

# Mantle of the Expert as an Arts-based Approach to Learning: A Review on Experiences of Tertiary Learners

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## Abstract

One of the most fundamental issues with the current teaching methodology is that pupils are not motivated or involved in class and find it uninteresting. Therefore, a practical teaching approach should be used when teaching ESL to produce learners with these skills. Mantle of the Expert pedagogy is a practical approach to help learners develop the 4Cs (critical thinking, creative thinking, communicating, and cooperating) in 21st-century learning. This study intends to determine how the Mantle of Expert approach affects learners' attitudes toward language acquisition and explore how learners perceive the Mantle of Expert approach's contribution to speaking ability. As part of the mixed-method approach utilized in this study, questionnaires were distributed to thirty undergraduates at a public institution in Johor. The mean value for each item in the surveys was set to analyse the research questions. In addition, ten students who took part in the lessons that were taught using the Mantle of Expert approach were interviewed based on their opinions. The data's thematic analysis results reveal that most students had a favourable attitude toward employing the Mantle of Expert approach to language acquisition, mainly speaking. Increased engagement, learning benefits, self-efficacy, confidence, motivation, speaking development, and vocabulary acquisition were among the points underlined. To address teacher-centred classroom concerns that affect their learning outcomes, creativity, and satisfaction, instructors must be aware of learners' needs and adopt a new approach that significantly engages them in learning English better.

**Keywords:** Mantle of the Expert, 21st-Century Learning, Higher Education, 4Cs, Attitudes

## Introduction

The English language is the world's most spoken language in the world (Yen & Mohamad, 2020). English language competency is measured by the capability to develop all four skills (writing, reading, speaking, and listening). Researchers have pointed out that in many domains, such as tourism, education, and business, it is necessary to communicate with people face to face (Altalbe & Wilkinson, 2013), and speaking is considered an essential skill. However, ESL learners generally lack opportunities to speak English or to communicate with

people (Terhune, 2016). According to Zhang & Liu (2018), English-speaking learning has always been one of the most significant obstacles for ESL students.

Learners may find it challenging to communicate in English for various reasons. Alonso (2018) identifies the factors that cause learners to have difficulty speaking English. These factors involve the learners, instructional tactics, curriculum, and the surrounding environment. Our observation shows learners get bored in their English language class due to textbook-oriented and repeated activities. Teachers fail to keep learners engaged due to traditional language teaching methods. The conventional language teaching method is teacher centred and Baghoussi (2021) asserts that teacher-centred classrooms prevent learners' educational growth because teachers play an active role, whereas learners are merely passive recipients of knowledge. Furthermore, learners are not trained to speak spontaneously, most of the time in groups or pairs. So, learners do not get to talk in a free environment. As a result, learners' speaking problem keeps inclining, as seen in their speaking assessment, because learners are not actively involved in the learning process. Unlike traditional methodology, the MoE approach is much more student-centred and stresses students' active participation in language learning. This is supported by the findings of the Gover et al.'s study, which indicates that the student-centred group outperformed the teacher-centred group 2019.

According to Karunakaran & Babu (2013), many ELT approaches like the grammar-translation method, direct method, silent way, total physical method, communicative language teaching approach, and so on have been used to improve students' participation depending on many factors like the level of the learners, socio-cultural, socio-political, and socio-economic factor. Even though there are many approaches related to language teaching, 21st-century-based teaching and learning require a lot of students' involvement.

One of the main issues among students in Malaysia has been low English proficiency. However, the issue of low English literacy among Malaysian learners has received little attention. Both primary and secondary schools in Malaysia provide instruction in English as a second language. However, their language skills are still weak, even though mastery of English is now encouraged at all school levels, from primary to university (David et al., 2015). The government must encourage Malaysians to learn English so that they can focus on the language that is crucial for developing a nation, according to former Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (Jantmary & Melor, 2014).

Indeed, according to the Malaysian Education Blueprint, English proficiency is far lower. According to our observations, the repetitious and textbook-focused English language class exercises bored students. Traditional language teaching techniques do not successfully engage students in the classroom. Since the conventional approach to teaching languages is teacher-centred and results in subpar language performance, it is not imaginative enough. Moreover, it does not accommodate students with varying levels of ability. According to Baghoussi (2021), teacher-centred classrooms limit students' learning ability because teachers take an active part while students are only passive recipients of information.

