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線上家教平台的教學服務提供者之個人品牌打造研究：
以 AmazingTalker 為例

A Study on the Personal Branding of Online English Teachers:
via AmazingTalker platform

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一轉眼，我完成了人生中的第二個碩士學位，這一切都源於兩年前的一個衝動。回想當時，為了在工作上有所突破，我決定回到學校進修，以提升自己的思維和見識。幸運的是，這個突發奇想趕在報名截止前十天，我卯足全力準備資料，決定勇敢地申請。還記得口試那天，由於疫情影響，面試臨時改為線上進行，需要輪流進入不同連結與四位教授對談。當我切換時，記得手在抖，生怕按錯影響面試。幸好，老天保佑一切如願，讓我在工作多年後再次重返校園，成為台大的學生。

這兩年有苦有樂。身為一個非典型的商管學院學生，我在社交場合並不自在，根據現在流行的 MBTI 分類，我是一個 I 型人格（笑）。重返校園讓我既興奮又緊張，特別是因為我帶著多年工作的經驗重回校園，期待能在理論與實務中檢視自己的能力。我還需要在多國同學的環境中主動發言，用英文表達自己的想法，這對我來說也是一個新的挑戰。但隨著時間的推移，我逐漸適應，並在 GMBA 課程中認識到不同國家同學的多樣性和獨特性。

在工作與學業的雙重壓力下，我發現原來自己有成為“時間管理大師”的潛力啊（笑）！每當我以為自己達到極限時，最後能一次次地完成任務。甚至在這忙碌的過程中，也一邊準備通過了法語檢定 DELF B2 的考試。我想，完成這個碩士學位，最大的意義在於在成年後，憑藉純粹的學習熱情，完成了這個自己設下的目標。

這過程中感謝太多人的幫助！謝謝一路行動與心靈支持我的先生祖康，你自己工作忙碌之餘還照顧我們家生活大小事，這兩年常常陪著我早起擔任司機把我送去一早九點的課，晚上趕報告準備考試時也陪著我晚睡，更常承接我所有因壓力而生的大小焦慮情緒，謝謝你做為我成年後的「家長」角色，讓我沒有煩惱如願地去完成這個夢想。謝謝我的爸媽生給我這樣的個性，並有持續追求進步的動力和恆毅力。也謝謝我的公婆，同理媳婦這兩年時常週末忙碌不見人影，總是尊重和支持我做任何想做的事。謝謝兩位最好的朋友蔚怡和姝彥，在我徬徨不安的時候，永遠給我正面力量，陪我聊聊，相信我做得很好，當我順利完成每一項關卡時，也總是真正為我開心。謝謝過去好主管 Morris 以及我第一個碩班的戴皖文教授，當初答應我很急迫的請託，幫我寫了讓我很感動的推薦信，沒有這份暖心支持，我無法順利踏上圓夢之路。

此外，非常謝謝我的指導教授瑤屏老師，在素未謀面下第一次約訪老師就願意相信我，並收我當指導學生，也總是替我著想，工作忙碌下，雖然時常只能和老師通信討論，老師也總是很迅速仔細地回覆我，在這過程中也一直鼓勵我，幫我疏通想法和協助提供不同解法，能有瑤屏老師陪伴一起完成這份論文，覺得溫暖且幸運！也感謝兩位口試委員怡靖教授和政衛教授，在短短口試一小時間給我受益良多的專業和精闢建議，幫助我能更完善這份論文。我非常珍惜這幾個月的論文之路，受到這些善良無私與真誠的幫助，大家的用心對待是研究生生涯中獲得最棒的禮物之一。

畢業只是一個階段里程碑的結束，但喜愛學習是一輩子的事。始終相信透過知識產生的智慧與力量，也相信每一個人都能因為知識而強大，並讓這份能量帶著自己前進到任何想去的遠方，持續探索人生道路上各種可能性。

2024.6.25 黃怡方 Yvonne Huang

中文摘要

本研究以線上家教平台 AmazingTalker 為例，探討平台上教學服務提供者（老師）的個人品牌建立過程。在數位時代，教育工作者有更多機會展示專業知識並培養個人品牌。本研究分析個人語言教育服務提供者在現今線上家教平台面臨的挑戰和應對策略，並建議合適的專業技能。本文首先回顧品牌理論及個人品牌的概念與發展，並討論個人品牌在數位時代及教育產業中的演變。研究採用質性資料收集方法，對 AmazingTalker 平台的台籍與外籍英語教師進行半結構化深度訪談，並整合二手資料得出結論。研究發現，教師應聚焦自身專長和目標學生群體，並調整個人頁面以符合平台演算法要求。試聽課是吸引學生的關鍵，儘管費用較低，教師應全力設計吸引人的內容。平台的導師制度對新手老師有建設性幫助，受訪者提到平台佣金制度影響，但實質意義在於平台希望教師能長期穩定發展。平台提供行政支持與大量導流服務，幫助教師在平台上建立個人品牌。研究提出實務建議，期望對未來相關研究與發展有所助益。

關鍵字：個人品牌、品牌形象、線上學習、客戶關係

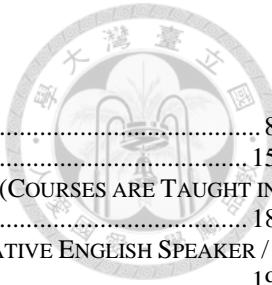
Abstract

This study explores personal brand building for teachers on the online tutoring platform AmazingTalker. In the digital age, educators have more opportunities to showcase their expertise and build personal brands. The research examines challenges faced by language education service providers on online tutoring platforms and strategies to address these challenges, supplementing necessary professional skills. The study reviews brand theory, the concept and development of personal branding, and its evolution in the digital age within the education industry. However, there is a lack of specialized research on personal brand building specifically for "online teachers," including the initial creation process, client interaction impact, and necessary skills. The study uses qualitative methods, conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews with Taiwanese and English native teachers from AmazingTalker. Secondary data collection is also employed to derive findings. Key findings indicate that teachers should focus on their expertise and target student groups, adjusting personal introduction pages to meet platform algorithm requirements. Trial lessons, although often low-priced, are crucial for converting students to official enrollment and should be designed to be appealing. The platform's mentorship program assists new teachers in establishing their brands. Despite complaints about the platform's commission mechanism, it aims to foster long-term, stable teacher development. Administrative support and substantial traffic services from the platform help teachers sustainably develop their personal brands. The study concludes with practical recommendations for future research and development.

Keywords: Personal Brand, Brand Image, Online Learning, Customer Relationship

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Research Background and Motivation

With the proliferation of the Internet, accessing information and engaging with others online has become second nature for modern consumers. Digital education and learning, born in response to the demands of contemporary society, have substantially transcended the constraints of traditional education. The emergence of online education platforms has provided students with more flexible, personalized, diverse and even more time- and economic-effective learning options (Wu, 2021). Simultaneously, it liberates educators from geographical limitations, granting them access to a broader array of employment prospects. This expansion enables them to showcase their individual teaching styles and characteristics, thereby cultivating a distinctive personal brand (Huang, 2021).

The genesis of online education platforms can be traced back to the Internet of Things (IoT). As technology matured and social needs changed, the rapid proliferation of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in 2008 by George Siemens and Stephen Downes, offered by prestigious universities and educational institutions such as Coursera, featuring a broad spectrum of high-quality learning topics, has spurred innovative business models in education across various companies and institutions. More paid platforms focusing on specific topics, skills or hobbies have emerged. In particular, the advancement of Internet technology has greatly increased the popularity of online language education, and even provided education service providers (e.g. English teacher) with innovative and entrepreneurial scenarios centered on the Internet. These new education platforms integrate artificial intelligence, big data and other new technologies to serve language education. Provide more and new job opportunities (Huang, 2021)



In Taiwan, several new tech platforms are more commonly used. Initially, there were only a few multi-topics learning platforms, Hahow (<https://hahow.in/>) and YOTTA (<https://www.yottau.com.tw/home>), dedicated to adult education in 2015 and language learning platforms AmazingTalker (<https://tw.amazingtalker.com/>) established in 2016. However, due to the impact of COVID-19 in 2020, the development of market players has begun to change (Lin, 2022). Nowadays, since consumers often have many choices, how these paid teaching courses attract them and then compete for the priority position in their buying decision is an important focus.

