum caters to it. However, only a few studies have investigated group work in cooperative classwork and other subjects more than in the ESL Classroom. Therefore, this study will explore how group/pair work affects motivating student learning in the ESL classroom and how collaborative learning and teaching can increase interaction between students and motivate learning. Group work is a teaching and learning strategy that enhances teamwork and collaboration which allows the students to assemble knowledge and perform their tasks collaboratively (Rance-Roney, 2010).

When students work in groups, this allows them to learn in an interactive and engaging environment. They can learn independently and cooperate with the other students to accomplish a common goal that might be unattainable individually (Sajedi, 2014). The social constructivist learning approach theoretically supports the implementation of pair and group work in the L2 classroom. The social constructivist learning view, founded by Vygotsky (1978), holds that human growth is fundamentally a socially located activity. Several studies have highlighted the various benefits of collaborative pair and group work in L2 learning from a pedagogical perspective. For instance, McDonough (2004, p. 208) argues that pair and small group activities give students more time to speak the English language than teacher-led activities, promote learner autonomy and self-directed learning, and allow instructors to work with individual students. Furthermore, while engaging with peers in pairs or groups, learners may feel less uncomfortable and more confident than

when participating in whole-class discussions. As a result, it has been determined that learners should be encouraged to participate in activities that generate collaboration in the L2 classroom, based on both theoretical and pedagogical grounds.

The role of group work has been highlighted in the academic research as a supporting mechanism in the process of learning since the start of 20th century (Gillies & Boyle, 2011). It has been proven to be amongst the best the practices of active learning (Burke, 2011) as there are significant benefits to the method both at the level of education and career.

Tolessa et al. (2017) writes that group work is excellent for promoting cooperation in the education process and translates to sharing knowledge, ideas, and opinions between the group members, whereby also fosters critical thinking, encouragement of individual accountability, and improvement in problem-solving abilities. It further enhances the skills of debating, engagement and mutual understanding (Henderson et al., 2015). In terms of career, the employers prefer those graduates who are able to perform within groups and teams effectively and hence this quality is valued (Branine, 2008).

Mosher (2013) also reinforced this idea that showing team player quality is a core skill for those students who embark on careers. Group work within classrooms helps equip the students with several life skills needed in a workplace, such as cooperation, conflict resolution, negotiation, time management, commitment, leadership, delegation, etc. (Morey et al., 2002).

In conclusion, there is a rich literature which highlights the multiple advantages of group work, however there is a lack of studies that examine the effectiveness of group work as a learning strategy for particular subjects such as English in the UAE context. Previous studies have not shed much light on how group work can motivate students and increase their English language

understanding. However, this study aims to bridge the gap in the literature through a shift in focus from the overall benefits of group work to the effectiveness of group work on motivation and interaction of students in the English Language classroom.

See Appendix A for group/pair activities from students' book.

3.5 Research Setting

The present study took place in a boys' public school located in Dubai that works under the curriculum of the Ministry of Education (MoE). The study was conducted on two classes of grade 12 students. As the classrooms in UAE Public schools are segregated, therefore the research was conducted on male students from Al Leesili Boys School.

3.6 Participants

The students from Al Leesili Boys Secondary School were selected as the students in this age happen to have a mature understanding and are able to understand and make sense of the knowledge given to them and interact with one another. This age group is also essential. After this level, the students will step into universities where they meet other students from different regions and nationalities. English serves as a common language for interaction between multilingual students.

Two classes of Grade 12 male students in the school were selected whereby one class had 10 students and the other had 5, making a total of 15 participants. The majority of students are of Emirati nationality, and only 47% of the students are of Syrian, Mauritanian and Egyptian nationalities. The study participants included both lower-mid and intermediate students.

An English Language grade 12 teacher also participated in an interview as part of this study. The teacher was female and of the age group 30-40. The

teacher is well experienced in teaching English as a Second Language and has enough knowledge and training in implementing group and pair work in her classroom. The teacher is a non-native speaker of English. She has lived long enough in the UAE and is aware of the education standards in the country and has experience teaching English in Bulgaria and the UAE.

3.7 Data Collection Tools and Procedures

Three tools were used to collect data for this study:

1. Student Questionnaire

The student questionnaire is designed to investigate students' interaction and how Collaborative Learning and group work promote student motivation in the English Language Classroom. Students must indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the statements provided in the student questionnaire. The questionnaire statements discuss collaborative tasks and group work in the English Language classroom and within the online learning environment (see Table 1).

Table 1: Student Questionnaire

| No. | Statement | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-----|--|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| 1 | Collaborative learning improves my attitude towards group work. | | | | | |
| 2 | My work is better organized when I am in a group. | | | | | |
| 3 | Group activities make the English Language learning experience easier. | | | | | |
| 4 | Collaborative learning helps me to socialize more using the English Language. | | | | | |
| 5 | Collaborative learning enhances good working relationships among students. | | | | | |
| 6 | Through collaborative learning, I learn to work with students who are different from me. | | | | | |
| 7 | I enjoy the material in the English class more when I work with other students. | | | | | |
| 8 | I prefer that my English teacher use more group tasks. | | | | | |
| 9 | I willingly participate in English Collaborative activities during online learning. | | | | | |
| 10 | Creativity is facilitated and encouraged during group work in the English online learning classes. | | | | | |

Table 1: Student Questionnaire (Continued)

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 11 | When I work with other students during English online learning classes, I achieve more than when I work alone. | | | | | |
| 12 | Collaborative discussion in English online learning classes enhances class participation. | | | | | |
| 13 | Collaborative group tasks are more effective in online classes. | | | | | |
| 14 | I interact better in the English online learning class as a group leader. | | | | | |
| 15 | I feel motivated to learn English during online learning when working collaboratively in groups. | | | | | |

2. Student Survey

The student survey is designed to investigate students' interaction and how Collaborative Learning and group work promote student motivation in the English Language Classroom. In the student survey, students are required to answer open-ended questions that discuss collaborative tasks and group work in the English Language classroom in general as well as within the online learning environment (see Table 2).

Table 2: Student Survey Questions

| Student Survey Questions | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Q1. | When working in collaborative learning groups or teams, do you usually find yourself in the leader position? |
| Q2. | How easy or difficult has it been for you to communicate your thoughts or opinions in English to the group? |
| Q3. | Do you enjoy working collaboratively with other students in the English class? |
| Q4. | How often do you do collaborative group tasks in English classes during online learning? |
| Q5. | Do you enjoy working collaboratively with other students in English online classes? |
| Q6. | What do you like most about working on group tasks during English online learning? |
| Q7. | What do you like least about working on group tasks during English online learning? |
| Q8. | What difficulties do you face when working in English group tasks during online learning? |
| Q9. | Do you feel more motivated to learn English when working collaboratively in groups during online learning? |
| Q10. | In general, would you say group work has been effective in learning the English language during online learning? |

3. Teacher Interview

The teacher interview questions have been designed to target the teaching of collaborative tasks and group work in the English Language classroom in general and within the online learning environment. The interview, recorded,

was conducted with the teacher virtually through a zoom meeting (see Table 3 below).