The Mantle of the Expert approach could keep learners engaged and motivated throughout the learning process compared to all these approaches (Karunakaran & Babu, 2013). Jindathai (2015) further affirms that the Mantle of Expert approach is one of the teaching approaches

that could fulfil the requirements of learners in the 21st century and develop their skills in English language learning. In a language classroom, the teacher has to guide the learners in achieving the learning goal and set reasonable conditions for learning by applying strategies or techniques in teaching. Therefore, teachers are responsible for choosing the approaches and a supportive environment allowing learners to speak. Some characteristics of successful speaking include learner's talk, learner participation, high motivation, and confidence (Chou, 2018). Hence, an approach used to teach English should be an approach that attracts student attention, improves student motivation and confidence, and improves skills.

Furthermore, the Mantle of Expert approach ensures students' engagement in English language classes (Taylor, 2016). It is based on the premise that treating learners as responsible experts increases their engagement and confidence. Hence, this approach would be a great way to incorporate students' involvement in their English language learning, which will positively impact their learning outcomes.

In the present classroom, though learners frequently communicate in groups or pairs, they are not taught how to speak independently. Thus, students are not allowed to share ideas freely. Because they are not actively engaged in the learning process, learners' speaking problems continue to worsen, as evidenced by their speaking assessment. The MoE approach is significantly more student-centred than previous methods and emphasizes students' active involvement in language learning. The results of the Gover et al. study, which show that the student-centred group outperformed the teacher-centred group, are consistent with this 2019. Learners' opinions of the subject and learning vary when the traditional method is utilized to improve students' speaking abilities and English language learning. The negative perceptions of learners lead to low intrinsic motivation to learn the language well. They become less able to understand the language as a result. As a result, students become less motivated to use all their effort to become proficient at acquiring the language.

Learners will lack perseverance and focus on the material if they lack the enthusiasm to learn the language (Peng, 2015). Therefore, the issue must be resolved by using an engaging and innovative teaching strategy to capture and hold students' attention so that they are more motivated to study. Due to its innovative approach to curriculum teaching, MoE is widely employed in many schools worldwide, particularly in the UK, Australia, and New Zealand (Papadopoulos & Kosma, 2018). By adopting MoE in schools and colleges, more drama-related aspects and activities can be utilized. However, the MoE concept has not been applied to university students and has never been used in Malaysian schools. This study is pertinent to understanding learners' perceptions of implementing MoE in their language learning because of these research gaps.

Our study is essential for this reason. Instead of providing all the information, teachers should assist or direct students in developing ideas and communicating. Teachers and students must participate in implementing and adapting different modes and ways of learning since they are significant people in the teaching and learning process. The difficulties in learning the English language, mainly speaking, should be solved using adequate resources, methods, and teaching strategies. The system's incomplete functionality may have influenced this. Therefore, replacing the old teaching technique with a better one that addresses the issues that arise is essential.

**Objectives**

This study seeks to answer the following research questions

- What is the impact of the Mantle of the Expert on learners' attitudes toward language learning?
- What is the learners' perception of the role of MoE in improving their speaking ability?

**Literature Review**

The Mantle of Expert is a dramatic inquiry-based teaching style that creates engaging, intentional learning experiences using fictional circumstances (Taylor, 2016). It is a drama studies approach to teaching and learning (Sayers, 2013). Abdul Samat et. al (2022) contend that drama being an educational tool has positive effects on students' mental, physical, social, and emotional health which could shape participants' creativity and analytic skills. By taking on the role of "experts" in a made-up company to solve a problem, learners achieve learning objectives.

According to Sayers (2013), students can have the same responsibilities, concerns, and issues as adults in the real world by taking on expert roles. MoE is a ground-breaking learning and teaching approach that enables educators to provide an ideal and holistic class with clear-cut links between learning threads. As a result, learning happens in the context of a relevant and engaging enterprise (challenge or commission), with the learners always learning something new. This approach encourages learners to participate actively in class while also assisting them in improving their English skills. While the inquiry process is the focus, the MoE approach can often lead to meaningful results. Thus, the teacher's job is to direct the play, step in and out of character as needed, and encourage and motivate the specialists.

Four elements must be used for the enterprise to succeed: student-in-role (and out-of-role), teacher-in-role (and out-of-role), reflection and tension. Because the learners take on the part of specialists, the key actors in the enterprise who carry out the commission, student-in-role is the most significant aspect of running the business. The teacher is "in charge of providing, overseeing, and sustaining the momentum of the task, as well as managing behaviour," (p. 3) according to Kosma's (2020) description of the teacher-in-role. She further highlights that this will help learners transform their thinking and learning. Teachers' capacity to do so will summon learners' self-awareness to bear the responsibility of "supporting the demands of their clients" (p.42).