Furthermore, from the perspective of a course service provider, we can examine the challenges faced by the English Department. Chinese research indicates that with the popularization of English and the impact of COVID-19, employment prospects for English majors have been significantly affected. To address this, it is crucial to provide innovation and entrepreneurship education to English major students to improve their entrepreneurial skills and enhance their competitiveness in response to changing environmental conditions (Huang, 2021). Consequently, current education service providers must now assume multifaceted roles. They are no longer just teachers but also marketing promoters and salespersons of their own educational courses on online platforms.

According to the above, the platform provides a unique communication environment that connects teachers (service providers) and learners (course clients). According to McNally, D., & Speak, K. D. (2002), brands cannot exist without customers, and the same applies to personal brands (Huang, 2013). Nowadays, course teachers need to create personal brands to attract learners to purchase courses. While it presents new opportunities for educators, it also poses significant challenges for teachers to deal with clients by their own.

The research primarily focuses on the Taiwanese market. The more well-known online tutoring platforms currently in Taiwan include the following five platforms: Engoo (<https://engoo.com.tw/>), Cambly (https://www.cambly.com/english?lang=zh_TW), AmazingTalker (<https://tw.amazingtalker.com/>), as well as TutorABC (<https://www.tutorabc.com/site/zh-tw>) and Hi Tutor (<https://www.hi-tr.com/>). However, although the latter two also offer online tutoring courses, the majority of their business is focused on organizing overseas study tours, making their nature not entirely the same as pure online tutoring platforms. Therefore, TutorABC and Hi Tutor will be excluded from the discussion. When comparing online tutoring platforms, the research considers the main differences that students care about when choosing an online tutor. The public information from the official websites of each platform has been compiled and summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Comparison of Online Tutoring Platforms

	Establish date	Teachers	Teaching materials	Tuition fees
Engoo	2015, Taiwan	+8,209 teachers from 115 countries Focusing on English learning	Designed by the platform	Subscription - monthly payment
Cambly	2013, USA	+45,000 teachers from English speaking countries	Designed by the platform	Subscription - monthly payment
AmazingTalker	2017, Taiwan	+9,327 teachers from +190countires providing 143 language & subjects	Designed by teachers	Single lesson purchase

Source: Own Data

It can be seen that although AmazingTalker was established later and has fewer teachers compared to the other two platforms, Engoo and Cambly, it offers opportunities for teachers of various language subjects to teach on the platform. Additionally, the course materials are not specified by the platform but are designed and arranged by the teachers themselves. This

suggests that teachers have greater freedom to choose their preferred teaching materials and to design courses with their personal touch. Furthermore, in terms of payment for courses, students are not required to sign up for monthly subscriptions but can purchase individual lessons, which is more student-friendly and offers greater convenience. This also likely benefits the teachers' development on the platform. Therefore, these characteristics make AmazingTalker the ideal platform for the study on personal branding.

1.2 Problem Statement

Historically, education providers concentrated on enhancing teaching quality and methodologies. However, in the digital age's evolution, many providers must now cultivate personal branding skills to access a wider array of job opportunities. Bines, H., & Watson, D. (1992). believe in professional education is important to develop students into competent professionals and ensuring they continue to maintain professionalism in a dynamic work environment. It shows that with the evolution of the times, scholars have realized that vocational education is not only the professional ability training of the subject itself, but also the mentality of adapting to the future position and the sense of risk-taking and innovation are indispensable to cope with the changes of the times (Huang, 2021). This research would explore the challenges and responses faced by personal language education service providers on the current online tutoring platform in the digital age, and to add on the proper professional education.

Therefore, this study employs the AmazingTalker online tutoring platform as a case study. By conducting personal interviews with tutors offering language learning courses on the platform and gathering case data, this study seeks to comprehend the process through which

these teaching service providers establish their personal brands on the AmazingTalker platform. This includes an examination of strategic thinking and initiatives, influential factors in the process, and effective strategies for personal brand development.



Based on the above research motivations, the research purposes of this study as follows:

1. The process of personal brand construction: How should teaching service providers build personal brands on the AmazingTalker platform?
2. Factors influencing personal branding on the platform: What factors influence teaching service providers' ability to establish personal brands on the platform?
3. Difficulties and responses encountered in the process of personal brand building: Analyze the problems and obstacles encountered in building personal brands through the sharing of different education service providers and then understand how education service providers respond to and deal with them.

1.3 Relevance and Importance of the Research

Practical significance: Examining the personal brand-building process of teaching service providers on the AmazingTalker platform can offer valuable insights and recommendations for educators on alternative online tutoring platforms. Moreover, it can provide more streamlined and strategic guidance for individuals intending to enter this profession, aiding them in effectively attracting customers.

Besides, the research contributes to the comprehension of contemporary trends and challenges faced by teaching professionals, identifies areas for skill enhancement and learning improvement, and offers implications for further education research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review



2.1 Brand Theories

"Brand image" represents the brand beliefs held by consumers towards a specific brand (Kotler, 2000). Consumers form a set of beliefs to shape brand image through rational and emotional subjective cognition (Kotler and Armstrong, 1996). A positive brand image can influence consumer decisions and judgments, generating higher levels of trust and purchase intention.

2.2 The Concept and Development of Personal Branding

The concept of personal branding first emerged in 1997 with Tom Peters' "The Brand Called You," where he emphasized the importance of individuals considering themselves as brands with unique value propositions, images, and positioning. Similar to corporate and product brands, personal brands need promotion within target audience networks, shaping consumer perceptions and impressions through positioning, image building, and value propositions. This process involves differentiation and personalization to stand out from competitors. Peters advocates for everyone to possess the ability for self-promotion and marketing, effectively showcasing personal value and strengths to garner attention and recognition from others, ultimately exerting influence. Such construction is continuous and dynamic; personal brands require ongoing learning, growth, and innovation to maintain competitiveness and value positioning.

2.3 Personal Branding and Digital Tools

According to Labrecque et al. (2011), the concept of personal branding involves creating a unique identity to achieve personal or career goals and establish relationships with target audiences. With the emergence of the internet and the creation of social media over a decade ago, personal professional development has evolved. Individuals can now showcase themselves online and transmit messages from themselves to others, allowing individuals to create and maintain personal brand images (Goffman, 1959). Due to advancements in digital technology, individuals can instantly transmit messages through the internet from their personal computers or mobile phones, making the internet a perfect platform for nurturing personal brands. This self-presentation and message transmission are metaphorically likened to theatrical performances, where central actors choose appropriate costumes, props, and backgrounds to project the desired identity to the audience through complex self-negotiation and make adjustments to maintain consistency (Goffman, 1959). Thus, elements in personal web pages and social network profiles (such as personal information, photos, design, and layout choices) resemble costumes and props in theatrical metaphors (Labrecque et al., 2011). Furthermore, these personal brand workers attempt to visually depict and convey various aspects of their brand identity to others through online "visual collages," aiding customers in shaping interpretations and perceptions of personal brands (Schau and Gilly, 2003, p. 386). However, although the internet and digital tools have greatly simplified complexity and shortened the brand production process, the differentiation and sophistication of personal brands rely on the management of external images (photos, web design, layout, etc.) and textual messages (wording, etc.) by each brand operator, as well as their assembling and output capabilities. Since everyone has the ability to become their own brand (Peters, 1997), a person's primary job is to become their own marketer/brand communicator/salesperson (Shepherd, 2005), develop appropriate brand strategies for their brand, and promote and sell their brand.



If personal brand operators fail to manage their brand properly, the rights to the brand may be transferred to others, such as extending incorrect interpretations of their own brand by others, affecting the performance and attractiveness of personal brands (Kaputa, 2005). Finally, although the digital age advocates exploring multiple selves (Turkle, 1995), personal branding operates as a single individual's outward communication under different audience communication in the face of the internet ecology. Catering to multiple market preferences still requires attention to how to convey consistent and authentic brand messages to avoid brand perception discrepancies that hinder subsequent development (Shepherd, 2005).

