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PII: S0346-251X(20)30700-4

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102340>

Reference: SYS 102340

To appear in: *System*

Received Date: 10 April 2020

Revised Date: 7 July 2020

Accepted Date: 26 July 2020



Please cite this article as: Jenifer Ho, W.Y., Tai, K.W.H., Doing expertise multilingually and multimodally in online English teaching videos, *System*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102340>.

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## **Doing expertise multilingually and multimodally in online English teaching videos**

### **Abstract:**

The use of online videos as a teaching resource is gaining importance. It opens up opportunities for the creation of knowledge, as educational content can now be accessed by anyone with an Internet connection. This democratisation of access to knowledge can also be seen in the language learning context, where English language teachers create online videos for a transnational audience. In this paper, we present a case study of how two online English teachers ‘do expertise’ in their lessons, drawing on their multilingual and multimodal repertoire so that expertise is talked into being. We conducted semi-structured interviews and analysed them by interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to make sense of the teachers’ experiences of designing online teaching materials, and how their expertise was talked into being in the process. The aim of this paper is to contribute to understanding of expertise in the context of online language teaching. We argue that online teachers ‘do expertise’ by drawing on their multimodal design knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and linguistic knowledge.

**Keywords:** Online teaching; Expertise; Multimodality; Multilingualism; Design; Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

### **1. Introduction**

On 22 October 2018, YouTube announced that it would invest 20 million USD to support the posting of high quality content by creators of educational content on its platform (Wojcicki, 2018). As a video-hosting site that attracts over 1.9 billion logged-in users per month (YouTube Press, 2019), YouTube is the ‘go-to’ site for people looking for knowledge and answers. A survey conducted by the Pew Research Center revealed that one in five YouTube users based in the United States considered YouTube to play a very important role in helping them learn how to do new things (Pew Research Center, November 2018). This apparent ‘democratisation of knowledge’ has given rise to a new form of recreational language learning in which learners can ‘create their own language classrooms’ to personalise their learning (Author, 2017: 170). This kind of learning, as Eneau and Develotte (2012) argued, demands more time, organisation and dedication from learners than learning in a classroom. In particular, the freedom to ‘window shop’ for online learning resources has brought to the fore two issues: first, the design of learning materials, and second, the expertise of the teacher. The first issue has been extensively researched, with particular attention to language-learning social network sites (e.g. Chik, 2015; Author, 2019b). To date, however, there are no established criteria for identifying expert teachers (Tsui, 2009). Some researchers have attempted to compare ‘expert teachers’ with ‘novice

teachers' to investigate the qualities or features that expert teachers possess. For instance, Carter et al. (1988) found that expert teachers and novice teachers differed in their perception and interpretation of classroom information, and that expert teachers were better able to ascribe meaning to visual classroom events. The problem with such a comparison is that it neglects the variety of teaching contexts in which teachers work, such as online classrooms, where teachers lack access to the visual cues commonly found in classrooms. Expert teachers do not necessarily demonstrate expertise in teaching online, as the latter depends largely on how well teachers make the transition from face-to-face classroom teaching to the new online teaching environment (Comas-Quinn, 2011).

In this article, we consider the use of YouTube videos for language teaching, and how expertise is constructed by online teachers. We believe that expertise should be seen as a process that builds up over time rather than a state that is reached after years of practice or experience (Tsui, 2009). First, we investigate how 'democratic' access to technology impacts the constitution of 'expertise'. Second, we examine how the strategic use of multilingual and multimodal resources contributes to online teachers' claim to expertise. Teaching on YouTube requires teachers to become designers of the learning environment, through which expertise is constructed multilingually and multimodally.

Recent studies of videos in language education have focused on 1) the acquisition of specific skills, such as vocabulary (e.g. Arndt & Woore, 2018), 2) the benefits of engaging students in the process of video production (e.g. Hafner, 2014), 3) learners' and teachers' perceptions of the use of videos in the classroom (e.g. Aldukhayel, 2019), and 4) technical issues related to the use of videos in language classrooms (e.g. Hafner & Miller, 2019). Most of these studies have been related to learners; the few studies related to teachers have mostly been confined to teachers' perceptions and identities. Whilst studies have examined teachers' use of videoconferencing for synchronous teaching (e.g. Develotte et al., 2010; Whyte, 2011), the role of teachers as designers of recorded video teaching materials remains an underexplored area. In particular, there has been insufficient research on the display of expertise by teachers through YouTube videos and how the use of multilingual and multimodal resources constitutes expertise.

## **2. Literature review**

Considerable work has gone into investigating how online videos are used in language teaching. For example, online videos have been used as a tool for incidental vocabulary learning. Arndt and Woore (2018) compared how learners acquired second language (L2) vocabulary through engaging with written blogs versus video blogs, and found that the former "promoted more gains

in orthographic knowledge” than the latter, thus calling for a better understanding of the affordances of different forms of online media (Arndt & Woore, 2018: 124). Evidence of language and intercultural learning has also been investigated. Benson (2015) analysed YouTube video comments, and concluded that YouTube videos create a context for individuals to comment on issues raised by the videos, leading to interactions that are “interactionally rich, and oriented towards negotiation exchange and information of meaning” (2015: 99). Hafner (2014: 680) reported that engaging students in the production of scientific documentaries “provided students with many opportunities for spoken and written language practice”. Videos can also be used to develop a multimodal understanding of events. One study (Author, 2019a) analysed the multimodal design of a series of online YouTube videos created by an online English teacher to teach job interview skills in English, and suggested that these videos not only teach learners the required language skills, but also promote a multimodal understanding of specific contexts through the teacher’s strategic orchestration of multiple semiotic modes.

Studies of learners’ perceptions of the use of videos for learning have been conducted in classroom contexts. Aldukhayel (2019) examined both learners’ and teachers’ perceptions of the use of video blogs to improve L2 listening skills. The students perceived the video blogs as interesting, and the teachers also perceived them positively, largely because they afforded learners and teachers “full control of pause, rewind, fast forward, captions, and speech rate” (2019: 15).