In the Mantle of Expert approach, learners are framed as experts and are commissioned to solve devised tasks through imaginative role-playing. For example, when considering the needs of older adults in their community, the teacher (in her role) asks her students, a group of experts, to research the community's needs. In this case, students will take the role of experts and complete the tasks by participating in mimed activities, improvisation, research, or discussion. These activities provide learners with skills and knowledge they can apply to their everyday lives.

Learners and teachers will be involved in the Mantle of the Expert worlds: the content world, the world of expertise, and the world of the client. Together, they would practice switching roles as needed and interacting with one another while delivering the commission. The MoE makes learning situational, assimilating and more relevant than other teaching methods. In

place of the previous approach, when students were expected to respond, the instructor now creates a setting where students can develop ideas and discussion. Students and teachers must have a solid interaction to teach and learn effectively. Kidd (2015) states that "relationships between teachers and children are the base of learning," implying that a good rapport between teachers and students is the basis of learning and will result in a productive learning environment (p. 33). Therefore, in MoE, students are provided with an imaginary community and environment to communicate and produce ideas.

### **Materials and Methods Study Design**

To achieve the study's purposes, the researchers used two instruments: a questionnaire and an interview.

#### **Questionnaire**

To help implement the approach, the researchers conducted a class based on the MoE strategy. Respondents received a questionnaire after the instruction session. In addition, questionnaires were issued to students to gather information on their attitudes toward the Mantle of Expert approach to language acquisition. The research questionnaire consists of closed-ended questions that ask participants to choose among pre-set answers.

#### **Interview**

A structured interaction that involves active listening and focused questioning between an interviewer and one or more interviewees is known as an in-depth interview (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). A variety of interviews are conducted on the phone, in person, and on social media. We adopted the use of a structured interview in this study. According to Kallio et al (2016), a structured interview is a popular data collection strategy that strictly follows an interview method to guide the researcher.

### **Description of Lessons**

According to Zukepeli et al (2002), due to the epidemic, several learning and teaching activities took place online. Virtual learning could not simply happen overnight since individuals usually require time to adjust to change, therefore many learners were not prepared for this significant change that would happen in their everyday lives. One's method of pursuing education has been replaced by flexibility with the rise of online teaching and learning. Because all lessons had to be conducted virtually, we planned out two MoE lessons (designated as Lessons A and B) to be run online. To discover more about the learners' thoughts toward MoE and how they believe it has improved their speaking abilities, a survey and interviews were carried out. The next part of this paper summarises the tasks by identifying the topic, activities, learners' responsibilities, and learning materials used by the researchers.

#### **Lesson A Procedure**

We replicated the study, "Implementing Mantle of the Expert in Indonesian Senior and Vocational High Schools," by (Fatimah, 2016). In the first session, 29 engineering students with intermediate to high English proficiency were present. The researchers introduced the topic by showing pictures of two people with the caption, "Job Vacancy." The students were asked a series of queries, ranging from general to specific. Another exam question posed to the group of students is their opinion on whether it is easy to find a job. The researchers then

gave the class a reading assignment that included an article on Malaysia's unemployment rate.

The students were given time to read and jot down important information. Then, a brief discussion in the form of a question-and-answer session was held to determine the reasons behind Malaysia's high unemployment rate. Next, the learners were assigned the assignment of developing employment solutions. Before the researchers conducted the first task, the students were randomly divided into breakout groups. Each group was given a link to an online discussion on the Jam board where they could voice their opinions. The discussion period lasted ten minutes and involved four groups.

The discussions in each group were productive, and each group produced more than five solutions to this issue. All groups concurred, however, that providing classes to boost abilities was a comparable choice. Next, the researchers created an imaginary company based on the learners' responses. They framed the learners as educational experts and business entrepreneurs to construct a training and skills institution that can teach many unemployed people how to be trained and find acceptable jobs and help new graduates gain more knowledge before obtaining a job. The students were told to choose a moderator and a secretary for their respective groups.