Table 3: Teacher Interview Questions

| Teacher Interview Questions | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Q1. | How often do you use collaborative learning as an English teacher in your lessons? |
| Q2. | Do you feel pressured by the administration to implement collaborative learning in the L2 classroom? Elaborate. |
| Q3. | Do you think your students have the skills necessary for effective collaborative group work? |
| Q4. | Did you take any training that prepared you to implement collaborative learning in the English online lessons successfully? |
| Q5. | Does collaborative learning in the English class create any disciplinary problems among students in groups during online learning? |
| Q6. | What difficulties do you face as an English teacher when implementing collaborative group work in online teaching? |
| Q7. | In what way would a sense of competition between groups in online learning be beneficial for students? |
| Q8. | How does student-to-student interaction during online learning help students obtain a deeper understanding of the English language material? |
| Q9. | How does students' understanding in the online learning environment increase when working in groups collaboratively? |
| Q10. | How does a collaborative online teaching environment create a better learning opportunity? |

3.7.1 Data Collection Procedure

Students' data were collected remotely due to the Covid-19 pandemic using an online survey questionnaire using Microsoft Forms. Both questionnaire and survey were handed over to the grade 12 English teachers to administer to students during an online lesson on Microsoft Teams. Prior permissions from the school administration and the teacher have been secured already. At

the time, clear oral and written instructions were given to students before answering the questionnaire and survey (see Appendix B). Data were collected three weeks before the end of term three of academic year 2020/2021 (Term three runs for eleven weeks). Data was collected on week 8 before final exams were administered.

The data collected from the teachers were done through an interview conducted through a zoom meeting and recorded.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter generally reflected on the development of education in the UAE and discussed the development of English Language Teaching in the UAE, including the English curriculum in public and private schools. The chapter explains the different stages and changes the English curriculum went through in the UAE to get to the standards achieved today and how the UAE has set high standards and prioritized the education system to ensure the best for both its Emirati and non-Emirati students. In addition, the chapter shed light on the importance of group and pair work implementation in the English Language Classroom in the UAE and how it has been embedded into the English curriculum. Moreover, the chapter described the research setting and participants, including students and teachers. Next, data collection procedure was presented in detail in terms of explaining the three different research tools used in the study; student questionnaire, survey and teacher interview. Finally, the chapter provided a thorough explanation of the procedure of research data collection.

The following chapter will present the research results and findings regarding the student questionnaire, survey and teacher interview which were conducted for the study.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will present the findings of the study obtained from the student questionnaire and survey results as well as the results from the teacher interview. First, I will present the student questionnaire results along with the figures to further explain the results. I will then present the student survey questions along with the results of students. In addition, I will pinpoint one or two student responses that stand out in each question. Moreover, I will report the teacher interview results; the questions along with the teacher responses. Finally, I will summarize the main findings in light of the student questionnaire and survey and the teacher interview findings.

4.2 Students' Questionnaire Results

The students' questionnaire is designed to investigate students' interaction and how Collaborative Learning and group work promotes student motivation in the English Language Classroom. The questionnaire statements from 1 to 8 discuss collaborative tasks and group work in the English Language classroom in general and statements from 9 to 15 discuss collaborative tasks and group work in the English Language classroom within the online learning environment. In the students' questionnaire, most of the results show that students either agree or strongly agree to working in groups and that collaborative learning motivates them to learn in the English Classroom. Some students answered that they prefer group activities in the actual classroom over the online learning group activities.

Table 4: Results of Student Questionnaire

| Q No. | Statement | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-------|--|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| 1 | Collaborative learning improves my attitude towards group work. | 1 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 8 |
| 2 | My work is better organized when I am in a group. | 0 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| 3 | Group activities make the English Language learning experience easier. | 0 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 8 |
| 4 | Collaborative learning helps me to socialize more using the English Language. | 1 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 5 |
| 5 | Collaborative learning enhances good working relationships among students. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 4 |
| 6 | Through collaborative learning, I learn to work with students who are different from me. | 0 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 4 |

Table 4: Results of Student Questionnaire (Continued)

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | I enjoy the material in the English class more when I work with other students. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 4 |
| 8 | I prefer that my English teacher uses more group tasks. | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 4 |
| 9 | I willingly participate in English Collaborative activities during online learning. | 0 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 3 |
| 10 | Creativity is facilitated and encouraged during group work in the English online learning classes. | 0 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| 11 | When I work with other students during English online learning classes, I achieve more than when I work alone. | 0 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| 12 | Collaborative discussions in English online learning classes enhances class participation. | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 7 |

Table 4: Results of Student Questionnaire (Continued)

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | Collaborative group tasks are more effective in online classes. | 1 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| 14 | I interact better in the English online learning class as a group leader. | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 6 |
| 15 | I feel motivated to learn English when working collaboratively in groups during online learning. | 1 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 5 |

Results of question 1 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 1.

Collaborative learning can improve my attitude towards group work.



Figure 1: Q1 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 1, most students either agree or strongly agree that collaborative learning improves their attitude towards group work.

Results of question 2 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 2.

My work is better organized when I am in a group.

[More Details](#)

 Insights






| | |
|---|---|
|  Strongly disagree | 0 |
|  Disagree | 2 |
|  Neutral | 3 |
|  Agree | 5 |
|  Strongly agree | 4 |



Figure 2: Q2 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 4.2, most students either agree or strongly agree that their work is better organized when working in a group. Only three students believe that working individually helps them keep their work organized.

Results of question 3 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 3.

Group activities make the English Language learning experience easier.

[More Details](#)






| | |
|---|---|
|  Strongly disagree | 0 |
|  Disagree | 1 |
|  Neutral | 0 |
|  Agree | 5 |
|  Strongly agree | 8 |



Figure 3: Q3 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 3, the majority of students either agree or strongly agree that group activities make their learning in the English classroom easier. When in a group, students interact with a smaller group of students instead of the whole class. This allows the students to see and assist with the struggle

faced by other students in the use of language, hence their learning experience can improve.

Results of question 4 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 4.



Figure 4: Q4 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 4, the majority of students either agree or strongly agree that collaborative learning helps them to use the English language when socializing. As a result of the student to student interaction, students gain more confidence. Higher confidence in speaking a language allows students to use more of that language in their interaction with others outside of the classroom as well.

Results of question 5 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 5.

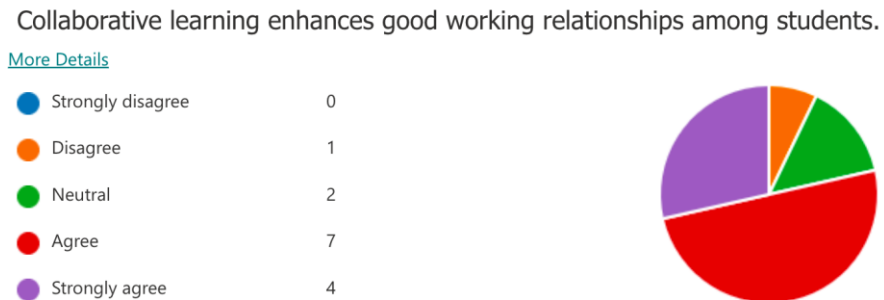


Figure 5: Q5 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 5, most of the students either agree or strongly agree that collaborative learning enhances good working relationships among students. When students are assigned with a group task and there is a common shared goal, this provides students with the opportunity and setting to work collaboratively with one another.