In addition to using available videos for teaching, teachers can engage students in creating online videos in the classroom as part of the learning process. However, depending on the familiarity of the students and teachers with the technology, this may be challenging to implement. The technical issues that arise in making videos as part of a classroom-based course were well documented by Hafner (2014) and Hafner and Miller (2019). Hafner (2014) studied the challenges students face when creating scientific documentaries, and noted that students’ lack of prior experience of creating videos was a major challenge. In addition to technical challenges, students perceived rhetorical challenges such as finding ways to create an attractive hook and combining modes simultaneously to achieve multimodal orchestration. A major issue is the contradictory discourses that language teachers encounter when deciding whether to adopt videos in their teaching. Whilst a considerable number of studies have presented the benefits of using videos in teaching, teachers are also concerned about the detrimental effect on literacy. Such worries were summarised by Casanave (2017) and Chun et al. (2016). Another challenge faced by teachers, specifically in the context of engaging students in creating videos, is that of assessment (Author, 2020).

## 2.1 Rethinking expertise

Expertise is a fluid concept without a stable definition. Studies on expertise have been conducted in the fields of psychology (e.g. Ericsson et al., 1993), health communication (e.g. Candlin & Candlin, 2002), sociology (e.g. Collins & Evans, 2007) and linguistics (e.g. Rampton, 1990) among others. Many of these studies have investigated 1) the transition of novices into experts, 2) qualitative and quantitative differences between novices and experts, and 3) the discursive expression of expertise (especially in healthcare settings, where the knowledge gap between novice and expert is much more pronounced than in other professional communication settings).

One aspect that has attracted much attention is the acquisition of expertise. A sociological understanding of expertise sees it as a product of socialisation. Collins and Evans (2007), in their seminal work *Rethinking Expertise*, suggested that the acquisition of expertise is a social process in which novices become socialised into the practices of experts. In a study of expertise, Ericsson et al. (1993) argued against the misconception that expertise is innate, and suggested that expertise is acquired through deliberate practice and by overcoming constraints presented by the environment.

In a professional encounter in a clinical or an educational setting, for example, the distribution of power is asymmetrical. Expert behaviour is therefore closely related to discursive ability. Candlin and Candlin (2002) argued that certain discursive features and strategies can provide insights into professional expertise, and can therefore be regarded as resources that warrant professional expertise. In the clinical setting, Candlin and Candlin (2002: 116) stressed that “the discursive expression of expertise is to different extents a coparticipative endeavour of all involved”. Expertise, or expert behaviour, is expressed by the strategic deployment of discursive resources that signals one as an expert. In a study of genetic counsellors, Sarangi and Clarke (2002) noted that these counsellors used a range of modalised discourse strategies to convey (in)expertise, such as discursively conveying expertise through contrasts, and uncertainty through hedging.

One aspect of expertise that has not been adequately explored is how it is conveyed multimodally. In a study of Swedish cooking programmes, Eriksson (2016) found that the expertise of the chef was demonstrated multimodally, by talking directly into the camera and by answering the questions posed by the host, who was often positioned as a novice. Interestingly, multimodal strategies were also used to downplay the chef’s expert status, such as not wearing professional clothing and making no distinction when addressing the host or the viewers, thus creating a sense

of ordinariness. Evidently, therefore, multimodal strategies can construct both expertise and inexpertise.

In this paper, we embrace the concept of repertoire as the totality of a person's multimodal and multilingual resources (Rymes, 2014; Kusters et al., 2017). This paper argues for the inclusion of multimodality and multilingualism in rethinking expertise in the context of online language teaching. Multimodality is a contemporary communication approach that challenges the hegemony of language as the only way to make meaning. Meaning is made by the strategic combination of apt modes, and each mode has its own set of affordances and constraints (Kress, 2010). Studies of multimodality have tended to focus on the use of multiple modes in making meaning, normally with the use of one named language, as in Eriksson's (2016) study. It is therefore necessary to attend to the multilingual nature of communication, and how it constitutes expertise. In this study, we interviewed two well-established online teachers in order to understand how they talked expertise into being, and how it is done multilingually and multimodally.

### **3. Methodology**

#### ***3.1 Participants***

Two female online teachers, Sharon and Alice (pseudonyms), were recruited through online contacts. Both participants were purposively selected to form a relatively homogenous sample to answer our research question. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) adopts an idiographic approach that allows researchers to recruit a closely defined group of participants that represents a specific perspective in the area of study (Smith et al., 2013). Both teachers were experienced online English teachers, who had been teaching online for more than four years at the time of the study. As their lessons were posted on YouTube, they attracted students from a wide range of backgrounds and English proficiencies. The first language (L1) of most of these students was expected to be Mandarin or Cantonese. Both teachers aimed to offer impactful English education, which motivated them to create YouTube videos to showcase their English teaching style to a wider audience. Sharon had graduated from a prestigious US university with a BA in linguistics. She was born in Taiwan and could speak Mandarin and English fluently. After graduating, she took a job in Taiwan, and ran her own English-learning service at the time of the study. Similarly, Alice graduated from a prestigious US university with a BA in German language and literature. Alice was a Chinese American who had acquired multiple languages, including English, Cantonese, Mandarin, German and Swedish, and was learning Japanese at the

time of the study. She ran her own English-learning academy in Hong Kong, taking a linguistics-based pedagogical approach.

### **3.2 Method**

The semi-structured interviews were conducted in English. The two multilingual online teachers were asked to discuss their experiences of teaching English through online platforms and how they communicated their expertise through their design of teaching materials. The interviews were conducted by both authors and guided by an interview schedule. However, we also encouraged the participants to talk freely about their experiences, and we sometimes asked questions spontaneously in response to their accounts. Each interview lasted for an hour and thirty minutes, during which we played selected online video clips prepared by the teachers to give them a chance to reflect on their own pedagogical practices. During the interviews, we discussed three to four videos that each teacher had created. The videos ranged in length from just over three minutes to just over seven minutes, and covered different aspects of English grammar or vocabulary.