2.4 Personal Branding in the Education Industry

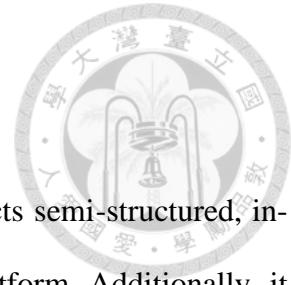
With the development of personal branding theory, the education industry is an area frequently discussed within this context. Relevant studies include research on personal branding of kindergarten teachers (Huang and Wang, 2014), primarily conducted through semi-structured interviews with 21 stakeholders, including principals, kindergarten teachers, and parents, to construct a reliable and effective scale for evaluating kindergarten teacher personal branding (Huang, 2013). Le Thanh et al. (2023) also conducted research in the education field, focusing on EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers. EFL teachers refer to those teaching English in non-English-speaking regions to learners whose first language is not English (Wikipedia). As English is a global lingua franca, this profession involves not only teaching itself but also the intersection of cultural adaptability, interpersonal communication, and social experiences, making personal branding crucial. Previous research has indicated the importance of personal branding in teachers' professional lives, particularly in aspects such as their teaching practices, career development, and job satisfaction (MacLure, 1993; Nord et al., 2014). Motivated by the service marketing nature of the education industry and the emphasis

on human interaction (Huang, 2006), previous research on teacher personal branding has focused on teaching service provision, student satisfaction, and affirmation, highlighting the value and importance of personal branding in service relationships.



The digital revolution of the 21st century has made social media a daily tool (Popkova & Gulzat, 2020) and has significantly increased the online visibility of personal brands (Jacobson, 2020). Earlier research, such as Labrecque et al. (2011), primarily focused on exploring the process, challenges, and impact of creating online personal brands among a diverse group of workers, including students, freelancers in design, and consultants. With the advancement of research, recent studies by Le Thanh et al. (2023) have investigated English teachers' self-awareness experiences and perspectives on personal branding on social media. This is because social platforms often serve as platforms and spaces for online teachers, such as EFL teachers, to nurture and establish personal professional development (Lomicka & Lord, 2016). However, research in this area mainly focuses on the coordination between digital identity and real-life, psychological factors, and perceptions of personal image. Therefore, there is currently a lack of dedicated research on the shaping and service production of "personal brands" specifically for "online teachers," including the frontend creation process, the impact of customer interaction, and the exploration of necessary skills. This study aims to address this gap in information and contribute to the discussion at the intersection of these two topics in both academic and practical contexts.

Chapter 3: Methodology



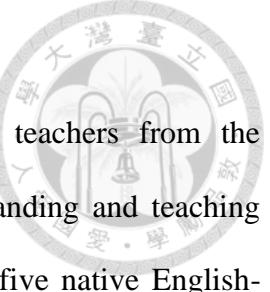
3.1 Study Design

The study employs qualitative data collection methods and conducts semi-structured, in-depth interviews with language teachers from the AmazingTalker platform. Additionally, it integrates secondary source collection and comparative analysis to derive research findings. Convenience sampling is utilized to select interviewees, wherein the researcher's subjective judgment guides the selection of samples aligning with the research objectives. Given that English learning holds a prominent position in Taiwan's national education system, and its global significance ranks second only to Chinese and Spanish (linguist Bernard Comrie, Microsoft Encarta 2023), the study concentrates on English teachers as interview subjects. Observations of English learning habits and behaviors in Taiwan indicate that some students prefer English teachers who are proficient in Chinese, as it fosters a sense of security and comprehension of learning content. Conversely, students who have attained a certain level of language proficiency may seek interactions with native speakers. Consequently, based on the need for representative sampling, both Taiwanese English teachers and native English-speaking foreign teachers were included as research subjects. (please refer to Table 2)

Table 2: The Demographic Information of Interviewees and Their IDs

	Teaching experience is above 4 years in the AT platform	Interviewees' IDs
Taiwanese teachers (courses are taught in Chinese and English)	Total 5 people	A B C D E
Foreign teachers (native English speaker / courses are taught in English)	Total 5 people	F G H I J

Source: Own Data



The interview sample for this study consists of ten language teachers from the AmazingTalker platform, selected to provide insights into personal branding and teaching practices. The sample includes a balanced mix of five Taiwanese and five native English-speaking teachers from the USA and South Africa, with a range of ages, teaching experiences, and backgrounds. On average, the teachers have approximately 2.5 years of experience on the AmazingTalker platform, with their total English teaching experience averaging over 8 years.

Sample Composition Description (please refer to Table 3 and 4):

- **Gender and Age:** The sample includes both male and female teachers, with ages ranging from 25 to 49 years old.
- **Teaching Experience:** The average teaching experience on the AmazingTalker platform is 2.5 years, with total English teaching experience averaging over 8 years. Nearly half of the teachers have over 10 years of experience.
- **Professional Backgrounds:** Four teachers are not from an educational background. The other teachers come from diverse professional backgrounds, including advertising, international trade, mechanical engineering, and real estate. This diversity enriches their approach to teaching and personal branding.
- **Teaching Specialties:** Among the interviewees, six teachers specialize in certification exams (TOEIC, IELTS, TOEFL) and interview/business English, while the others focus on improving the long-term English proficiency of learners across various age groups.
- **Student Demographics:** Most of these interviewees' students range from high school and junior high students to adults, including middle to senior-level executives and

individuals preparing for specific exams or interviews. Only one interviewee primarily teaches children.

- **Social Media Use:** Several teachers leverage social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube to enhance their visibility and attract students, with some having significant followings (e.g., one teacher with over 80K Instagram followers).

This diverse and experienced group of teachers provides a robust foundation for exploring the factors influencing personal branding and the challenges encountered in the process.

Among them, it is particularly noteworthy that Interviewee F, although a native French-speaking instructor, has proficient English skills with certification and consistently teaches on the platform for English and French subjects. Therefore, during the research process, his opinions were consulted as a reference. Additionally, it is speculated that the degree of familiarity with platform use also affects the establishment and practice of personal branding. The AmazingTalker platform has been operational for seven years since its establishment in 2016. The study stipulates respondents must have at least one year of experience using the platform as teachers. This criterion ensures their familiarity with platform operations, rules, and accumulated teaching experience, enabling insightful responses to the research questions.

Furthermore, The unique mentorship program on the AmazingTalker platform is designed to help new teachers become familiar with the platform and successfully establish their personal careers. Mentors are certified by the platform and typically possess extensive teaching experience and high ratings. These mentors provide one-on-one guidance to new teachers, helping them understand the platform's operations and teaching tools, thereby

improving their teaching quality. Although the platform offers some basic guidelines, new teachers may still experience confusion during practical application. Therefore, joining the mentorship team allows them to receive effective guidance and support more quickly. Consequently, in selecting interviewees, five mentors were invited to provide richer insights into personal brand management on the platform.

Table 3: The Interviewees Background Information of Taiwanese Teachers (Courses are Taught in Chinese and English)

Interviewee's ID / Nationality	Gender	Age	Years of teaching experience on the platform	Total years of English teaching experience	Currently employed elsewhere	Previous profession before joining the platform	Teaching specialties	Composition of student background	Use other social media platforms
A / Taiwan *Mentor	Female	49	2	20+	No	Physical cram school teacher	Certification exam TOEICs	TW: High school & Junior high school students / Adults	No
B / Taiwan	Male	25	2	2	No	Video making part time job, Real estate agent	College entrance exams	TW: High school / Junior high school students	Yes IG (followers 80K+)
C / Taiwan *Mentor	Female	42	5+	7+	No	Advertising	Children English	TW/HK/KR/ CN/JP/IN: Kids & Adults	Yes IG (followers <1K)
D / Taiwan *Mentor	Male	26	1	5+	Yes	International trade & Mechanical Engineer	Business English Interview English	TW/HK: Adults 30-40yrs / Middle to senior-level executives	Yes
E / Taiwan *Mentor	Female	32	6	14	Yes	Physical cram school teacher	IELTS TOEFL	25-35yrs High school & college students	Yes YouTube