Results of question 6 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 6.

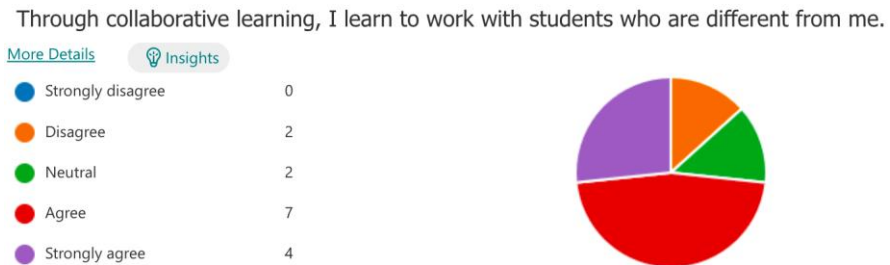


Figure 6: Q6 Student Questionnaire

As shown from Figure 6, most students either agree or strongly agree that they learn to work with students who are different from them through collaborative learning. One of the key points of collaborative learning is to group students that are different from each other in their performance levels and other aspects. When students are grouped together, they are more likely to learn about each other's strengths and weaknesses. It is a way for students to learn that other students who are different from them also happen to have strengths that may be different from their own.

Results of question 7 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 7.

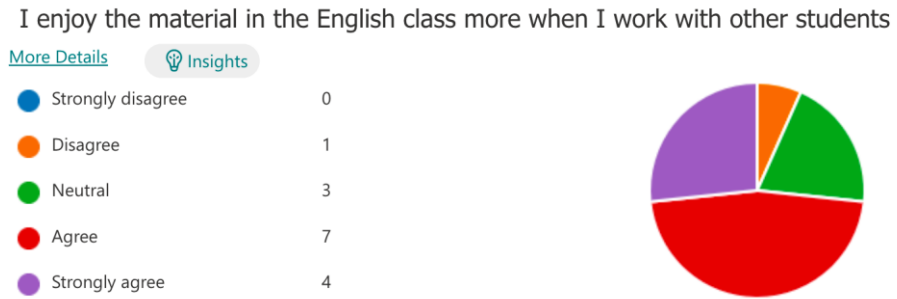


Figure 7: Q7 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 7, most of the students either agree or strongly agree that they enjoy learning in the English class when they work with other students collaboratively.

Results of question 8 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 8.

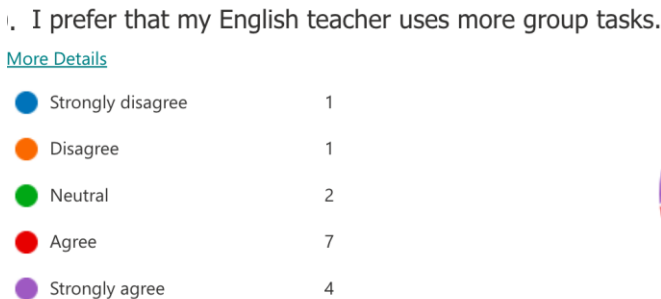


Figure 8: Q8 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 8, most of the students either agree or strongly agree that they prefer group tasks over individual learning.

Results of question 9 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 9.

. I willingly participate in English Collaborative activities during online learning.

[More Details](#)

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Strongly disagree | 0 |
| Disagree | 1 |
| Neutral | 4 |
| Agree | 6 |
| Strongly agree | 3 |



Figure 9: Q9 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 9, most of the students agree that they willingly participate in English Collaborative activities during online learning. When activities are assigned to be done with more collaboration, the students may feel more confident.

Results of question 10 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 10.

. Creativity is facilitated and encouraged during group work in the English online classes.

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Strongly disagree | 0 |
| Disagree | 0 |
| Neutral | 3 |
| Agree | 6 |
| Strongly agree | 5 |



Figure 10: Q10 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 10, most of the students either agree or strongly agree that creativity is facilitated and encouraged during group work in the English online classes. When students are interacting with each other in

groups, it is more likely that they are encouraged to share their creative ideas with one another.

Results of question 11 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 11.

. When I work with other students during English online learning classes, I achieve more than when I work alone.

[More Details](#) [Insights](#)

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| ● Strongly disagree | 0 |
| ● Disagree | 1 |
| ● Neutral | 4 |
| ● Agree | 4 |
| ● Strongly agree | 5 |



Figure 11: Q11 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 11, most of the students either agree or strongly agree that working with other students during the English online lessons helps them achieve more than when working individually. Four students only mentioned that they like working individually to get more work done.

Results of question 12 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 12.

. Collaborative discussions in English online learning classes enhances class participation.

[More Details](#)

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| ● Strongly disagree | 0 |
| ● Disagree | 1 |
| ● Neutral | 1 |
| ● Agree | 6 |
| ● Strongly agree | 7 |



Figure 12: Q12 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 12, the majority of students either agree or strongly agree that collaborative discussions in the English online classes enhances their participation. Although it is difficult to engage students in

online classes as compared to face to face learning, students are involved in collaborative discussions when they work together online, and this enhances their participation.

Results of question 13 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 13.

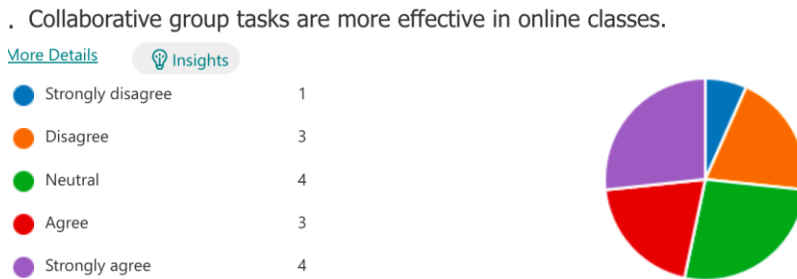


Figure 13: Q13 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 13, the results to question 13 are somewhat divided. 46% of the students agree that collaborative group tasks are more effective in an online class, whereas 27% disagree and 27% respond in neutral. The neutral opinion or disagreement could be due to a number of reasons such as inability to use computers efficiently, poor internet connection, etc. Online classes provide a more interactive medium for students to interact with each other, i.e., the computer and internet. In contrast, students may not have access to computers and the internet in the face-to-face classroom. Computer and internet allow students to be more innovative and also share ideas with more references and faster than physical class.

Results of question 14 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 14.

. I interact better in the English online learning class as a group leader.