This study followed the analytic stages suggested by Smith et al. (2013) to analyse the interview data. The analysis moved from a focus on the individual to a more shared understanding, and from the descriptive level to a more interpretative level. The first interview was read line by line, and initial comments were made in note form, focusing on what was being said. We then made exploratory comments on the transcript regarding the content (descriptive comments), the participant's use of language (linguistic comments) and the researchers' interpretations of the transcript (conceptual comments). This stage required us to develop a conceptual understanding of the issues raised by the participant's account. These exploratory comments were made on each transcript in isolation, without reference to the content of the other interview. Next, emergent themes were identified to reflect the meanings of the comments. This entailed interpretation and re-labelling of the exploratory comments to develop succinct and resonant themes reflecting the participant's account. The techniques of subsumption and abstraction (Smith et al., 2013) were applied to identify patterns between the series of emergent themes, which led to a number of superordinate themes for the participant. After analysing the data for the first participant, we repeated the process with the remaining transcript. Each interview was analysed in its own right to allow the development of new themes. The online teaching videos created by the teachers were also used to inform the analysts' interpretations, in line with the use of IPA. After analysis of both transcripts, the emergent and superordinate themes for each participant were jointly reviewed to seek patterns across the cases. Points of strong convergence and divergence were also identified, as the teachers had different opinions and experiences that were captured within



the same theme. By clustering the themes together, three superordinate themes were identified, which illustrated the layers of expertise displayed by the teachers in their online English language teaching.

### ***3.3 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis***

IPA was used to analyse the data from the two semi-structured teacher interviews. IPA is a qualitative approach developed within the field of psychology to investigate personal lived experience (Smith, 1996). Smith and Osborn (2008) stated that IPA focuses on the in-depth exploration of personal experience and how individuals understand and make sense of their experiences. The assumption is that individuals are actively engaged with the world and constantly reflect on their experiences to make sense of them (Smith et al., 2013). In addition, IPA acknowledges that investigating the meanings of participants' experiences is an interpretative enterprise by both the researcher and the participants. Thus, for researchers to understand how participants make sense of their world, a dual interpretation process is involved, called the 'double hermeneutic'. The double hermeneutic involves researchers trying to make sense of participants' attempts to make sense of their world (Smith et al., 2013). Smith et al. (2013) also suggested that researchers play an active role in the interpretation process, which means that various interpretations of the participants' experiences are possible. IPA was chosen as the analytical method for this study because of its inductive approach and capacity to explore the complex lived experience of the participants.

### ***3.4 Multimodal design, pedagogical and linguistic knowledge in online teaching***

We expanded the concept of expertise by analysing how it was talked into being by the two online teachers, identifying the strategic use of multilingual and multimodal resources. Three layers of expertise were extracted from the data: multimodal design, pedagogical knowledge and linguistic knowledge.

'Design', in a multimodal sense, refers to "the situated process in which a sign-maker chooses semiotic resources and possible arrangements for semiotic entities to be produced to meet particular social functions or purposes" (Jewitt et al., 2016: 73). This process involves the selection and arrangement of different modes to suit the rhetorical purpose and specific audience (Kress, 2010; Bezemer & Jewitt, 2010). The content creators must work within the affordances and constraints of the available resources to fulfil the various norms and conventions. Online teaching requires teachers to design the learning environment. They have a "semiotic purpose" to shape the pedagogical content using the resources available to achieve the "best possible alignment" between the purposes of the designer and the resources available to the audience

(Kress, 2010: 49). The range of available designs is framed by the mode and media available (New London Group, 1996; Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). In the online teaching environment, a wide repertoire of resources is available to teachers, and it is important for them to have the necessary multimodal design skills to utilise these ‘new’ resources in their teaching.

Pedagogical knowledge in online language teaching is often shaped by classroom teaching approaches. Online teachers adapt, and sometimes modify, classroom practices in their online teaching, such as drawing on whiteboards, providing definitions, eliciting questions and varying the use of registers and languages to construct online language-learning environments that resemble classroom teaching. Nonetheless, online teaching approaches do not replicate classroom teaching, and online teachers therefore need a different set of skills compared with face-to-face classroom teaching. Hampel and Stickler (2005) presented an overview of the skills required by online teachers, ranging from basic competence in using technology to developing their own style in online teaching. Aside from general pedagogical knowledge, multilingual and multimodal pedagogies are of considerable importance in the online language-teaching context. Pedagogy that conceptualises language as a “multilingual, multisemiotic, multisensory, and multimodal resource for sense- and meaning-making” (Li, 2018: 14) should be at the centre of online material design. In particular, a translanguaging pedagogy is increasingly being used, which takes into account the multilingual and multimodal repertoire of learners and mobilises students’ familiar resources to scaffold their mastery of the target resources (Lin, 2012). In this sense, pedagogical knowledge is closely related to multimodal design, which forms the theoretical basis on which semiotic resources can be arranged.

Linguistic knowledge goes beyond syntactic and semantic knowledge; it also incorporates a kind of sociolinguistic awareness of the sociolinguistic reality in which the learners and the learning environment are situated. Online teaching presupposes that learners come to the learning environment with their multilingual repertoire, based on which the teachers have to design the teaching and learning activities. The goal of language learning is to help learners to become multilingual, rather than to replace their L1 to become monolingual (Li, 2018). These beliefs about language and language learning shape how languages are taught and learned in online contexts, and influence the way semiotic resources are utilised in the creation of teaching videos.

As indicated above, multimodal design knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and linguistic knowledge are three interconnected constructs that constitute expertise in online language teaching. The following section shows how expertise was talked into being by the two online teachers.