Source: Own Data

Table 4: The Interviewees Background Information of Foreign Teachers (Native English Speaker / Courses are Taught in English)

Interviewee's ID / Nationality	Gender	Age	Years of teaching experience on the platform	Total years of English teaching experience	Currently employed elsewhere	Previous profession before joining the platform	Teaching specialties	Composition of student background	Use other social media platforms
F / France	Male	40	3	10	Yes	Physical cram school teacher	Certification exam	TW/HK/FR Teenagers – 40yrs	No
G / USA	Male	34	5	5	No	Photographer Real estate agent	Pronunciation	Mostly Asian countries: kids & adults	No
H / USA	Female	25	1	10+	Yes	Physical cram school teacher	IELTS TOEFL Master interview	TW, CN 20-30+ yrs.	Yes Website IG
I / USA	Female	27	1.5	2	No	PhD student, English essay improver	conversation for adults	Mostly Asian countries: Adults 20-60 yrs.	Yes IG
J / South Africa *Mentor	Male	36	4+	8	No	Music teacher for 10 yrs.	IELTS High / Junior high school	HK TW CN	No

Source: Own Data

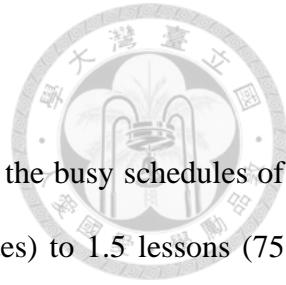
Prior to the interview, consent was obtained from the interviewee through the AT platform's mailbox. They were briefed on the interview's motivation, purpose, timing, and method. An interview outline was provided in advance to facilitate the interviewees' understanding and preparation, thereby enhancing the quality and depth of the interview data. The study conducted interviews with a total of 10 interviewees. The interviews will be conducted through an online classroom on the AT platform. Due to the sensitive nature of the interview content, involving business secrets, interviewees' identities are anonymized using alphabetic representations to safeguard future work on the case.

3.2 Procedures and Sources

3.2.1 Interview Procedure

Each respondent participated in an interview. To accommodate the busy schedules of some interviewees, the interview duration was limited to 1 (50 minutes) to 1.5 lessons (75 minutes) of standard teaching time on the AT platform, conducted in a semi-structured format. The researcher conducted individual in-depth interviews centered around the topic. The interview outline will be prepared in advance, allowing for flexibility to delve deeper or explore additional areas based on the interviewees' responses.

The interview procedure is as follows: prior to commencement, the researcher will introduce herself and elucidate the research's purpose and focus. Additionally, the recording of interview data, usage guidelines, and concerns regarding commercial confidentiality will be addressed. After obtaining the consent of the interviewee, the interviewee will first be asked to introduce themselves and their basic background in teaching on the platform, such as the average number of teaching hours per week, whether they have other full-time jobs, etc., and then ask about their motivations for joining the AT platform in the first place. As well as starting to get into the interviewees' sharing of experiences in building their personal brands on the platform. Throughout the interview, the researcher elucidated and clarified questions as needed, ensuring timely and coherent inquiry. The interviews were scheduled within a formal course session taught by the interviewee on the platform. As a token of appreciation for their participation in the interview and contribution to research data collection, a single course fee will be provided.



3.2.2 Interview Outline Design

Based on the research objectives and theoretical framework discussed in the literature, the study has devised the following interview outline. This outline was developed through careful consideration of key themes in personal branding and language education services. The questions aim to achieve a comprehensive understanding of how language education service providers construct their personal brands, as well as the factors influencing this process. Each question was formulated based on both the need to gather fundamental background information and the desire to explore the detailed experiences and challenges faced by the interviewees. The interview seeks to initially gather basic background information about the interviewees, elucidate the methods they employ in constructing their personal brands, and delve into their experiences, highlighting key points and challenges encountered. The interview outline is detailed below:

Table 5: Interview Outline

1. The process of personal brand construction Personal profile on the platform 1.1 How do you determine the content of your personal information page on the AmazingTalker platform? 1.2 Which aspects of your profile do you consider most important for attracting students? 1.3 How do you believe your profile influences students' decisions to enroll in your courses? Competition & differentiation 1.4 Given the number of teachers offering similar subjects on the AmazingTalker platform, what are your thoughts on this competition? 1.5 In such a competitive market, how do you distinguish yourself from other teachers and enhance your competitiveness? (e.g., teaching methods, curriculum design, student feedback, etc.) 1.6 What do you believe sets you apart from other teachers offering similar subjects on the AmazingTalker platform? What do you consider your strongest attribute?
2. Factors influencing personal branding on the platform: Essential Skills 2.1 What skills do you believe are essential for promoting courses effectively?

2.2 Which skills do you currently possess, and which ones do you feel you need to improve upon?

2.3 Which skills do you plan to develop further to enhance your course promotion efforts?

2.4 How do you currently leverage social media and online promotion to increase your visibility on the AmazingTalker platform?



Customer relationship

2.5 How do you cultivate strong relationships with your students on the AmazingTalker platform? How does this affect your performance?

2.6 Do you believe that establishing strong teacher-student relationships is essential for long-term success on the AmazingTalker platform?

Pricing

2.7 How do you determine the pricing for your courses on the AmazingTalker platform?

2.8 How do you believe your pricing strategy influences students' decisions? Can you provide any examples of how adjusting prices has impacted your sales?

3. Difficulties and responses encountered in the process of personal brand building:

Commission mechanism

3.1 What are your thoughts on the commission mechanism implemented by the AT platform? How does it affect you personally?

Difficulties and responses

3.2 In your experience, what aspects of course promotion do you find relatively easy or challenging?

3.3 Which skills do you plan to develop further to enhance your course promotion efforts?

Other

3.4 If you were asked to provide three suggestions to teachers who are new to the platform, what would they be?

Source: Own Data

Chapter 4: Result and Analysis



This study analyzes interview data, combines literature review with research objectives, to understand the potential key elements and issues that platform service providers (teachers) may encounter in the process of establishing a personal brand on the platform, and proposes corresponding strategies and recommendations. However, before delving into the research findings, this chapter will first introduce the platform background and the structure and relationships of the stakeholders to help readers better understand the context. This explanation will provide a clear reference for the analysis in the subsequent chapters.

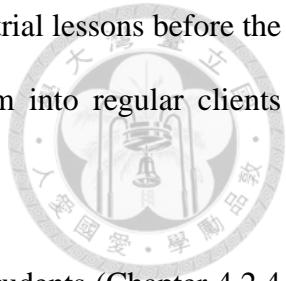


Figure 1: The Structure and Relationships of the Stakeholders and the AmazingTalker Platform

Source: Own Data

First, the AmazingTalker platform is an online tutoring platform offering one-on-one tutoring in various subjects. The platform primarily connects educational service providers, i.e., teachers, with learners, i.e., students (please refer to Figure 1). Among them, teachers are the main focus of this study. They showcase their credentials, teaching expertise, and style through their personal introduction pages on the platform (4.1 Items for Establishing a Personal Brand on the AmazingTalker Platform). These page elements include personal photos, copywriting,

videos, and class reviews. The platform design allows teachers to offer trial lessons before the formal classes to attract potential students and possibly convert them into regular clients (Chapter 4.2.1 Trial Lessons).



Moreover, teachers need to manage customer relationships with students (Chapter 4.2.4 Maintaining Customer Relationships), design course content, provide various teaching services, and extend the overall learning lifecycle of existing clients (returning students). Focusing on optimizing these aspects not only helps improve student satisfaction but also aids teachers in successfully establishing and steadily maintaining their personal brand on the platform.

The basic functions of the AmazingTalker platform include matching suitable teachers and students through algorithms, giving new teachers opportunities to connect with new student clients, and gradually building a stable income. Additionally, to provide a steady stream of new students, the platform continuously invests heavily in advertising to increase its visibility, thereby helping teachers develop on the platform (4.3.1 Commission Rates and Teacher Retention). The platform plays a central role in this structural relationship. To support new teachers in better developing on the platform and retaining quality teachers, the platform has designed a mentorship program (Chapter 4.5.1 The Mentorship Program), where experienced and certified teachers offer one-on-one training to new teachers. This helps them become familiar with the platform functions, including technical operations and data analysis, as well as how to quickly meet algorithm requirements and set appropriate course prices (Chapter 4.2.3 Pricing Strategies), thus enabling them to more efficiently develop their personal brand on the platform.