Students should submit their plans as a poster for the next lesson. Depending on the results of their proposal presentations to the Ministries of Education, Manpower, and Transportation, their ideas were either accepted or rejected. In this session, the students played the roles of imaginary educational experts and business entrepreneurs, and they constructed a training and skill-building organization. They also participated in a scenario where the experts constructed a hypothetical institution. The training was then continued with images of open positions. Randomly selected students were chosen to portray the happiness of acceptance and the grief of rejection. In the following lesson, students then assume roles to discuss themselves in groups and suggest a made-up institution.

### **Lesson B Procedure**

The researchers began by briefly recapitulating the previous lesson. Then, a student was chosen at random from each group. The representatives from each group assumed the roles of the ministers of education, transportation, and health ministers. They were assigned to a breakout room before the activity to discuss and create their evaluation criteria based on their expectations for the presentations the learners would make to the ministers. The ministers were tasked with approving or rejecting the grant considering the presentation. Afterwards, each group presented a 5-minute presentation of their plan. Ministers were given a breakout session to discuss and choose the winners after the presentation.

After the discussion, winners were selected, and a business was set up with the winning group as the employers. The task of the employers was to determine who would work for their organization. They were assigned to a breakout session for the upcoming activity and the interview process. These students in their roles had enough time to talk about what they wanted in new workers and practise interview questions. The employers took up the interview procedure in the class's subsequent lesson (winning group). Questions were posed to all employees, and interviewees were chosen randomly. According to our observations,



students enthusiastically contributed by offering their time to the activities done during class time. A summary of the activities is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

*Summary of the MoE lessons.*

	<b>Lesson A</b>	<b>Lesson B</b>
<b>Duration</b>	2 hours	2 hours
<b>Proficiency</b>	Mixed ability	Mixed ability
<b>Topic</b>	Job Vacancy	Job Vacancy
<b>Activities</b>	Individual work: Article reading Mime excitement or sadness Group work: Jamboard activity Draft proposal	Interview work: 1. Interview process Group work: Presentation Discussion among ministers Discussion among employers
<b>Platform for T/L</b>	Webex	Webex

## Results and Discussion

The following are the findings of this research.

### Learners' attitude towards MoE implementation

Three aspects focused on the learners' attitude towards MoE implementation: learning gains, engagement, self-efficacy, and learning through virtual MoE, is presented in this sub-section.

#### *Learners' attitudes towards learning gains*

Table 2

*Learners' attitudes towards learning gains*

Item	Statement	Mean
1	During MoE activities, I speak English with my friends.	4.143
2	During MoE activities, I speak English with my teacher.	4.143
3	I can think critically.	4.143
12	I can be creative in the task given.	3.964
15	I can become an expert in various situations.	3.893

Analysis of the questionnaire found that students recognized that the most notable learning gains in the MoE method, with the highest mean value of 4.143 were the ability to think critically and speak English with friends and teachers during MoE activities. The lowest mean value, 3.893, was discovered among students who could become specialists in various contexts. The mean score for students who displayed creativity in the given task was 3.964.

The results drawn from my interview data are supported by the findings above. According to Afaf Aqilah, the MoE strategy could enhance learning benefits.

Afaf Aqilah: The interactive activities in this method enable students to use all their thinking and teamwork skills while simultaneously expressing their opinions through team communication.

By working in teams, the activities under this approach can enhance thinking, teamwork, and communication abilities, as seen in the statement above.

#### *Learners' attitude towards engagement*

Table 3

#### *Learners' attitudes towards engagement*

Item	Statement	Mean
4	I can participate actively in the tasks given.	4.143
5	I can contribute ideas and make decisions in the task given.	4.321
14	I can engage in the MoE activities.	4.250

The task offered most leadingly has the highest mean value of 4.321, which indicates that learners can contribute ideas and make decisions based on the data collected about learners' attitudes toward participation. The students think they can contribute ideas and make decisions in the task given with a mean value of 4.143 while being engaged in the MoE activities has a mean value of 4.250.

The results above support the conclusions drawn from our interview data. Furthermore, the interviewees concurred that studying English through MoE is considerably more enjoyable than doing so in the old-fashioned way.

Junaid: This form of learning is much more engaging and fun to participate in, and you get to interact with people. It is fun to learn English this way, and if it is face-face, it would be a lot more engaging and fun and increase my motivation.

The statement, as mentioned earlier, highlights how much more interesting the MoE method is when used in conversation. Students are motivated by this engaging teaching approach.