## 4. Analysis

### 4.1 Multimodal Design

The teachers illustrated their ability to utilise multimodal resources by creating online videos and delivering instruction. Sharon believed that referring to other course materials was one way she could demonstrate her expertise:

#### Extract 1

I always put in the description an ‘About’ link so that if people are curious about me and the video in itself does arouse any kind of curiosity as to, you know, who are you, why are you teaching this, then I hope that they can follow the links and then go and read more about my experience [...] I think by pointing to different course material, and by pointing to different videos and including the links, I think that that also serves over time to demonstrate how everything is linked together and that it has a greater organization and I think that sense of greater organization that repetitive themes that can also add to the area of expertise. (Sharon)

In this extract, Sharon explained that she normally pointed out video links and different course materials to the students. Sharon believed that by showing the students the connections between the existing materials and the pedagogical focus of the lesson, she illustrated her expertise as a teacher who could identify the relevance of different course materials to the current lesson topic. Sharon’s ability to draw on her multilingual and multimodal repertoire to design videos was evident in a video clip in which she explained the difference between ‘make’ and ‘let’ to her Chinese-speaking students. As shown in Figure 1, Sharon included a screenshot of the English definition of ‘let’, extracted from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, to explain that the meaning of ‘let’ is connected to the idea of ‘permission’. This figure also demonstrates Sharon’s use of various resources, including Chinese (the students’ L1), yellow highlights, screen brightness (e.g. using white to highlight the particular definition of ‘let’) and symbols (e.g. an arrow and a red-shaded box), to emphasise the meaning of ‘let’.



**Figure 1**

Alice presented different views on her use of multimodal resources:

### **Extract 2**

I try to have scenes of me talking and then like switching that back and forth with like blackboard, services. I just see this like black screen has like a blackboard for me with examples on it. I try to... yeah, when I'm trying to... when there's too many words to fit like around my face and I try to do this like, a blank screen and put examples on them and just focus on that, especially when I'm trying to explain like the structure and use the different colours and try to have the screen be just like one example or as few words as possible [...] I always feel like I should, what if I should, you know, what if it would help people understand this more easily if I put this other label on here [...] I try to make it as clear as possible visually for students. (Alice)

Here, Alice noted that she imagined a 'virtual blackboard', a 'black screen' on which words and examples were shown to facilitate her explanations of English sentence structure. This may show how Alice's experience as a classroom teacher came into play. As noted in the interview, Alice had worked as an English language and literature teacher at a secondary school for a few years before becoming a full-time online English teacher. Here, it can be argued that Alice adapted the practices commonly used in classroom teaching when designing her online teaching. In the following extract, Alice stated her preference for using different symbols and colours to design her videos:

**Extract 3**

I tried to use like different colours to colour code different things in the clause. I tried to, as much as I can, to use like symbols, arrows like showing you things and like for them trying to make them in sync with the word so that they would appear at the right time. That's the difficult part. (Alice)

Alice's account here demonstrates her understanding that it is necessary to arrange multimodal resources systematically and appropriately to highlight the key messages for students. This perspective was demonstrated in one of her teaching videos (Figure 2), in which Alice used various colours and arrows to highlight the construction of relative clauses.

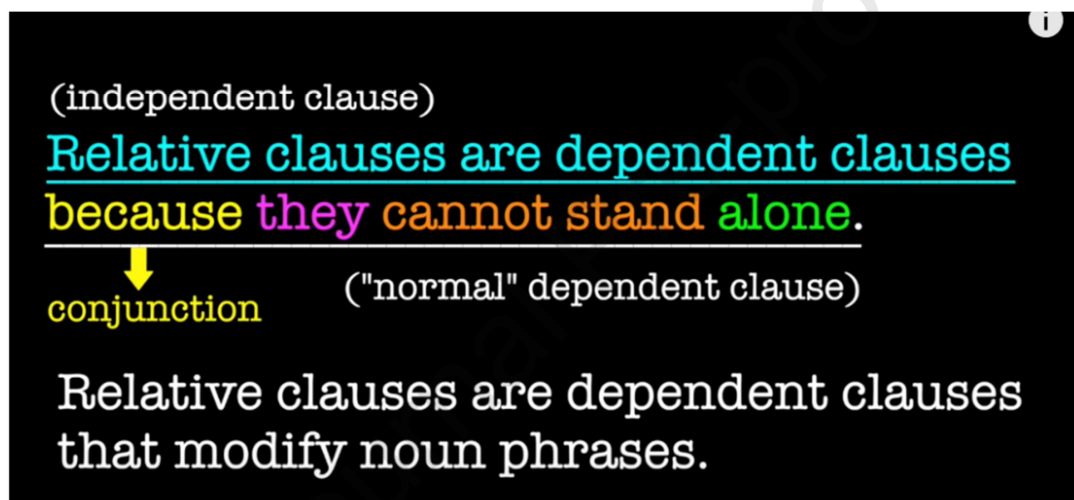


Figure 2

**4.2 Pedagogical Knowledge**

Both online English teachers explained how their pedagogical knowledge shaped their online teaching approaches. Drawing on her own life experience and everyday knowledge, Sharon deployed examples familiar to students as a way to scaffold their understanding, which was a way for her to demonstrate her expertise:

**Extract 4**

I usually do try to pick examples that are recurring in my work so that I know that for sure this is going to be very helpful to a lot of people [...] I hope that I can continue to use the information with my own students so that's how I try to select the topics. And when I teach, the way that I hope to demonstrate that expertise is by the actual discussion of it, so when I do a demonstration, I try to use my experience and bring up things or ideas that are relevant to

people then try to explain it as clearly as I can, and I hope that that does convey the area of expertise. (Sharon)