The perspectives of learners are not the focus of this study. Therefore, insights into how teachers' various strategic operations on the platform, such as the presentation of personal pages, planning of trial lessons, and management of customer (student) relationships, impact

students' responses will be derived from teachers' interviews. This aspect is not discussed in separate chapters in the study but can serve as a reference for future research.

The following chapters will provide more detailed analysis and explanation of the processes and various influencing factors.

4.1 Items for Establishing a Personal Brand on the AmazingTalker Platform

4.2 Factors Affecting Personal Branding on the AmazingTalker Platform

4.3 Difficulties and Coping Strategies in Establishing a Personal Brand on the Platform

4.4 Experience Transfer: Advice for Novice Teachers

4.5 Other Research Findings

4.1 Items for Establishing a Personal Brand on the AmazingTalker Platform

The AmazingTalker platform is an online tutoring service that offers tutors for various subjects. Learners can easily find the most suitable teacher for themselves through the platform's transparent and public information, as well as its big data algorithm that assists in matching. The platform hosts online tutors from around the world, enabling learners to have one-on-one discussions with tutors according to their needs and to customize their own online courses. As the platform primarily promotes online tutoring services, each teacher's personal page on the platform acts as the main product page marketed to consumers.

Tom Peters (1997) emphasized that the success of personal branding largely depends on how a unique value proposition is communicated, thus “Brand communication “ highlights the importance of effectively conveying a brand's values and benefits to its target audience. In this context, the AmazingTalker platform ensures that each teacher's personal page is not only

an introduction to their qualifications but also a communication tool that aligns with the platform's brand image. In the dedicated support page (<https://reurl.cc/gGpZk4>) for teachers on the AmazingTalker platform, there is a section on "How to Create an Ideal Teacher Profile?" (Please refer to Table 6) It emphasizes that a teacher's personal page is the first impression students get of. Therefore, it is crucial to properly edit the relevant sections of the page to present a friendly profile picture, a clear title, and a concise introduction of the teacher's strengths. This can quickly attract students' clicks and persuade them to purchase lessons. The platform provides a checklist and step-by-step guidelines for new teachers to follow to complete and update their personal page information, such as educational background, personal strengths, personality, and course syllabus design, as well as identifying the main target audience. The platform's clear SOP guides novice teachers in taking the first step towards establishing their personal brand on the platform.

Table 6: Checking List from AmazingTalker Platform for New Teachers

Profile Photo	Title	Profile menu page	Personal introduction page
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clear Face <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clear Background <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Friendly	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emojis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Short Sentences / Keywords <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emojis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bullet Points <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organized in Sections <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Short Sentences / No Long Paragraphs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Persuasive and Engaging

Source: AmazingTalker. (2024). How to create an ideal teacher profile? Retrieved from <https://reurl.cc/gGpZk4>

Additionally, the platform's support page (<https://reurl.cc/gGpXrz>) offers detailed guidelines on how teachers can record their personal videos (Please refer to Table 7). These videos predominantly appear on the teachers' personal introduction pages. The support page also provides exemplary script templates, which include: "greeting + teaching advantages +

teaching content + success stories + call to action." It is emphasized that the first second of the video is crucial, as this frame will be captured by the platform for the thumbnail.

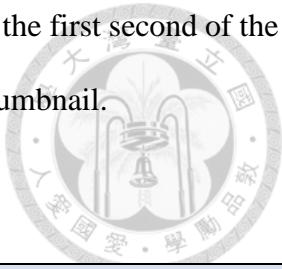


Table 7: Suggestions from AmazingTalker Platform for New Teachers

Video	
Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use HD or 4K Mode for Recording <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensure Adequate Lighting and Adjust Brightness/Contrast <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Upload Videos at 720p or Higher Resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Avoid Recording in Poor or Excessive Lighting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Avoid Glare from Glasses or iPad <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Export in Highest Quality When Using Other Software

Source: AmazingTalker. (2024). How to create an ideal teacher profile? Retrieved from <https://reurl.cc/gGpZk4>

1. Photo

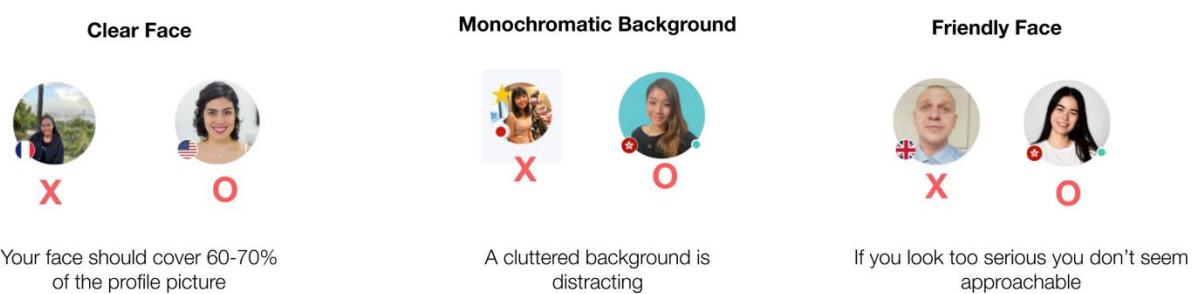
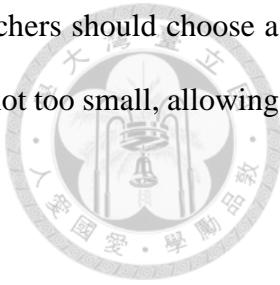


Figure 2: Examples from the AmazingTalker Support Page

Source: AmazingTalker. (2024). How to create an ideal teacher profile? Retrieved from <https://reurl.cc/gGpZk4>

Regarding teachers' profile photos, the AmazingTalker platform provides basic guidelines (Please refer to Figure 2). Several interviewees indicated that the photo is a significant factor for learners when choosing a teacher and establishing a favorable impression. In the highly competitive platform environment, an appealing profile photo can help a teacher stand out and attract students to view more of their personal information. Interviewee B mentioned, *"The reason is that this is your competition photo; it shouldn't be too serious, and you should look good."* Other interviewees agreed that first impressions and appearance are indeed considerations for learners on the platform, and the teacher should not appear too distant.

Therefore, when setting up their photo, interviewees suggested that teachers should choose a headshot that occupies 80% of the frame. This ensures that the photo is not too small, allowing students to see clearly and not miss out on potential matches.



2. Video

Ninety percent of the teachers interviewed indicated that videos are important for their promotion. Most interviewees agreed that videos can help learners understand the teacher before the official class begins. Teachers can use the tool to showcase their unique characteristics, serving as an added advantage. For example, when parents and students look for suitable teachers, they often intuitively compare academic backgrounds. Teachers who did not graduate from top schools can use the video tool to highlight their personalities and teaching strengths. Although Interviewee C, a long-time veteran tutor on the platform, mentioned that after trying different video materials, she did not notice a significant impact on student enrollment conversion. However, she maintains an open attitude towards experimenting with new tools if her mentees are willing to try.

Some interviewees provided examples, such as young children, where parents particularly care about the teacher's friendliness and teaching style. Interviewee E, a senior platform mentor, shared her experience with mentees she has coached. *“There was a teacher from South Africa who started his introductory video by holding a sheep or something like that while teaching. His target audience was children, and he presented himself with great energy. Naturally, parents liked this teacher, so he quickly gained popularity.”* Other interviewees also noted that they have observed substantial traffic and student inquiries generated by effectively utilizing video tools and designing video content thoughtfully. For instance, Interviewee E shared another example: *“I also coached another teacher who made an extremely well-crafted video. That teacher managed to attract 100 students in the first month alone. So, videos are*

extremely, extremely important." The interviewee E further mentioned that for Chinese language teachers, videos help students evaluate the spoken English proficiency of Taiwanese teachers who are non-native speakers. This assessment helps determine if the teacher is truly capable of speaking English well. Additionally, videos better convey a teacher's teaching style, personality, and classroom atmosphere compared to static text, helping learners visualize and build trust before starting classes.