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Strongly disagree | 1 |
| Disagree | 1 |
| Neutral | 2 |
| Agree | 5 |
| Strongly agree | 6 |



Figure 14: Q14 Student Questionnaire

As shown from Figure 14, most students agree or strongly agree that they interact better in the English online lessons if assigned as the group leader. It could be because online classes take on mediums like Microsoft Teams or Zoom and applications. These allow easy management of work, division of tasks, and sharing of files and other resources, allowing one to enjoy more control over the group work and become a better leader.

Results of question 15 from the student questionnaire are displayed below in Figure 15.

. I feel motivated to learn English during online learning when working collaboratively in groups.

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Strongly disagree | 1 |
| Disagree | 0 |
| Neutral | 3 |
| Agree | 6 |
| Strongly agree | 5 |



Figure 15: Q15 Student Questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 15, the majority of students either agree or strongly agree that they feel motivated to learn English online when working collaboratively in groups.

4.3 Students' Survey Results

The student survey is designed to investigate students' interaction and how collaborative learning and group work promote student motivation in the English language classroom. Survey questions from 1 to 3 discuss collaborative tasks and group work in the English Language classroom in general and questions from 4 to 10 target the online learning environment. Displayed below are each survey question with the students' results.

Question 1 from the student survey asks whether the students usually find themselves in the position of a leader when working in collaborative learning groups.

In response to question one, 70% of the students have answered that they would usually find themselves in the position of a leader when working in collaborative learning groups, while only 30% of the students answered they would prefer to have another student be the leader of the group. For example, Abdulla responded "Yes, my self-esteem, my abilities, and my limitless ambitions qualify me to lead a group activity, while Omar mentions no, I prefer to have a leader guide me through a group activity".

Question 2 from the student survey inquires, how easy or difficult is it for students to communicate their thoughts or opinions in English to the group?

In response to this question, 70% of the students have answered that they find it easy to communicate their thoughts and opinions in English to their group. For example, Ahmed explained, "Exchanging ideas with my teammates is easy and meaningful to the subject matter, and therefore helps me with the group task". On the other hand, 30% of the students said they face difficulties

when communicating such as language barriers, weak vocabulary and sometimes learning online can be challenging to those students when they do not interact face to face with their group members. For instance, Majid mentioned that it is difficult to share ideas with the group because sometimes I feel like I don't know how to explain certain things to them.

Question 3 from the student survey asks if students enjoy working collaboratively with one another in the English Class.

In response to question three, all students answered that they enjoy working collaboratively with other students in the English class. Students find group tasks and learning collaboratively motivating which encourages them to participate in the English class. For instance, Mohamed mentioned, "Working collaboratively gives me the incentive to compete and challenge myself".

Question 4 from the student survey asks how often students do collaborative group tasks in English classes during online learning.

The majority of students' responses to question four show they agree that they often do collaborative group tasks in the English classes during online learning. Abdulla answered, "We do collaborative group tasks often, as my teacher knows that group work motivates us to learn. Moreover, Salem said, we do collaborative group tasks 3 to 4 times a week".

Question 5 from the student survey asks if students enjoy working collaboratively with one another in online English classes.

In response to question 5, 73% of the students answered they enjoy working collaboratively with other students in the English online classes. For example, Majid said, "Yes, because I acquire certain English Language skills such as listening skills when working collaboratively online with other students". The other 27% of the students said they enjoy working collaboratively in the actual classroom more than they do online. On the other hand, Ahmed said,

“Not always, because sometimes technical problems may occur such as not being able to hear the other students during an online group discussion”.

Student survey question 6 asks what do you like most about working on group tasks during online English learning?

In response to question 6, Hamdan answered, “I enjoy discussing and sharing ideas with other students in the group, while Abdulla said, I get to share and exchange different points of view with other students in my group”.

Student survey question 7 asks students what they like least about working on group tasks during online English learning.

In response to question 7, Rashid said, “What I like least about working on group tasks during English online learning is the communication interruption that might occur due to internet problems”. Moreover, Ahmed answered, “I don’t like when students end up speaking and discussing at the same time which can cause confusion in the group discussions during English online learning”.

Student survey question 8 enquired about students’ difficulties working in English group tasks during online learning.

In response to question 8, most of the students answered that the most common difficulties they face when working in English group tasks during online learning are technical and internet problems. For instance, Mohamed answered that a difficulty he faces is when other students in the group refuse to work or participate in the group activity.

Student survey question 9 inquires if students feel more motivated to learn English during online learning when working collaboratively in groups.

70% of the student responses for question 9 were that they do feel motivated when learning English in groups online, while the other 30% of students said

they prefer collaborative learning in the actual classroom (face to face). For instance, Salem's response was "Yes, because it gives me the motivation to learn more and to practice the English language when speaking to my group mates". However, Obaid mentioned, "I prefer face to face group work and collaborative learning because seeing my group mates helps me interact with them more efficiently".

Student Survey question 10 asks students generally if group work has been effective for them in learning the English language during online learning.

The majority of students responded that group work has been effective for them in learning the English language during online learning. Ahmed said, "Group work has played a positive role and added so much to my learning experience". Similarly, Omar mentioned that it has motivated him to work more and participate in the English online classes.

4.4 Teacher Interview Results

The teacher interview is designed to investigate students' interaction and how Collaborative Learning and group work promote student motivation in the English Language Classroom. The following interview questions from 1 to 3 discuss teaching collaborative tasks and group work in the English Language classroom in general and questions from 4 to 10 are within the online learning environment. Below are the teacher interview questions presented along with the teacher's answers from the recorded interview.

Question 1 inquires how often the English teacher uses collaborative learning in her lessons.

Miss Silviya, the classroom teacher, responded to question 1, saying she uses collaborative learning every day during her English lessons with her classes. When she plans her lesson, Miss Silviya says, "I include at least one group

activity in my lesson to make sure students learn to work together collaboratively”.

Question 2 asks if the teacher feels pressured by the administration to implement collaborative learning in her classroom.

The teacher responded by saying that based on her implementation of collaborative learning in her classes, she saw how important group tasks are for students and how it motivated them to learn more. The pressure from administration was never the motive to implement collaborative learning in her classes. Miss Silviya says, “The administration does support us through organizing workshops that reinforce the skills of teaching using group work and collaborative learning in the classroom, but never have they pressured teachers to implement it”. A teacher chooses when and how to implement collaborative learning in her lesson with her students.

Question 3 asks the teacher if she thinks her students have the skills necessary for effective collaborative group work.

The teacher states that students have clearly improved since they have been working on collaborative group tasks in the English class. Students have developed a sense of confidence towards learning collaboratively. In addition, the teacher mentions that for some students, it takes a little more time to develop the skills necessary for effective collaborative group work. As miss Silviya states in the interview, some students don’t know how to work alongside other students and prefer working individually. These students would need to practice more on working collaboratively on group activities to be able to work effectively on collaborative group tasks.

Question 4 asks if the English teacher has followed any training that prepared her to successfully implement collaborative learning in the English online lessons.