Sharon remarked on the usefulness of drawing on examples familiar to students, which made the teaching content more relatable to their life experiences. This idea is related to the notion of ‘bringing the outside in’, which was first exemplified in a study by Cooke and Wallace (2004). This notion emphasises that the L2 classroom is a space in which teachers and students can draw on considerable cultural, linguistic and life experience resources. This can bridge the gap between classroom interaction and real-life L2 use (Author, 2018). In one of Sharon’s online videos, she used examples of Disney movies to illustrate the different pronunciations of ‘the’:



Figure 3

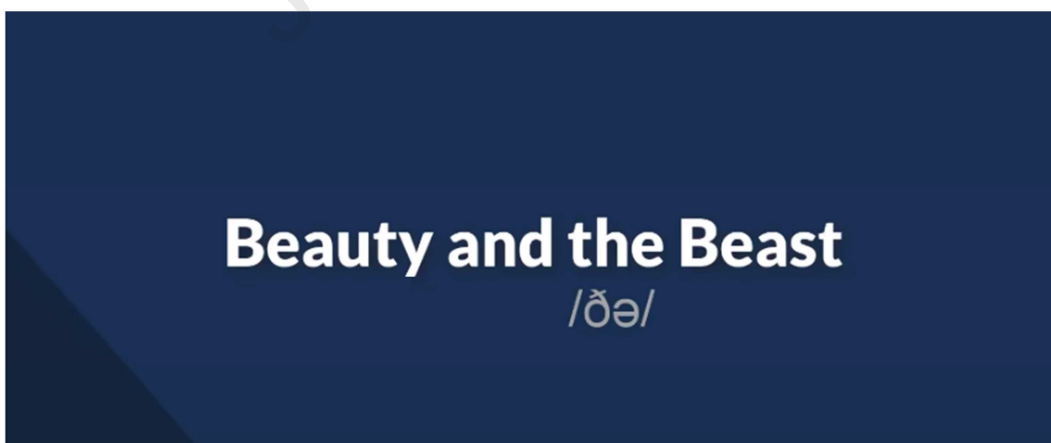


Figure 4

As shown in Figures 3 and 4, Sharon used examples such as *The Avengers* and *Beauty and the*

*Beast* to explain when students should use the long ‘e’ sound /ði:/ and the schwa sound /ðə/. Doing this helped the students to understand how the new knowledge connected to their old understanding, affording them opportunities to acquire knowledge. Alice explained that online teaching can also serve as a means to increase student engagement:

**Extract 5**

Yes, I enjoyed those interactions as well, because a lot of people... what I found interesting was when I answered these people's questions in words, like verbally, like in words, they understood a lot of the stuff that I tried to explain [...] a lot of them understood my verbal explanations, and I think that's because they watched my videos and that they tried to engage with it even before asking me a question, and so they were very engaged. (Alice)

Alice stressed the need for students to watch her online videos and take the initiative in digesting their content. Doing so prompted the students to ask higher-order questions, helping to promote knowledge construction between the teacher and students. This extract illustrates Alice's understanding of the pedagogical function of online videos, which gave her a platform to explain more complicated linguistic concepts, and also encouraged students to initiate higher-level questions. Alice also expected her students to follow the course format, as this could help them to initiate meaningful questions:

**Extract 6**

That's why I think the course format is good also, allowing the students to really kind of think about everything first and then decide what they don't understand, and then I can engage with you on that level of understanding. (Alice)

This extract clearly exemplifies Alice's pedagogical rationale for presenting English structure in sequence. Alice believed that by adopting a step-by-step approach she could guide students to acquire a basic understanding of English sentence structure. This was exemplified in her online video channel, where she systematically classified the videos in chronological order. For instance, she divided the teaching of relative clauses into five videos. Each video lasted for approximately ten minutes, and each offered a general overview of the lesson and had a specific teaching focus, such as relative adverbs or relative pronouns as subjects and objects. Alice assumed that once students had engaged with the videos in this order, they could initiate questions based on the areas they had failed to grasp.

### ***4.3 Linguistic Knowledge***

The teachers also explained how their expertise in linguistics informed their online pedagogical approaches. In her interview, Sharon explained that language can be a creative form, and that she hoped to convey this perspective through her teaching. In the extract below, Sharon demonstrated her sociolinguistic awareness, which may have shaped her English teaching approach:

**Extract 7**

I always try to observe that in my teaching but it can be a little bit difficult at times because if your goal is to try to get your students prepare for specific purpose. I think there are certain standards that need to be observed and I don't want to only present the ideology of it without being able to make it practical [...] So now I am trying to teach people the difference between the long "o" and "schwa" sound. But I think that was the wrong example to give because you can in fact say both, it's just a little variation in the way we pronounce it both are openly, both are okay [...] So that experience quite early on made me more of aware of how I should be teaching in a way especially to the general public that doesn't narrow down the scope too much and doesn't become too restricted in a way and too standardize to point of being discriminating. (Sharon)

Here, Sharon displayed her awareness that it is important not to indoctrinate the model of 'standard' English pronunciation, as this may convince students that there is only one way to pronounce specific English words. Being able to produce intelligible utterances is considered far more important than adopting a particular accent in daily communication (Jenkins, 2012). During Sharon's undergraduate studies, she was involved in a sociolinguistic research project that gave her unique insights into the different varieties of language use in society. Hence, it is possible that Sharon's awareness of sociolinguistics came from her linguistics background and was reflected in her teaching. Indeed, in one of her online videos, Sharon explained the difference in pronunciation between 'w' and 'wh' when uttering words like 'what' (/hwɒt/ versus /wɒt/) and 'why' (/hwaɪ/ versus /waɪ/). In the video, Sharon referred to this as the 'wine-whine merger' (pronounced /wam/ and /hwam/, respectively) and rightly pointed out that some people nowadays do not pronounce the /h/ sound (i.e. /wɒt/ for what or /waɪ/ for why), and that this is related to the sociolinguistic understanding of language, which changes across space and time. Sharon also skilfully used a world map to visually illustrate locations, such as Scotland, where people still pronounce the 'wh' sound (Figure 5). She thereby demonstrated her linguistic expertise by displaying not simply her understanding of the pronunciation of the words, but also the historical development of the change in pronunciation over time and across space and social groups.