Moreover, in the digital age, people are generally familiar with short videos on YouTube and social media platforms. Younger teachers, influenced by YouTubers, have more experiences using social media and a better understanding of videos. They are often more motivated to learn how to create videos that attract learners. Interviewees mentioned that they consider what content students want to see, and even if they haven't formally learned video editing skills, they figure it out through self-exploration, ultimately producing effective promotional videos. Interviewees typically script and refine their video content to resonate with and appeal to learners. They further noted the importance of considering the audience's perspective and attention span when making personal videos, offering specific tips like adjusting video pace, adding background music, using post-production effects, and controlling video length to enhance engagement. Since audiences typically focus on the first 10-15 seconds, it's crucial to convey the key points quickly to capture attention.

Certainly, there are also many older teachers on the platform who still perform well in selling lessons. Interviewee L, a mentor, shared that if teachers lack these skills, he advises them to hire someone skilled in video editing to help create outstanding videos for better promotion.

Different generations of interviewees have varying views on video trends. Interviewee A, 49 years old, mentioned that the platform introduced new features allowing short vertical videos shot on mobile phones in addition to the traditional horizontal format, encouraging teachers to upload more. She has not made these videos, feeling that they are too short to convey professional information effectively. In contrast, Interviewee B, a 25-year-old who has been on the platform for two years, is enthusiastic about exploring the new trend in short videos. Despite being self-taught in shooting and editing, his videos are well-received by students. Interviewee F, a middle-aged teacher who is not particularly skilled with video tools and prefers not to speak directly to the camera, believes teachers should not feel anxious about mainstream trends. He suggests that the key is to find one's unique approach to attract their target audiences, which can still lead to success on the platform.

In short, the importance of video for teacher promotion on the AmazingTalker platform is widely recognized among interviewed teachers. The digital age and familiarity with short videos encourage younger teachers to try and excel in video creation, often learning through self-exploration. While some older teachers may be less focused on video trends, hiring skilled personnel when necessary or finding other ways to highlight personal characteristics to achieve success is a consensus.

3. Copywriting

Although the platform's guidelines suggest that teachers should pay attention to key points in their introductions, organize them into sections, and use short sentences, interviewees who serve as mentors mentioned that these instructions can sometimes be too abstract for new teachers, making it difficult for them to hit the mark. Interviewees noted that the mentorship system is particularly helpful in this regard. Mentors are well-versed in the best ways to format and present information to attract students, so they teach new teachers how to highlight their

unique selling points using bullet points. Interviewee E, a veteran mentor on the platform, shared that she was among the early teachers selected for mentor training program. Along with the AmazingTalker platform staff, they analyzed data to distill a formula for successful personal pages, which they then passed down to new teachers. She explained, *"On the platform page, if you click in, the first six lines of text are what you see initially; the rest needs to be expanded. If the first six lines don't attract students, they might not expand to read more."* This is because students typically don't spend much time on a single page, similar to email marketing where the subject and first few lines must pique interests. Important information such as pricing, promotions, specialties, and expertise should be included in these first six lines to ensure they capture the opportunity to pitch further. After that, the main teaching services and course descriptions can be detailed. For new teachers, it is recommended to focus on three main courses initially to avoid overwhelming students with too much information and to help them quickly grasp the teacher's strongest teaching areas. Using short phrases to highlight key points and make reading easier is also advised.

Mentors guide new teachers by asking them to draft an initial version of their personal page, which is then reviewed and adjusted collaboratively to achieve the best presentation. Interviewees stated that when mentoring new teachers in writing their personal pages, they first have a discussion to brainstorm strengths. After drafting an initial version, mentors help refine it. These mentors, having received similar support when they joined the platform, pass on their experiences to benefit new teachers. Other interviewees mentioned that mentors also enhance and revise based on the existing structure of the information, focusing on presenting each teacher's strongest attributes in bullet points to prevent readers impatience from leading to them skipping the teacher's profile.

An interesting insight from the interviews was shared by mentor Interviewee J, who said, "Students are a little bit lazy, and if they see a lot of writing, they will get scared and they don't want to read." For English learners, seeing long narrative paragraphs can be daunting, so understanding these psychological barriers and helping students quickly get to know a teacher without pressure is key to writing an effective personal page.



Figure 3: The Number of AmazingTalker's Online Languages Courses / Teachers / Students
Source: AmazingTalker. (2024/06/10). Explore the World through Foreign Languages.
Retrieved from <https://tw.amazingtalker.com/about>

When it comes to the text on a personal page, as Philip Kotler's STP (Segmenting, Targeting, and Positioning) marketing theory suggests, the copywriting should consider who the audience is. With about 2.94 million learners on the platform, not all are potential customers for every teacher (Please refer to Figure 3). Many interviewees emphasized the importance of considering the subject taught and the profile of their target customers. What type of students do they want to attract, and what narrative style and content will resonate with them? Therefore, the personal page's copy must be tailored to the specific student demographic, rather than being a one-size-fits-all template. Interviewees agreed that the personal page requires the most effort because learners easily compare teachers' profiles when searching. When learners are unfamiliar with the teachers and the conditions and prices are similar, having information that

another teacher lacks can make a difference. Younger interviewees mentioned that besides writing the copy, using emojis can add personality. While many new teachers start by referencing how others present their pages, they should not be limited by existing styles. Adding personalized emojis, similar to managing their own social media, can highlight individual differences.

4. Managing Course Reviews

In the process of cultivating teachers' personal brands on the platform, the course review system within individual profiles is crucial for teachers to thrive. These reviews provide feedback on the interaction between learners and teachers, reflecting the teaching quality and satisfaction levels for prospective learners. New teachers can actively solicit reviews from learners and accept constructive feedback, enhancing their image and reputation to attract more students and establish a solid personal brand on the platform. Therefore, the course review system directly impacts a teacher's success and influence on the platform.

However, managing course reviews on individual profiles is not simply about soliciting positive feedback from learners. Interviewee C, a senior mentor on the platform for over five years, applies concepts from customer relationship management to learner review operations. She asserts that the focus should align with the teacher's teaching priorities and target audiences. For example, a teacher specializing in exam preparation, such as IELTS or TOEFL, requires reviews that demonstrate students' achievements. Conversely, a teacher focused on long-term language proficiency enhancement, such as business communication, requires more comprehensive reviews. Interviewee C emphasizes that accumulating such reviews over time serves as proof of a teacher's capabilities.

Moreover, Interviewee C reiterates that encouraging learners to leave reviews is not only about aiding teacher recruitment but also about documenting their language learning progress. This approach fosters a positive learning journey for students and enhances the overall interaction between teachers and students, resulting in a mutually beneficial scenario.

4.2 Factors Affecting Personal Branding on the AmazingTalker Platform

4.2.1 Trial Lessons

The AmazingTalker platform offers learners the opportunity to have a 25-minute trial lesson before officially signing up for a course, with fees varying depending on individual teacher rates. For teachers, these trial lessons are akin to a chance for in-person sales pitches, representing a crucial opportunity to initiate course enrollments. According to David Anker's (1998) "Brand Identity Theory," which defines a brand's unique characteristics, values, and attributes, AmazingTalker teachers must establish a strong brand image by showcasing their teaching style, expertise, and unique selling points during trial lessons to attract students. Since everyone has the potential to become their own brand (Peters, 1997), teachers must act as their own marketers, brand communicators, and salespeople (Shepherd, 2005). They need to develop appropriate trial lesson strategies and promote and sell their personal brand effectively.

By carefully designing the content and structure of their trial lessons to make the overall learning experience more appealing, teachers can create a positive first impression. Consequently, many teachers set extremely competitive prices for trial lessons to attract learners and provide an opportunity for them to experience their teaching styles firsthand. Even though the cost of trial lessons may sometimes be low, or even offered for free, teachers prioritize the quality of trial lessons over financial considerations. This is because the success

of trial lessons directly impacts whether learners proceed to purchase formal courses. Thus, the trial lesson becomes a pivotal moment for teachers to convey their brand's unique value and secure future enrollments. For example, in Figure 4, the teacher at the top of the image has only 9 course reviews and is a new teacher. She uses a very low price, around USD 1 = NTD 36 for trial lessons to attract new students to purchase courses, thereby increasing her chances of converting them into regular students. On the other hand, the teacher at the bottom of the image already has over a thousand course reviews. Despite this, she still offers a trial lesson price that is cheaper than half of her regular lessons to recruit new students.