The teacher responded, “Yes, I have undergone some training, but I believe one must self-develop through studying and research to implement collaborative learning successfully”.

Question 5 inquires if collaborative learning in the English class creates disciplinary problems among students in groups during online learning.

The teacher responded to question 5 saying, “I believe that when students learn in groups during online classes students are more focused and dedicated. She also mentioned, some students tend to speak in Arabic when discussing in their groups, but once I attend to them, they go back to speaking English and complete their work”. The teacher pointed out that this was efficient through breakout rooms on Microsoft Teams; having students put into groups in different breakout rooms.

Question 6 asks about the difficulties the teacher faces when implementing collaborative group work in online teaching.

The teacher says, “One of the major issues I face when implementing collaborative group work in online teaching is implementing it during the first couple of periods. Students tend to be uncooperative and lazy early in the morning”.

Question 7 asks in what way would a sense of competition between groups in online learning be beneficial for students?

The teacher states that competition is healthy for students. The teacher says, “It helps prepare them for real life and their careers later”. In her response, the teacher mentions, “Some students tend to enjoy the sense of competition and feel motivated to learn online. This helps them get involved in the activity”.

Teacher interview question 8 asks if student-to-student interaction during online learning help students obtain a deeper understanding of the English language material.

The teacher believes that student to student interaction during online learning does help students to obtain a deeper understanding of the English Language material. “Having a combination of challenge, support and guidance coming from their peers helps with understanding the material during the lesson”, says Miss Sylvia.

Question 9 asks if students’ understanding in the online learning environment increases when working in groups collaboratively.

The teacher answered that it increases the students’ understanding when working in groups in some cases, but other times it does not. It depends on a few other factors such as the content of the lesson, the task given and the time of the lesson as well. The teacher also adds that when students are assigned with the role of a leader in the group, they tend to be more motivated and focused which will in return help increase students’ understanding. When a student is appointed as the group leader, they will guide other students throughout a collaborative task and through the group discussions, students understanding is increased. Another example miss Silviya mentions is the study buddy technique she uses with low achievers. When the team leader is explaining the given task to help guide the low achiever, this helps with understanding, which will therefore motivate the low achiever to work on the task.

The final interview question, question 10, inquired whether a collaborative online teaching environment creates a better learning opportunity.

Miss Silviya answered, “All technology tools nowadays that are used for online teaching and learning are in the English Language. This itself exposes

students to the language. With this being said, implementing collaborative teaching will indeed help create a better opportunity for learning the English Language online”. The teacher adds, “It has also helped build confidence with a few of my students who in the real classroom would not usually participate in collaborative tasks, but they do participate in the online collaborative tasks”.

4.5 Summary of Main Findings

The student questionnaire findings have revealed that group work is an important aspect of teaching especially in the English language classes where English is an L2. Group work is equally essential for physical and online classes, and the students and the teacher acknowledge the importance. In the student questionnaire, the findings have shown that collaborative learning allows students belonging to different performance levels to work together for a common goal and improve their performance level. Collaborative online group activities positively impact English language learning and the use of English language in group discussions and regular conversations. Students learn to socialize, interact with other students and work with students who are different from them and develop healthy working relationships with others through collaborative group learning.

The student survey revealed that collaborative learning is a significant factor in enhancing student understanding of the English language. The findings show that students are more motivated to learn English when working collaboratively in groups. Moreover, having group discussions where students get to share and exchange their ideas helps build their confidence and improve their speaking skills. The results show that students enjoy participating in online collaborative learning activities as this helps them better understand the English language material. Online collaborative

learning has helped students engage more with their classmates, especially those who are usually shy to participate individually.

The teacher interview gathered insights from a teacher's opinion about collaborative learning and group work in English learning classrooms both online and in the real classroom. The teacher's interview also validates the majority opinions presented by the student participants in response to their questionnaire and survey. The teacher believes that group work improves class participation of those students who are otherwise non-participative in the class. The online classes also enhance class participation as the students feel more confident behind the screen. Based on the teacher's responses in the interview, group work also encourages healthy competition as the competition is not between the individuals but the groups to prove themselves better. In an effort to prove themselves, students within the same group interact more collaboratively. Moreover, the teacher emphasized that group work promotes collaborative interactions by encouraging students to work towards the same goal and learning from the feedback they receive from their group mates during group discussions and interaction. Finally, the teacher strongly believes that the majority of students in her class feel motivated to learn English when working collaboratively and interacting with one another in group tasks during online classes.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The study's results and findings will be discussed in this chapter. The chapter will first discuss the findings in relation to the four research questions. Next, the findings of the study will be discussed in terms of their support to previous studies. After that, the chapter will consider the significance of the findings. Moreover, the implications of the present study's findings on how group work and collaborative learning enhance student-to-student interaction and motivation will be highlighted. The chapter will next go over the study's limitations. Finally, the chapter will offer some practical suggestions for implementing group work and collaborative learning tasks into the L2 classroom.

5.2 Discussion

According to the results from the student questionnaire, survey and teacher interview, all four research questions were mostly answered positively in light of how group work and collaborative learning promote student to student interaction and motivate them to learn in the English classroom.

The first research question asked: How does Group Work promote collaborative interaction in the L2 classroom?

The student questionnaire and survey and the teacher interview show that students prefer working in groups, making them more confident when participating in class discussions. The results of the student survey and the teacher interview clearly show that group work promotes and enhances collaborative learning and interaction through a healthy sense of competition. Students like a challenge, primarily when they work with group members towards the same goal of completing a given task in the English class. Moreover, the teacher emphasized in the interview that group work promotes

collaborative interactions by encouraging students to work towards the same goal and learning from the feedback they receive from their group mates during group discussions and interactions. Collaborative online group activities positively impact English language learning and the use of English language in group discussions and regular conversations. Students learn to socialize, interact with other students and work with students who are different from them and develop healthy working relationships with others through collaborative group learning.

According to the findings, students are more motivated to learn English when working in groups. Furthermore, holding group discussions where students share and exchange ideas helps build confidence and enhance speaking abilities. Students appreciate participating in online collaborative learning activities because they help them better comprehend the English language subject. The majority of students agreed that they enjoy working collaboratively with other students in the English class. Students find group tasks and learning collaboratively motivating, encouraging them to participate in the English class. As student Hamdan mentioned, he enjoys discussing and sharing ideas with other students in the group, while Abdulla said he and other students get to share and exchange different points of view. Some individuals struggle with organization of their work, despite their ability to perform exceptionally. They have more focus on their performance. However, since the work is divided between the group members in a group, it is more likely that the work is better organized.

The second research question asked: Does Group Work motivate students to interact in the L2 classroom?

Based on the results, most students agreed that group work motivates them to interact in the English classroom virtually. However, some students (30%) mentioned they preferred working in groups and were more motivated to

interact with other students in the physical classroom. For instance, Salem's response was "Yes, because it motivates me to learn more and practice the English language when speaking to my group mates". However, Obaid mentioned that he prefers face to face group work and collaborative learning because seeing his group mates helps him interact with them more efficiently. Collaborative learning allows the students to understand the benefits of working with others in collaboration and therefore holds a more positive attitude towards working in a group with other students. Oftentimes, it is not the individual's own capability but his/her attitude towards working with others in the group that may negatively affect their performance. However, if they happen to develop a positive attitude, their performance can improve.