**Figure 5**

Alice also draws on her linguistic knowledge to shape her teaching approach:

**Extract 8**

But I realized that my main interest was in linguistics and so I wanted to actually use that background and that knowledge to teach English, so teach English as a foreign language to people within a sort of linguistics enlightened kind of way, like, linguistics-based manner.  
(Alice)

**Extract 9**

What I found difficult to explain to them was that you know, at the end of the day, it doesn't matter whether it's speaking or writing or reading. This is one language with systematic rules.  
(Alice)

From Extracts 8 and 9, it is apparent that Alice's pedagogical approach was heavily influenced by her linguistic expertise, which was acquired during her time as an undergraduate studying German language and literature at a US university. She believed that teaching students the linguistic structure of English could facilitate their acquisition of English. As evidenced by Alice's online channel, most of her online videos focused on teaching English sentence structure. In one of her videos (Figure 6), she used brackets, a typical linguistic notation convention, to illustrate the overall structure of a clause. Alice's linear analysis of the clause is clear evidence of how she applied her linguistic expertise to her teaching.

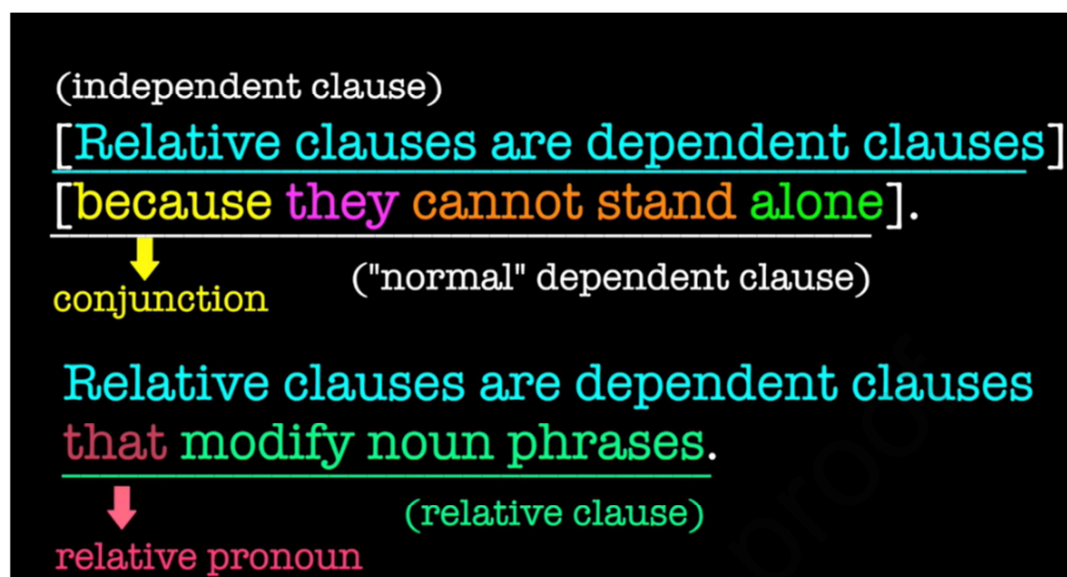


Figure 6

It is also apparent that both Alice and Sharon predominantly used Chinese to conduct their teaching. In Extract 10, Sharon acknowledged the role of the L1 in promoting L2 acquisition, and this recognition was informed by her own experience as an L2 learner and a sequential bilingual. In her own teaching videos, she used Mandarin for her explanations and used both Chinese and English (e.g. Figure 1) in the design of her videos.

#### Extract 10

I began to think about so what is a way that I can use Chinese to teach English without making people reliant on Chinese all the time but still benefit from it by maybe understanding the difference between the two languages. And sort of retracing back to what I have studied to try to provide some insight into that and also my experience as someone who is sequentially bilingual. I hope that that can also come into play and also as a language learner of Chinese and... I mean of English and of French. (Sharon)

#### Extract 11

I learned it from reading their [bilingual education researchers'] research and stuff. But why is there, at least as far as I can see, why there are so little linkage between, or connection between that research or the understanding that people have, of like both Chinese structure and like, you know, Chinese linguistics and English linguistics. There're so much scholarship and research and like knowledge in those areas and people who are experts but, there's like no

trickle-down, like there's no connections to like actual English teaching that we see in the world, in society. I'm not the judge of whether I'm successful in doing that, but at least that's my goal, like I want to at least be like one person who's trying to link that together [...] (Alice)

Alice further explained her goal in linking L1 and L2 linguistic knowledge in Extract 11 to address the pedagogical implications suggested by studies on bi/multilingualism. Alice's use of simile, i.e., *no trickle-down*, reflects the lack of connection between the findings of bi/multilingualism research and pedagogical practice. This motivated her to 'at least be one person' attempting to link Chinese and English linguistic knowledge in her videos to help students identify the similarities and differences between their L1 (Chinese) and L2 (English). This aspiration was reflected in one of her videos, in which she pointed out some structural differences between Chinese and English by presenting a comparative analysis of a complete Chinese sentence and its back translation into English (Figure 7).

✓ 我的目的 已經 達到  
(object + topic) (verb)

✗ \*My goal already achieved.  
(object + topic)

✓ I already achieved my goal.  
(subject) (finite verb) (object)

「I already achieved my goal」 才是符合英文結構規律的子句

Figure 7

## 5. Discussion

This study set out to examine how expertise was talked into being by two online English teachers. We explored how these teachers do expertise multimodally and multilingually. We believe that the concept of expertise comprises three aspects: multimodal design knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and linguistic knowledge. These concepts are interconnected and point to the need to embrace multilingualism and multimodality when conceptualising expertise.