#### *Learners' attitudes towards self-efficacy*

Table 4

#### *Learners' attitudes towards self-efficacy*

Item	Statement	Mean
6	I feel more confident during and after MoE activities.	4.179
9	With a teacher's guidance, I can perform well.	4.464
11	My speaking anxiety reduces when participating in MoE activities.	3.607
8	I can work collaboratively in a team.	4.357

With the instructor's guidance, who showed the most notable attitude and had the highest mean score of 4.464, students may do well in the self-efficacy domain. But it was also revealed that students who claimed their speaking anxiety reduced MoE activities had the lowest mean score of 3.607 of all groups. The mean score for students who felt more self-assured during and after MoE exercises was 4.179, while the average score for students who could work cooperatively in a team was 4.357.



The findings of our interview with students, who claimed that MoE activities increased their self-efficacy since working in groups improve their communication skills and gives them confidence while working in groups, corroborate this conclusion.

Syazana: Yes. I can speak smoothly without taking the time to translate my Malay words into English. I can communicate smoothly with the help of my friends and feel more confident.

Based on the aforementioned assertion, Syazana could communicate easily with her classmates without changing codes. Moreover, with the aid of her friends, she could also speak with assurance.

#### *Learners' attitudes towards learning via virtual MoE*

The results below demonstrate how students feel about learning through virtual MoE. According to Abdullah, the MoE tasks encourage students to compete in healthy ways. Although the MoE course was delivered online, there were a lot of engaged students in both sessions.

Abdullah Mohammed: The activities are lovely, especially when there is competition between students. I appreciate it. I was in secondary school in several areas of the activities, and they were all wonderful, although online.

Maryam: I participated actively in discussions and presentations. My favourite activity was coming up with the institution and miming it. I enjoyed and looked forward to the next plan excitingly. It is rare for online classes to be interesting like this.

Adzanarisya: I am slightly more interested in learning English or attending English classes because I find it quite fun to interact with classmates and discuss, even laughing when talking about it. I enjoyed it.

Maryam and Adzanarisya agreed with Abdullah's evaluation of learning via virtual MOE. They claimed that because most MoE activities promote teamwork and communication, they can keep students engaged even when they are carried out remotely.

#### *Learners' perception of the role of MoE in improving speaking skill*

Speaking improvement, vocabulary expansion, enjoyment factor/motivation, confidence, and challenges of MoE exercises were the five areas that were explicitly focused on how learners perceived the importance of MoE in improving speaking abilities.

Table 5

#### *Perception of speaking improvement*

Item	Statement	Mean
13	I can improve my speaking ability through the MoE approach.	4.179

According to the questionnaire results, the students believed that the MoE approach can help them develop their speaking skills, and the mean score for this perspective is the highest at 4.179.

The learners also claimed that the Mantle of Expert approach might enhance speaking abilities in an interview with the researcher. This assertion has the support of each of the ten interviewees. The data from the interview support the highest mean value in the manner indicated below.

Hakim Amsyar: The MoE approach helps increase one's speaking ability because there are a lot of activities and discussions to be done among a small group of members. It takes a lot of communication and needs a lot of speaking to convey ideas and communicate with others.

According to what Hakim Amsyar has said, it can be concluded that the MoE approach can help students speak more fluently because its activities encourage collaboration and idea sharing in small groups. Additionally, this approach allows students to converse with peers in the target language.

#### *Perception of Vocabulary Acquisition*

According to the results of the interview data, learners had varying opinions. The many points of view are listed below. However, most students agreed with the statement when discussing how the MoE activity improved their English vocabulary.

Iman Bazlan: My vocabulary has improved well because of how we communicate a lot with each other during every session

Iman Bazlan claimed that due to the activities involving communication, his vocabulary had gotten better. Six additional interviewees backed Iman's assertion. Maryam defended her ability to pick up language from the material, and Abdullah added that he was able to memorize new terminology as he listened to them. Syazana claimed that although her speech did not improve much, she still learned further information.

Hakim Amsyar: I don't think I can say much about it because the duration was just two weeks and one class per week, and it's a bit too short for me to assess my vocabulary.

Muhammad Alif bin Othman: Maybe a bit. I do find some new words during the activities so not significantly but slightly increase.

Hakim and Muhammad Alif, however, saw things differently. On the other hand, Hakim believed that because the session was only held for two weeks, he could not evaluate his vocabulary growth. He thought he had limited time to assess his vocabulary growth. On the other hand, Muhammad Alif discovered a similarly slight improvement but no discernible development because of the short period.