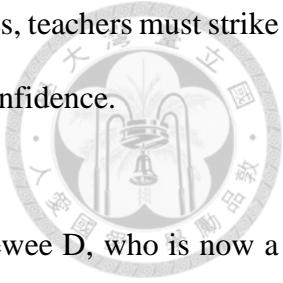


Figure 4: Price Differences Between Trial Lesson and Official Course

Source: AmazingTalker. (2014). Master English with Immersive Online English Tutoring. Retrieved from <https://reurl.cc/RqEv2r>

Compared to regular lessons, which typically last 50 minutes, trial lessons are shorter, spanning only half the duration. Within the brief timeframe, teachers must convey their teaching style, methods, and course content while also, more importantly, quickly understanding learners' genuine learning needs and goals. Teachers must identify learners' learning issues and provide constructive feedback to build trust. The success of trial lessons depends on various factors, including the design and guidance of lesson content, enabling learners to comprehend their own learning problems, and fostering learners' anticipation of

future learning with the teacher. While addressing learners' learning issues, teachers must strike a balance between correcting mistakes without undermining learners' confidence.



Despite only having a year of experience on the platform, Interviewee D, who is now a mentor, mentioned that when learners inquire about trial lessons, he engages in preliminary discussions with them to understand their motivations and learning needs. By using system formats to design personalized learning plans for learners, he can efficiently and systematically identify areas for improvement and provide recommendations during trial lessons, thereby increasing the conversion rate of his trial lessons.

Furthermore, interviewees highlighted the importance of maintaining a proper pace and atmosphere during trial lessons while allowing learners to speak. For instance, when teaching conversational skills, teachers must provide opportunities for learners to practice expressing themselves and express their needs during the lesson. Interviewee F emphasized the need for teachers to ensure learners' participation during trial lessons by adapting to different learning needs and periodically refocusing to confirm their requirements and thoughts.

Interviewees also monitor the conversion rates of trial lessons through backend data. A conversion rate of at least 50% is generally expected, although it may fall to 40% for lessons targeting children. If the conversion rate is lower, adjustments to the teaching approach during trial lessons may be necessary. Interviewee E remarked, *"In the teaching community, we talk about your acting skills, whether you can reach a certain level."* Trial lessons are viewed as a meticulously designed performance, where the teacher's acting skills and performance directly influence the success of subsequent teaching sessions. Within the brief duration of 25 minutes, trial lessons must captivate learners to stand out from other teachers on the platform.

Finally, the mentor Interviewee A, with 20 years of tutoring experience, emphasized the importance of competency and realism in trial lessons. She stated, *"I think it's still about your true competence, it's really practical. 25 minutes will determine whether to buy a course... It's definitely not based on emotions."* Trial lessons emphasize realism and competence because one-on-one formal courses are usually not cheap. Teachers must demonstrate their value during trial lessons to convince students that investing in a full course with them is worthwhile, testing their true competences.

4.2.2 Skills for Course Promotion

For teachers on the AmazingTalker platform, promoting courses requires a diverse set of skills to attract more learners and increase course sales. As eighty percent of the interviewed teachers transitioned from offline to online teaching on the platform, the research have outlined the differences in the skills mentioned by the interviewees regarding the transition between offline and online teaching environments shown in Table 8.

Table 8: The Comparison of Offline vs Online Platform Based on Interviewees' Sharing

	Offline course	Online course
Classroom Scale & Interaction Methods	Large class teaching, group discussions among multiple students or teacher-led instruction	Personalized teaching, one-on-one interaction, emphasizing the teacher's specialization and understanding of individual student needs
Course Design & Technical Requirements	Reliance on textbooks and traditional teaching aids	Personalized teaching materials, familiarity with multimedia application tools and technologies
Teaching Environment	Fixed venue environment	More flexible, requiring stronger time management and self-planning abilities

Source: Own data

Therefore, due to the necessity of technology and digital tools for teachers on the AmazingTalker platform when promoting courses to attract more students and increase course

sales, the following discusses the skills commonly considered important by the interviewees in relation to digital platforms, or some skills that teachers are currently continuing to improve through ongoing education.



1. Business Knowledge and Marketing Skills

Several interviewees mentioned their desire to learn business and marketing skills alongside teaching on the platform, especially in the realm of freelancing and digital marketing. Many interviewees expressed their aspiration to not be confined to a single platform in the future. Some even mentioned their plans for other personal brand entrepreneurship ventures. Therefore, they aim to continue learning these skills to prepare for future needs. One interviewee discussed how, before joining the platform, he encountered career bottlenecks and sought other opportunities by traveling to different cities within the country to learn from individuals with relevant marketing experience. Essential marketing skills such as understanding target audiences and storytelling techniques have helped him develop a good reputation on the platform, despite not joining any mentor's team on the platform, leading to a stable income and a continuous stream of clients.

Regarding basic concepts of business marketing, many interviewees, despite not having a background in marketing, but rather in language teaching, emphasized the importance of accurately selecting their primary target audience to help develop their careers on the platform. Here, the primary target audience refers to learners who best fit the teacher's expectations for teaching and the subjects the teacher excels in. They recognize that aligning the target audience with teaching materials results in the most suitable combination for teachers and stimulates their optimal teaching performance.

2. Marketing Practices

Since the platform is the primary battlefield for teachers to promote courses and teaching, teachers need to find ways to understand the platform's operation and mechanism to help sell courses on it. Therefore, if teachers can grasp the platform's algorithm mechanism, they can better adjust and comply with the platform's rules of the game, positioning themselves advantageously. For example, Interviewee D, who has an engineering background, compared to other interviewees, indicated that because he already had a rough understanding of the relevant operations before joining the platform, he would analyze and study based on his course sales performance after actually joining the platform to teach. However, if novice teachers cannot understand the platform's algorithm mechanism and lack related knowledge and skills, they can still rely on the mentor for assistance in getting started. Therefore, the lack of the skill does not have too much of an impact.

Social media platforms are among the channels favored by many freelancers and small businesses for attracting customers and business opportunities. Interviewees indicated that managing their own social media channels is indeed beneficial, but currently, they primarily rely on the platform's mechanisms to acquire customers rather than actively marketing themselves on social media. The reason is that the purpose and browsing motivations of the audience on social media platforms differ from those on the AmazingTalker platform. Therefore, interviewees do not consider social media platforms as assisting in current student acquisition efforts; they rely solely on the platform's traffic. Interviewee I, who has been a YouTuber for over 8 years, shared a similar sentiment. However, considering the complexity of the online world, privacy concerns, and the potential impact on their other online identities, he compartmentalizes different platform functionalities and primarily rely on the AmazingTalker platform's traffic. Some interviewees also mentioned that they have

subjectively observed a decrease in the numbers of learners on the platform since the post-COVID, with some learners returning to physical classrooms. Therefore, they prefer to strengthen enrollment through social media and then guide learners to the platform.



Additionally, some interviewees with shorter tenures on the platform mentioned that while they have YouTube or Instagram accounts, initially, it was to provide learners with more learning materials or to use other digital tools to assist in class without being influenced by rigid interfaces. They hoped to provide learners with more organized course materials to enhance their learning experiences. Therefore, these interviewees expressed no intention to lead learners through social media content. Similar to Interviewee I's mention, since the types of learners attracted on Instagram are not entirely those teachers wish to teach on the AmazingTalker platform, there is currently no intention to transfer different audiences to the platform. However, they hope to establish other social media platforms in the future, reducing reliance on the AmazingTalker platform as the sole outlet for personal brand management.