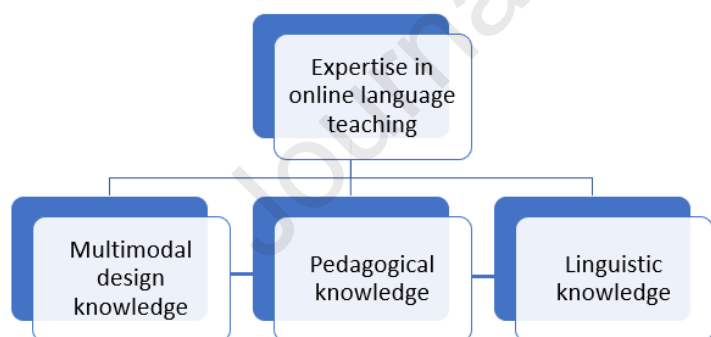
Online teachers are designers of learning environments. They have a ‘semiotic toolkit’ to shape a lesson using the resources available. Although the teachers in this study did not necessarily perform ‘hands-on’ design and editing work, the semi-structured interviews suggested that they were highly involved in the multimodal design process, and demonstrated an understanding of the affordances and constraints of the resources in their multimodal repertoire. Sharon, as indicated in Extract 1, made use of hyperlinks to connect her experience with the lesson content, and to connect different lesson content to organise these discrete, virtual lessons effectively. The use of hypertext, which is an affordance of digital texts, allows readers to ‘travel’ between one text and another (Lemke, 2002). The multiple interconnections are revealed by the multimodal design work of online teachers. Online videos allow teachers to bring a different ‘lifeworld’ to students by using direct links to a particular page, or by using screenshots. Teachers can also bring in resources from the classroom context, such as the blackboard and the use of multiple colours, as asserted in Extracts 2 and 3, to present complicated content in a visually appealing way. Presenting content in a visually appealing and coherent way involves more than just combining multimodal resources. It also relies on teachers’ understanding of the affordances and constraints of each of these resources in relation to their pedagogical and linguistic knowledge.

Although teaching an online audience presents a different set of challenges from classroom teaching, it is still useful for teachers to draw on pedagogical knowledge commonly used in the classroom context and adapt it to online teaching. For instance, in Extract 4, Sharon explained the importance of selecting examples that are relevant to the learners’ out-of-class experiences to create a supportive learning environment. In particular, the use of popular culture was a way for Sharon to create a space for the teacher and students to bring their life experiences into the online classroom. The use of popular culture for L2 teaching can be seen as a “motivational stimulus”, a reward”, a “resource for teaching and learning” and an “outcome” of learning (Benson & Chik, 2014: 5). Pedagogical knowledge was also demonstrated by the teachers’ understanding of the pedagogical potential offered by the new media, as seen in Alice’s comments in Extracts 5 and 6. Videos were used to encourage students to ask higher-order questions and to structure the lesson content.

Instructional design using a range of multimodal resources needs to be informed by pedagogical knowledge. This need to align design and pedagogy was stressed by Chapelle (2009), who observed that the expanding use of technology for language teaching and learning calls for designers and teachers of online language learning environments to modify and adapt existing second language acquisition theory to facilitate online language learning. The two teachers featured in the present study modified and adapted their pedagogical knowledge and the theory

of linguistics to their respective online teaching contexts. For instance, Sharon explained in Extract 7 that she was fully aware of prevailing language ideologies that are preoccupied with certain preferred norms or standards. This contrasts starkly with many English teachers, who are influenced by an “English and European bias” (Li, 2020: 3). Li further argued that multilingual language users can also bring innovations to language by challenging conventionalised patterns and structures, and that this creativity should be recognised and valued. As evident in Extracts 8 and 9, Alice’s background in linguistics and her experience of ‘sequential bilingualism’ had shaped her pedagogical approach, which focused on the structure of English. Both Sharon and Alice were aware that their learners were multilingual and believed that as teachers they should acknowledge this social reality. Instead of treating multilingualism as a hindrance, they attempted to draw on their learners’ multilingual repertoire in their English teaching, as shown in Extracts 10 and 11.

As seen from the above discussion, the three aspects of online teaching expertise, i.e., multimodal design knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and linguistic knowledge, are interconnected and influence one another. Expertise in online language teaching is built on the orchestration of these three aspects, as shown in Figure 8:



Examples of multimodal design knowledge:

The use of hyperlinks, virtual blackboard, colour coding as resources

Examples of pedagogical knowledge:

Drawing on relevant (popular culture) examples, using videos to prompt higher-order thinking and structuring lesson content

Examples of linguistic knowledge:

Awareness of linguistic theories and ideologies

**Figure 8**

## 6. Conclusions

This case study revealed that expertise in online language teaching is a multi-faceted concept. Analysis of the semi-structured interviews showed how the multilingual and multimodal nature of expertise was articulated by the teachers and realised in their lessons.

The use of semi-structured interviews, analysed by IPA, allowed the teachers to express themselves as ‘experiential experts’ on the subject, emphasising their role as active storytellers rather than passive respondents (Eatough & Smith, 2008). This gave the teachers a voice as active participants in the interview process. In our analysis, we used the double hermeneutic by trying to make sense of how the teachers made sense of their teaching experiences. As communicative practices become more complex and diverse, methodologies that empower interviewees can be used to understand the intricacies of meaning-making in different contexts.

The use of YouTube videos for language learning is an example of learning in the wild, where learners have to make decisions about which materials to choose. As observed by Author (2017) in the context of recreational language learning, learners need time to ‘window shop’ for learning materials to personalise their learning. In this process, “perceptions of expert knowledge [become] a differentiating criterion when selecting material” (2017: 169). It is therefore important to understand how expertise is displayed and realised by teachers in their online teaching materials. In response to the call by Little and Thorne (2017) for the ‘rewilding’ of education, future research could focus on how learners ‘in the wild’ perceive expertise to further inform our understanding of the design of online teaching materials.