The findings show that students are more motivated to learn English when working collaboratively in groups. Online collaborative learning has helped students engage more with their classmates, especially those who are usually shy to participate individually. According to the teacher interview findings, group work promotes class participation for students who are typically non-participative. Students feel more confident behind the screen in online classrooms, which increases class engagement. According to the teacher's responses in the interview, group work also creates healthy competition because competitiveness is not between individuals but between groups to show competence. Students in the same group engage more collaboratively with each other in order to prove themselves. In one of the student survey questions, a student, Majid said, "Yes, I feel motivated to learn in a group, because I acquire certain English Language skills such as listening skills when working collaboratively online with other students".

The third research question asked: What are the students' attitude and perception towards implementing collaborative interaction in the English classroom?

The results show that students enjoy participating in online collaborative learning activities as this helps them better understand the English language material. Online collaborative learning helps students engage more with their classmates, especially those who are usually shy to participate individually. According to the results, students find group work and collaborative interaction more efficient than working individually. When in a group, students interact with a smaller group of students instead of the whole class. Working closely with a small group allows the students to witness the difficulties other students face in the use of language. Hence their learning experience can improve. A majority of participants, i.e., 90% agreed (30% agree and 60% strongly agree) that group activities make their experience of learning English language easier. In question 6 in the student survey, student Hamdan answered, “I enjoy discussing and sharing ideas with other students in my group”, while Abdulla said he and other students get to share and exchange different points of view.

Moreover, the results show that collaborative learning helps students to socialize more using the English language. This can be due to the increase in the interaction between students and not just the student and the teacher. Students feel they will be judged and corrected more when interacting with the teacher. However, when interacting within the group, they gain more confidence. Higher confidence in speaking a language allows students to use more of that language in their interaction with others outside of the classroom as well. Finally, the teacher interview results show that the majority of students feel motivated to learn English when working collaboratively and interacting with one another in group tasks during online classes.

The fourth and last research question asked about the teacher’s attitude and perception towards implementing collaborative interaction in the English classroom.

This question was answered positively based on the findings from the teacher interview. The questions included in the interview revolved around frequency of use of collaborative learning, use of group work in online classes, benefits of student to student interaction, opportunities created by collaborative group work and motivation of students through collaborative learning. The findings from the teacher interview show that even though group work has been a part of everyday activities in the physical classroom, it is clear that collaborative learning is important and an essential tool for the learning of the English language especially after conducting online classes due to the Covid-19 pandemic because of the number of benefits that collaborative group work yields in online learning of the English language. The results from the interview also show that student to student interaction allows students to challenge and support each other at the same time. When support comes from peers instead of their teacher, students do not feel intimidated when they are corrected within the confinements of the group as opposed to being corrected by the teacher in front of the whole class. The similar results can also be seen depicted in the responses by the students in the student survey as they agree that they enjoy the learning material more through collaborative learning and group work. To add, the teacher interview findings mention that collaborative learning online has improved the participation of students compared to physical classes. It helps the shy students, who might be afraid of being judged, for instance, for pronunciation mistakes. They are encouraged and motivated to participate more in the English classroom when working collaboratively online.

The results of this study provide further support for the previous studies regarding collaborative interaction and group work to promote learning in the L2 classroom. The results support previous studies in terms of collaborative learning and group work enhancing student to student interaction and motivating learners to learn the English Language (e.g., Ahlquist 2019; Al-

Tamimi & Attamimi 2014; Hernández, 2010; Poupore, 2018). In addition, this study supports previous studies in the light of students working collaboratively in groups which results in better activity outcomes and higher success in achieving the objectives of the lesson or activity in the English classroom (e.g., Alharbi 2008; Fernández 2012; Xu & Kou 2018).

Moreover, an important aspect highlighted by the teacher in the findings of this study with regards to the performance of students in language classes, in both online and physical classrooms, is their motivation. Students' motivation is an important factor behind their level of participation or willingness to take a leadership role within the group. When students work in groups, this can positively impact their confidence level, which helps to improve their motivation to participate. In cases where students are hesitant to participate, they are encouraged by their peers in the group, and that support can be meaningful. A similar argument was also advanced by Ahmadpanah et al. (2014) as they mention cooperative learning approaches boost both social skills and knowledge acquisition. There is a correlation between the student's motivation for learning and their achievement.

Asner-Self and Feyissa (2002) mention that another creative way to help students whose native language was not English was to use poetry in groups, which provided students an environment to talk about delicate issues and practice their English as well. A similar issue was pointed out by the teacher in the findings of the interview in the current study that when the students are working on a group task during an online lesson in breakout rooms and the teacher is not present in a particular breakout room, that lack of sense of competition in some groups often leads to disciplinary problems such as students resorting to use of Arabic language when communicating within the group. So, implementing poetry in group activities could be a way to resolve the use of the Arabic language by some students within the groups.

The first significant finding of the current study 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 student to student interaction and enhancing student motivation in the ESL classroom, both online and in the physical classroom. Yes, there are different studies done about group work and collaboration, but none focused specifically on the implementation of group work in online learning and how students were more motivated to interact and participate in group work in online classes than they would usually in the physical classroom (see chapter 2). Another significant finding from both students and the teacher's perspective is that when students work collaboratively in groups, they get more motivated to interact and engage more than they would when working individually. This was also noticed in the work students did in groups as they showed more understanding and success to achieve the group task objective and the lesson outcomes as a whole. Students were eager to learn more and engage in class discussions when they were involved in group tasks and collaborative learning. Finally, when group work and collaborative tasks are planned well and accordingly to the student level when embedded into the English language learning and lessons on a daily basis, this will increase student to student interaction, motivate student learning, and increase students' knowledge acquisition.

5.3 Implications of the Study

Based on the study's findings, a variety of pedagogical implications may be drawn. This section will discuss three key pedagogical implications based on the findings of this study that can be used in classrooms.

The first implication is that group work is an important aspect of teaching especially in the English language classes where English is an L2. Group work is equally necessary for the students and teachers to acknowledge

physical and online classes and their importance. English language teachers can apply for group work and collaborative learning tasks in their classrooms to enhance the participation of students and promote student to student interaction. As teachers apply group work and collaborative learning in the English Language classroom, students belonging to different performance levels will be able to work together for a common goal and hence improve their level of performance.