#### *Perception towards enjoyment factor/motivation*

Table 6

*Perception of enjoyment factor/motivation*

Item	Statement	Mean
7	I can relate to and apply the content to real-life situations .	4.107
10	The materials used in MoE activities are enjoyable.	4.143

The interesting materials employed in MoE activities have the highest mean value of 4.143, according to the data mentioned earlier.

Iman Bazlan: Yes, the activities and materials were fun, and I participated actively in being one of the judges in the institute poster activities, in which I got to share my ideas in handling the activities.

Iman Bazlan has further highlighted that the MoE approach's activities and materials were enjoyable considering the questionnaire results. In the lesson, the students learned to think critically and communicate their thoughts when they play the roles of experts.

The lowest mean value, 4.107, is found in the learners' ability to relate to and apply the content to real-life situations.

Junaid: Since it's a very engagement-based learning method that encourages students to speak out, it's fun and perfect for learning how to speak out. The more engaging activities present in this method are significantly based on real-life situations that will improve our speaking ability.

According to Junaid's explanation of the questionnaire results, the MoE strategy is an engagement-based strategy that enables students to speak up and get attention. He added that the exercises are enjoyable and suitable for honing speaking skills. The activities also allow students to relate to and use what they have learned in authentic contexts, essential for boosting their motivation and speaking skills. Motivation is crucial in language acquisition because it affects learners' attitudes. According to Ahmed, positive attitude and motivation have a significant impact since passionate learners appear to boost learners' enthusiasm to study and master the language 2015. One of the methods used to improve motivation is the MoE approach as children as it is one of the most fundamental capacities (Katemba, 2018) to get them to speak and boosts their speaking confidence (Peng, 2015).

*Perception of Confidence*

Results of the students' perceived confidence is presented below.

Afaf Aqilah: At first, the activities were scary because they required a lot of speaking ability and communication with our team, but as the activities going on, surprisingly, I could feel a bit easier to talk because of the situations during the activities started to feel more comfortable and interactive. So, we can talk and discuss freely with our friends and team without having any restrictions and limitations in our communication.

Afaf Aqilah also addressed the issue the students who could talk with assurance during and after the MoE exercises. This assertion was supported by nine out of ten interviewers. The MoE strategy necessitates a lot of talking through group discussions and brainstorming. As

they can communicate their views in this method, learners typically feel more at ease sharing with their friends without any restrictions or limitations.

Abdullah: I can speak with more confidence after the activity because I can see a lot of people who can talk without many mistakes and fluent, and it motivates me to speak well.

Abdullah has also stated that the MoE strategy has inspired him to use English. In addition, being inspired by how his friends speak clearly and without errors has helped him improve his communication skills. The MoE technique, according to Denston, is found to lower student anxiety in language acquisition, mainly while speaking a second language 2021. This is because the structure of MoE learning places a strong emphasis on teamwork, with learners completing tasks in groups.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

According to research on students' attitudes on learning gains in MoE implementation, students' communication and critical thinking abilities have significantly improved. Additionally, almost all students participating in MoE events are left with continuous learning or good perspectives. This is due to the teachers actively encouraging numerous student-student interactions to motivate pupils to participate in group projects. One of the main themes raised by students during active involvement is that they like and are inspired by working in groups with their peers. This can indicate positive student interaction among students. According to Karnchanachari (2020), students are more involved and engaged in the learning processes when they work in groups.

They all mentioned how content they were to learn in a group setting. However, even though the students stated they feel at ease talking to their team, two complained that a few inactive group members do not react to questions or participate in the activities. It is impossible to avoid the issue of a free rider who depends on the contributions and efforts of other team members. However, the Mantle of Expert strategy can address this problem because it promotes peer tutoring, motivating inactive members to participate. In addition, by increasing the teacher's involvement, they will be able to keep an eye on students' behaviour and participation.

Because it results in desirable outcomes like students' academic advancement and success, such as engagement among students is a sign of their healthy functioning (Ladd & Dinella, 2009). Overall, learners appear involved in MoE activities since they were interestingly designed and prioritized student engagement. According to the lessons taught, practically every participant actively participated by answering the questions or participating in the activities. This is evident in the results of their work depending on the given task and in the students' in-class comments.