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Journal Pre-proof

Let vs. Make

「讓」的中翻英陷阱

**LET**

這個經驗「讓」我領悟到  
用功與努力工作的重要

Definition of let verb from the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary

let verb

BrE /let/; NAmE /let/

+ Verb Forms

Add to my wordlist

allow

- [no passive] to allow somebody to do something or something to happen without trying to stop it
  - let somebody/something do something *Let them splash around in the pool for a while.*
  - Don't let her upset you.
  - Let your body relax.
  - let somebody/something *He'd eat chocolate all day long if I let him.*
- to give somebody permission to do something
  - let somebody/something do something *They won't let him leave the country.*
  - let somebody/something *She wanted to lend me some money but I wouldn't let her.*
- let somebody/something + adv./prep. to allow somebody/something to go somewhere
  - to let somebody into the house

Figure 1

(independent clause)

Relative clauses are dependent clauses  
because they cannot stand alone.

↓  
conjunction ("normal" dependent clause)

Relative clauses are dependent clauses  
that modify noun phrases.

Figure 2



Figure 3

# Beauty and the Beast

/ðe/

Figure 4

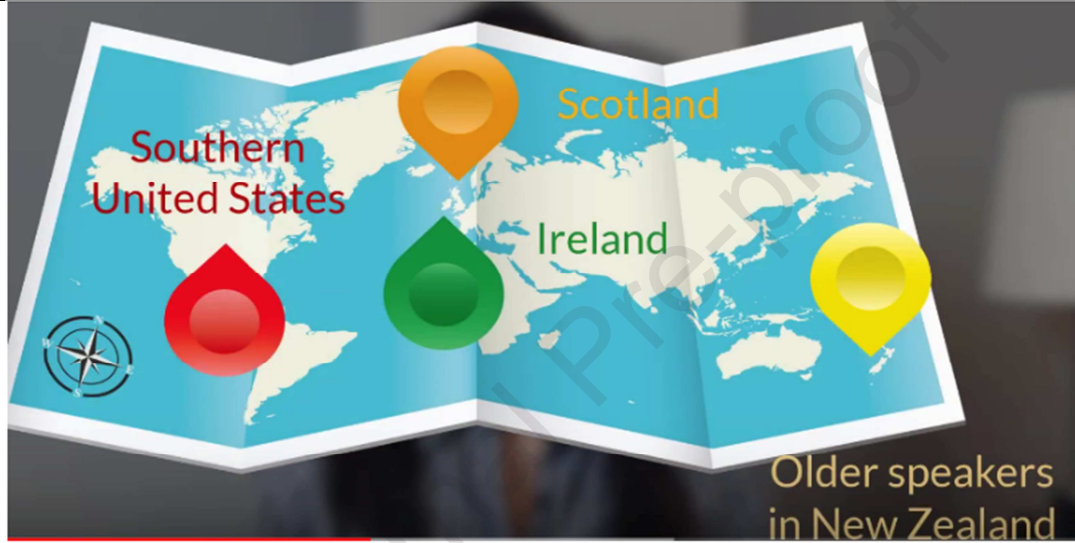


Figure 5

(independent clause)

[Relative clauses are dependent clauses]

[because they cannot stand alone].

↓  
conjunction

("normal" dependent clause)

Relative clauses are dependent clauses  
that modify noun phrases.

↓  
relative pronoun

(relative clause)

Figure 6

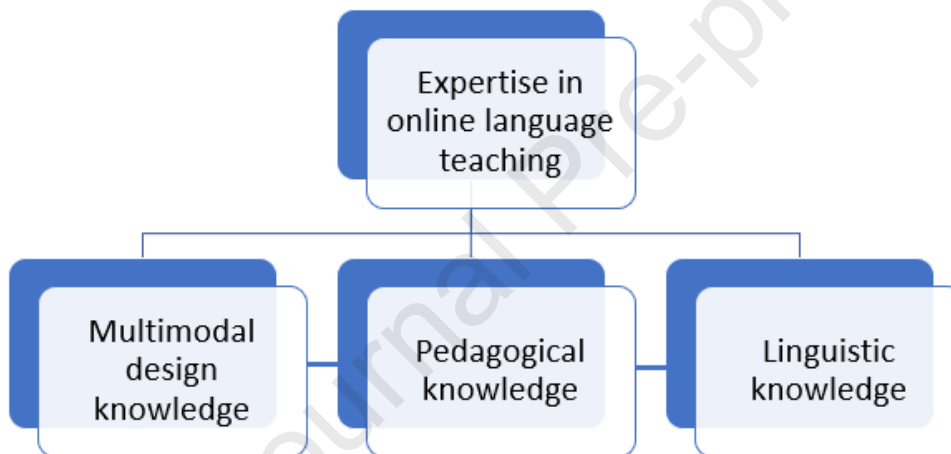
✓ 我的目的 已經 達到  
(object + topic) (verb)

✗ \**My goal already achieved.*  
(object + topic)

✓ *I already achieved my goal.*  
(subject) (finite verb) (object)

「I already achieved my goal」才是符合英文結構規律的子句

Figure 7



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The use of hyperlinks, virtual blackboard, colour coding as resources

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Drawing on relevant (popular culture) examples, using videos to prompt higher-order thinking and structuring lesson content

Examples of linguistic knowledge:

Awareness of linguistic theories and ideologies

Figure 8

Title page

## Doing expertise multilingually and multimodally in online English teaching videos

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### Acknowledgement:

We would like to thank the two English teachers who participated in our study. We would also like to thank Professor Li Wei for his insightful comments which tremendously improved the quality of this manuscript. Thanks must also be given to the anonymous reviewers who took time to give feedback on our work. The work described in this paper was fully supported by a grant from City University of Hong Kong (CityU Start-up Grant for New Faculty, Project No. 7200628).

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