Students learn to socialize, interact with other students and work with students who are different from them and develop healthy working relationships with others through collaborative group learning. A teacher can implement group work and collaborative learning in any English skill activity to help build students' confidence and allow them to interact with one another. Implementation of collaborative learning especially in online learning can motivate those shy, quiet students who usually do not participate in group tasks that can be applied through breakout rooms in Microsoft Teams during an online class. Students can have group discussions and exchange their ideas on a task. For example, a teacher can set a vocabulary activity where each group needs to use three different words from the lesson vocabulary to write three sentences. Groups of three can discuss and share the meaning of the vocabulary words, then each can come up with a sentence and share their opinions on the sentences. Collaborative learning allows students belonging to different performance levels to work together for a common goal and hence improve their level of performance. Group work promotes collaborative interactions by encouraging students to work towards the same goal and learning from the feedback they receive from their group mates during group discussions and interaction. The study shows that group work improves class participation of those students who are otherwise non-participative in the class. Online collaborative learning helps students engage more with their classmates, especially those who are usually shy to participate individually.

Secondly, teachers can also benefit from the implementation of group work and collaborative interaction by improving the speaking skills of students through group discussions and conversations when working on a collaborative activity. Having group discussions where students get to share and exchange their ideas helps build their confidence and improve their speaking skills. Through collaborative group learning, students learn to interact, engage with other students, work with other students who are different from them, and build strong working relationships with others. Teachers can use group work and implement collaborative activities in the English Language class to enhance students' English-Speaking skills. Having group discussions where students get to share and exchange their ideas helps build their confidence and improve their speaking skills. Collaborative online group activities impact the learning of English language and the use of English language in group discussions and regular conversations in a positive manner. Teachers can apply speaking activities in groups and turn it to a collaborative activity. This way, even the quiet or non-participative students will be motivated to speak up and get involved in the activity.

The third implication is that when teachers apply collaborative learning, this will contribute to enhancing student understanding of the English language and students are more motivated to learn English when working collaboratively in groups. This study has shown that students enjoy participating in online collaborative learning activities as this helps them better understand the English language material. Integrating collaborative activities in the English lessons would make lessons more fun and interactive. Teachers can apply collaborative learning and group tasks to encourage healthy competition as the competition is not between the individuals but the groups to prove themselves better. In an effort to prove themselves, students within the same group interact more collaboratively. This results in students'

motivation to learn English when working collaboratively in groups. Finally, implementing group work in English lessons promotes collaborative interactions by encouraging students to work towards the same goal and learning from the feedback they receive from their group mates during group discussions and interaction.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The following section will discuss some of the limitations of the present study that can be taken into consideration and avoided for future research.

One of the present study's limitations is that students are familiar with collaborative learning in the physical classroom, but the sudden shift to online instruction due to the Covid-19 Pandemic created challenges to students. For instance, students faced technical issues sometimes and do not know how to configure some of the features in the software applications to learn online. However, with some of the challenges students still managed to work smoothly in assigned online group tasks. However, as they went through the process, students enjoyed collaborative learning online more and felt more motivated to learn during English lessons.

Another limitation was due to the limited time and resources, the study was conducted on a small population (15 students and one teacher) in one school setting. A study in the future can include different schools (private schools) teaching different curriculums like the American Common Core Curriculum or the British Curriculum, so that the impact of group work can not only be noticed on students with different performance levels but also with different teaching materials and curriculums. Moreover, future studies could be done on both private and public schools to cover a range of learning abilities and different nationality backgrounds. Students of private schools tend to be from different nationalities which might give another outlook on the findings of the study.

Finally, the participants in this study consisted of only male students. However, future studies should also include female students. The female students are usually more reserved in the class, especially when it comes to class participation. The teacher also mentioned in the interview responses that online classes allow even the shyest students to participate more in the group activities as well as in overall class sessions.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and taking into consideration the limitations mentioned above, the following recommendations are made for future research:

- A recommendation for future study is to collect data from different schools teaching different curriculums so that the impact of group work can not only be noticed on students with different performance levels but also with different teaching materials.
- Results from the teacher interview show that even though teachers have been provided with training to conduct online classes and to use group work in online classes, a lot of training is rather mechanical. Using group work in classes require significant research and efforts for self-development on behalf of the teachers. The schools and the Ministry of Education should try to take feedback from the teachers regarding the areas they require training and help them develop their self-development plans. The schools and Ministry of Education should allow teachers to share their self-development plans. The School and Ministry of Education should support the plans as these plans will benefit the students and the school's overall performance in the long run.
- Based on the teacher's interview findings, the learning for the English language is enhanced in online classes because the gadgets and mediums

used for online classes such as the smart phones, iPad or laptops are set to default in English language. The applications used for online classes such as Zoom, Skype, etc. are also set to default in English. Therefore, the increased interaction of students with the gadgets and mediums also improves their English learning. Consequently, it is recommended that the school admin and the teachers ensure that digital mediums are used within the ranks even when classes are conducted physically in the future after the Covid-19 lockdown is removed. The group activities are conducted on computers or laptops.

- Some students already have the communication skills necessary to actively participate in the group activities whereas other students lack these skills. Based on the teacher interview findings, it is recommended that students be given training/workshops on group participation in class and elsewhere, such as being assertive, sharing one's opinion respectfully, and correcting someone in the group without being disrespectful.

5.6 Conclusion

The current study aimed to find the role of group work and collaborative learning activities in promoting students' interaction and motivation with secondary UAE EFL learners in a public school. The results from the student questionnaire survey and teacher interview responses conclude the following:

- Group work is important for L2 English classes in both physical and online classes.
- The importance of Group is acknowledged by teachers and students equally.
- Students believe that group work makes their English learning and the use of English language easier.

- Students believe that group work allows them to manage their work better, participate more in the class and learn to work in cooperation with students who are different from them.
- Student to student interaction is effective in learning and use of language with confidence.
- A majority of students also believe that they feel motivated to learn English when working collaboratively in online classes.
- Group work promotes collaborative interactions by encouraging students to work on the same goal and learning from the feedback which they receive from their peers instead of the teacher.
- The teacher also believes that group work improves class participation of even those students who are otherwise non-participative in the class. The online classes also enhance class participation as the students feel more confident behind the screen.
- According to the teacher, group work also encourages healthy competition as the competition is not between the individuals but the groups to prove themselves better. In an effort to prove themselves better than the other group, the students within the same group interact more collaboratively.
- A significant finding from both students and the teacher's perspective was that when students work collaboratively in groups, they get more motivated to interact and engage more than they would when working individually. This was also noticed in the work students did in groups as they showed more understanding and success to achieve the group task objective and the lesson outcomes as a whole.

- This chapter of the study concluded with a number of recommendations based on the findings of the study and implications for future research that the present study is quite significant as explained above along with the few pedagogical implications that highlight the importance of group work and collaborative learning in terms of promoting student to student interaction and enhancing student motivation in the ESL classroom; both online and in the physical classroom. Those implications can be applied by teachers inside the classrooms in the future to enhance student learning of the English Language using collaborative learning.

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Appendices

Appendix A- Examples of Typical Group and Pair Work Tasks/Activities

Below are examples of typical group and pair work tasks/activities from Unit 1 The Arab World, Grade 12 Bridge to Success General Course Book.

Speaking

3 Look at the images above and in your groups compare their design.

- 1 What different styles can you see?
- 2 Are the designs similar?
- 3 What countries do you think these are in? Why?