According to Mayer et al (2009), engaged students actively participate in learning by interacting with the subject, other students, and the teacher. In our opinion, the opportunity to suggest their ideas enhanced students' self-confidence and fostered their self-esteem. Learners also responded eagerly to group work. For example, despite being new to this approach, learners were easily framed as experts and experts were responsible and creative in completing the assigned commission. Based on this study, it can be concluded that the MoE

approach can induce students' engagement and higher engagement results in students' higher achievement, which is in line with Aitken (2021) who also points out that MoE offers a wide range of learning opportunities regardless of the academic level or learning style.

The results show a significant improvement in learners' self-efficacy, particularly in weak and inactive students. The interview data, which demonstrated that most students could finish the assignments by giving their all with the teacher's direction, supports this conclusion. A small percentage of students have also overcome their fear of public speaking. Working together has additionally inspired students to demonstrate their confidence in their abilities to complete the task at hand.

As a result, how students feel about the Mantle of Expert approach may have a favourable effect on learning results and self-efficacy. As Anderson noted, interactions in the classroom foster student involvement and increase self-efficacy 2003. Teachers also play a crucial role in lesson preparation based on the backgrounds of their students, presenting appropriate materials, and changing roles as needed.

Teachers carefully plan for skill development and information acquisition while considering students' prior knowledge using the MoE technique. To scaffold learners' comprehension and the complexity of the actual world, teachers, for instance, sustain the tension and include problem-solving scenarios. This approach enables students to test their knowledge and collaborate to discover a solution.

However, in the current classroom, teachers design their classes based on the curriculum and topic, which is frequently constrained or almost certainly theoretical, allowing for less student involvement and a weaker connection to the outside world. We can conclude that the more interaction in the classroom, the more engaged the students are because interaction is one of the main catalysts for student attention, positively impacting learners' self-efficacy.

It might be challenging to maintain student interest in an online learning environment. In addition, Mercer and Dornyei (2020) acknowledged the difficulty in maintaining student attention due to the abundance of distractions in online learning. However, given the previous results, the learners think that the Mantle of Expert technique is appropriate for usage in a virtual setting since it is entertaining and encourages friendly rivalry. This is because learners are given a chance for meaningful synchronous and asynchronous interaction in the target language through expert role framing.

As a result, learners take part in learning activities that are worthwhile, interesting, and fun. Additionally, MoE creates student-friendly virtual settings that promote conversation and teamwork. Therefore, MoE is a good strategy because it enables effective learning in virtual environments. Due to many activities and discussions required speaking to express ideas and interact with other group members, so most students claimed that their speaking abilities had improved. For instance, according to the interview data, students with speaking anxiety and low proficiency students who translated words by words were able to talk confidently during the activity.

Additionally, because it governs peer assistance and allows participants to engage in discussions and idea exchange, collaborative work is preferred by most students. This means

that it will improve more than only the communication and language skills of the students. Based on the data findings, student involvement in MoE activities is far higher than in regular classroom settings.

Furthermore, the impact of the Mantle of the Expert on learners' attitudes toward language learning has demonstrated a good result from students' comments. Additionally, there have been excellent results in how students perceive the function of MoE in enhancing their speaking abilities. Since the MoE approach may be applied in the classroom to develop effective teaching and learning processes and increase students' motivation, learning experience, and achievement, it is hoped that this research study will help Malaysia's stakeholders in the education system see this.

Therefore, teachers interested in trying Mantle of the Expert should not be deterred by the method's complexity. Additionally, Hiver et al (2021) highlighted the need for language pedagogy to narrow its attention on the foundations for students' engagement. Given that this study has demonstrated the importance of teachers' pedagogical approaches in fostering an engaging learning environment, teachers must design collaborative and engaging language learning environments.

It is notable that the Mantle of Expert approach gives teachers the chance to implement a fresh and practical teaching approach. Additionally, it gives them the chance to learn how to use a method and comprehend the real world as if it were their actual job. The significance of this study for students is that it might aid in the development of their capacity for fostering creativity. This is so that learners can be empowered by giving them the opportunity to assume leadership roles and make decisions that have an impact on the outcome by using the MoE approach to actively study themes across the curriculum through dramatization (Pinner, 2016). This delivers great opportunity for accommodating learner differences. Innovative approaches to several fields may also be beneficial to curriculum designers. Abbott (2017) emphasises that the Mantle of Expert method has the power to modify the learning process in support of this.

### **Conflict of Interest**

There is no conflict of interest regarding the publication and authorship of this research.

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