Speaking

6 21st Discuss the following statement in pairs and then groups. Explain whether you agree or disagree and why.

Al Janadriyah National Festival should only include exhibits from Saudi Arabia and other GCC Countries.

- Could I just come in here?
- What about ... ?
- So, what you're saying Faisal is that ...
- Could you tell our viewers about ... ?

Speaking tip

We use different types of questions and phrases when we have discussions with other people.

Starters

We use these phrases to open a conversation with another person or between other people. *Would you mind telling us about ... ?*

Clarifying

We use these phrases to check understanding and resolve any areas of confusion within a conversation. *Could you explain that in more detail, please?*

Interrupting

We use these phrases to pause a conversation or discussion when we have something to add or say. *Could I just come in here?*

Speaking 21st

4 In groups, discuss the following questions about the article.

- 1 What did you know about henna before and did you learn anything new?
- 2 Was the language difficult?
- 3 Who do you think would read this type of text?
- 4 What is the author's opinion about the future of the art of henna?
Is it positive, negative, neutral or not clear?
- 5 Explain to your partner why you think this is the author's opinion.

Reading

1 In pairs, look at the images of the two famous Arabic mosques in Oman and Abu Dhabi. Match the descriptions to the pictures of the mosques.

- 1 There are four narrow, pencil-shaped minarets. _____
- 2 This mosque is made of white and brown sandstone. _____
- 3 This mosque is made of white marble. _____
- 4 There is one major prominent, tall minaret and two smaller minarets. _____
- 5 There are three balconies on each minaret. _____
- 6 This mosque has a central balloon-shaped, golden dome. _____
- 7 This mosque has bright, yellow display lights. _____
- 8 This mosque has many white, spherical domes. _____

white marble.

Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque is a prime example of contemporary Islamic architecture and was inaugurated in May 2001 by the Sultan of Oman.

Abu Dhabi

Listening

1 Listen to a radio presenter interviewing a professor about trade in the UAE. Then, work with a partner and discuss what title you would give this interview.

Listening strategy

When listening for missing information, look at the words that come before and after the gaps. You can often guess what type of word it will be.



1 Unit 1 Lessons 1-2

Listening

- 3 1 Copy the graphic organiser into your notebook. Listen to the interview again and make notes.

| Sea | Road | Rail |
|-----|------|------|
| | | |

Speaking 21st

- 4 Compare your notes with a partner. What main ideas and details did you both note down? Did you and your partner organise your notes in the same way or differently?

Listening strategy

When you are listening for key information, it is helpful to make notes. Include details such as dates and facts; or key ideas such as opinions. Don't try to write everything you hear.

Create graphic organisers to help you take notes. Try using a table, a spider diagram, a list or even pictures to record key information. It is good to try different methods and see what works best for you.

Speaking 21st

- 4 In groups, discuss the following questions about the article.
- 1 What did you know about henna before and did you learn anything new?
 - 2 Was the language difficult?
 - 3 Who do you think would read this type of text?
 - 4 What is the author's opinion about the future of the art of henna? Is it positive, negative, neutral or not clear?
 - 5 Explain to your partner why you think this is the author's opinion.

Appendix B- Student Questionnaire and Survey

Student Questionnaire

Dear student, this questionnaire is designed to investigate students' interaction and how Collaborative Learning and group work promote student motivation in the English Language Classroom. The researcher appreciates your cooperation and participation.

INSTRUCTION: To respond to this questionnaire, please put a check mark (√) in the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the statement:

1 (strongly disagree); 2 (disagree); 3 (neutral); 4 (agree); and 5 (strongly agree)

The following questionnaire statements from 1 to 8 discuss collaborative tasks and group work in the English Language classroom in general and statements from 9 to 15 are within the online learning environment.

| No. | Statement | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-----|--|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| 1 | Collaborative learning improves my attitude towards group work. | | | | | |
| 2 | My work is better organized when I am in a group. | | | | | |
| 3 | Group activities make the English Language learning experience easier. | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 4 | Collaborative learning helps me to socialize more using the English Language. | | | | | |
| 5 | Collaborative learning enhances good working relationships among students. | | | | | |
| 6 | Through collaborative learning, I learn to work with students who are different from me. | | | | | |
| 7 | I enjoy the material in the English class more when I work with other students. | | | | | |
| 8 | I prefer that my English teacher use more group tasks. | | | | | |
| 9 | I willingly participate in English Collaborative activities during online learning. | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 10 | Creativity is facilitated and encouraged during group work in the English online learning classes. | | | | | |
| 11 | When I work with other students during English online learning classes, I achieve more than when I work alone. | | | | | |
| 12 | Collaborative discussion in English online learning classes enhances class participation. | | | | | |
| 13 | Collaborative group tasks are more effective in online classes. | | | | | |
| 14 | I interact better in the English online learning class as a group leader. | | | | | |
| 15 | I feel motivated to learn English during online learning when working collaboratively in groups. | | | | | |

Student Survey Questions

The following survey questions from 1 to 3 discuss collaborative tasks and group work in the English Language classroom in general and questions from 4 to 10 are within the online learning environment.

- 1) When working in collaborative learning groups or teams do you usually find yourself in the position of leader?
- 2) How easy or difficult has it been for you to communicate your thoughts or opinions in English to the group?
- 3) Do you enjoy working collaboratively with other students in the English class?
- 4) How often do you do collaborative group tasks in English classes during online learning?
- 5) Do you enjoy working collaboratively with other students in English online classes?
- 6) What do you like most about working on group tasks during English online learning?
- 7) What do you like least about working on group tasks during English online learning?
- 8) What difficulties do you face when working in English group tasks during online learning?
- 9) Do you feel more motivated to learn English during online learning when working collaboratively in groups?
- 10) In general, would you say group work has been effective for you in learning the English language during online learning?

Appendix C- Teacher Interview Questions

Teacher Interview Questions

The following survey questions from 1 to 3 discuss teaching collaborative tasks and group work in the English Language classroom in general and questions from 4 to 10 are within the online learning environment.

1. As an English teacher, how often do you use collaborative learning in your lessons?
2. Do you feel pressured by the administration to implement collaborative learning in the L2 classroom? Elaborate.
3. Do you think your students have the skills necessary for effective collaborative group work?
4. Did you undergo any training that prepares you to implement collaborative learning in the English online lessons successfully?
5. Does collaborative learning in the English class create any disciplinary problems among students in groups during online learning?
6. What difficulties do you face as an English teacher when implementing collaborative group work in online teaching?
7. In what way would a sense of competition between groups in online learning be beneficial for students?
8. Does student-to-student interaction during online learning help students obtain a deeper understanding of the English language material? How?
9. Does students' understanding in the online learning environment increase when working in groups collaboratively? How?
10. In general, how does a collaborative online teaching environment create a better opportunity for learning?

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This thesis is about the role of group work and collaborative learning and their impact on high school students to promote student to student interaction and motivation in the Second Language Classroom in the UAE.

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