However, many interviewees raised a concern that while teachers generally expect to manage their own media and other social channels to strengthen their personal brands, the current platform requirements demand a certain number of hours to reduce commission percentages. Teachers are already dedicating too much energy each week to lesson preparation and teaching, leaving insufficient time for marketing activities. Interviewee L, a mentor, emphasized that besides helping to strengthen teachers' personal brands, social media is essential and helpful for teachers who plan to expand their personal careers beyond the platform in the future. However, he also believed that unless a teacher genuinely cannot teach well and needs additional advertising and traffic support, the current platform's traffic provides

sufficient customer sources for teachers. Therefore, if teachers are not currently managing personal social media platforms, the impact is not significant.



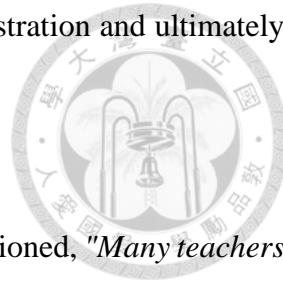
3. Content Creation

Due to intense competition on the platform, interviewees emphasized the importance of enhancing their ability to create various teaching materials. Whether it's videos, customized files, or social media posts, they need to tap into their personal creativity to produce engaging language learning content that captures learners' attention, allowing them to feel they are receiving valuable resources from their teachers. Interviewee A, a seasoned educator and also a platform mentor, expressed her desire to develop systematic themed AI video courses. She aims to provide learners with engaging learning materials for different learning purposes, using a subscription-based model to explore more business opportunities. Consequently, she is currently enhancing her technological skills to meet the demand for content creation. Similarly, Interviewee D also aims to increase video materials, but the initiative stems from the need to accommodate different accents among students. Therefore, he is considering collaborating with teachers from different countries to develop thematic courses or jointly create teaching materials.

4. Communications

In the platform teaching environment, unlike in physical classrooms with administrative support, each teacher must facilitate course sales through direct interaction with learners. Given the characteristics of online teaching platforms, which emphasize deeper one-on-one interactions, interviewees noted that truly understanding learners' issues is a crucial skill closely linked to teaching techniques. Many students cannot adequately express their learning needs and problems. If a teacher lacks sensitivity, it can easily lead to ineffective

communication and an inability to address students' issues, causing frustration and ultimately hindering course sales.



Interviewee C, a senior mentor on the platform, specifically mentioned, *"Many teachers are focused on selling their courses, so they approach it from their own perspective: 'You should buy my course because I can offer you something.' But instead, they should first ask what the students need and then provide what they need."* This highlights that teachers should focus more on students' needs during interactions rather than merely promoting their own courses. The student-centric sales strategy not only increases student satisfaction but also more effectively facilitates course sales.

5. Proficiency in Languages

Several foreign teachers mentioned that proficiency in Chinese is particularly advantageous on the AmazingTalker platform, as it was founded in Taiwan and has a significant number of Mandarin-speaking learners. Interviewee F highlighted that many teachers claim to have basic Chinese skills, but his fluency in both speaking and listening often impresses students during trial lessons, providing a substantial advantage and leading to more course sales. Some foreign interviewees also noted that improving their Chinese skills would likely increase their sales opportunities and strengthen their negotiating power regarding pricing.

Furthermore, the AmazingTalker platform allows personal pages to be translated into other languages, which can display the teacher's profile on different nationality-specific listings, expanding their visibility beyond a single national audience. Therefore, teachers proficient in multiple languages or those who can find assistance in translating their profiles can better promote their courses on the platform.

Lastly, according to an online article by Sonu Im (2023), it is recommended that teachers offer two subjects, as this can double the number of lesson bookings. For instance, Interviewee F teaches both English and French. While his English classes are somewhat limited due to accent preferences, offering French classes has significantly enhanced his competitiveness on the platform. The dual-subject strategy has helped him maintain a steady student base and quickly reach the reduced commission income target during his early period on the platform.

4.2.3 Pricing Strategies

The pricing strategy for courses on the AmazingTalker platform significantly impacts teachers' ability to establish and maintain their personal brand. The price set for a course can affect learners' perception of the teacher's professionalism and value. High prices may imply high-quality teaching services, while lower prices might attract more students, influencing the teacher's brand image. According to the "Brand Positioning theory" (Jack Trout and Al Ries , 1972), pricing is a critical element in defining a brand's position in the market relative to competitors. Setting a reasonable price also affects the teacher's market positioning on the platform, the type of clientele attracted, and how well the teacher stands out in a competitive market. Therefore, pricing strategy influences the long-term development of a teacher on the platform. The following sections discuss this from different perspectives:

1. Platform Regulations

According to the current AmazingTalker platform mechanism, interviewees indicated that different pricing strategies and price ranges directly affect the number of system-assigned matches and income levels. As per the AmazingTalker platform regulations (<https://reurl.cc/gGpZE4>) *"New teachers who complete the application process after*

2022/03/04 must set their course prices according to the system-recommended price range. Only after completing more system-regulated teaching hours (the basic threshold is 100 lessons) or obtaining the relevant system-required teacher level certification can they set higher prices." Therefore, new teachers might initially set lower prices to attract more students, build their reputation on the platform, and the platform also mandates that new teachers can only set one price below USD 15 for their first 100 lessons. According to the platform's explanation (<https://reurl.cc/QRG4Oo>), "*Since 57% of students' budgets are below USD 15 and 24% are between USD 16-20, setting prices too high initially will result in less match assigned by the AmazingTalker platform, hindering the early accumulation of customers*". Additionally, similar to launching a new product in the market, there is the concept of an introductory price. New teachers entering the platform without enough positive reviews and student base might find it challenging to attract students with high initial prices, thus the system regulates this price range.

Besides the restriction on the number of completed lessons, the platform also has another pricing regulation based on the teacher's nationality. The platform sets the price range according to the market rates and living standards of the teacher's country of origin. However, this information is not publicly available to learners on the platform and is primarily understood through interviewee insights. Nonetheless, the platform's official website provides comparisons of 2024 hourly rates for online English teachers from different nationalities, as well as price comparisons for different English subjects and competing platforms. The table 9, sourced from the AmazingTalker official website, shows the "2024 Online English Hourly Rates for Teachers from Different Countries." It reveals a noticeable price gap between teachers from South Africa and the Philippines compared to those from the US, UK, and Australia. Interviewee A, who is also a mentor on the platform, mentioned that she has

mentored many teachers from the Philippines and Western countries. She noted that while many teachers from the Philippines are extremely diligent, the platform's regulations limit their salary growth. She expressed sympathy and a sense of unfairness for these new teachers. During the interviews, some interviewees also disagreed with the regulation, stating that it means new teachers, regardless of their professional capabilities, must go through the challenging process of accumulating teaching hours and gradually increasing their prices.

Table 9: 2024 Online English Hourly Rates for Teachers from Different Countries from AmazingTalker Website

English tutor's nationality	Hourly rate
Taiwan	USD 16.04 - USD 26.73 / 1 hr
USA	USD 14.80 - USD 24.67 / 1 hr
British	USD 16.78 - USD 27.97 / 1 hr
South Africa	USD 11.66 - USD 19.43 / 1 hr
Philippine	USD 8.05 - USD 13.42 / 1 hr
China	USD 12.69 - USD 21.16 / 1 hr
Canada	USD 12.38 - USD 20.64 / 1hr
Iran	USD 9.47 - USD 15.78 / 1 hr
Australia	USD 19.11 - USD 31.85 / 1 hr
Malaysia	USD 10.73 - USD 17.89 / 1 hr

Source: AmazingTalker. (2024). The best English tutor rates and private English lesson prices in 2024. Retrieved from <https://en.amazingtalker.com/tutor-price/english>

Regarding pricing, another platform regulation linked to pricing is its impact on traffic assignments. According to the AmazingTalker platform's official website, new teachers are advised that setting the price for a 50-minute lesson between USD 10 and USD 15 will help them receive the highest number of matches. As long as teachers can consistently convert these matches into regular customers and accumulate completed lessons, they can gradually increase their course prices (<https://reurl.cc/lQ4vME>).

Interviewee C, a senior mentor who has been on the platform for over five years, explained the evolution of this platform regulation. She stated that in the past, there were no pricing regulations on the platform, but numerous learners' complaints highlighted issues where

teachers would attract learners with low prices and then significantly increase the prices unreasonably. This led to feelings of exploitation among learners, who sometimes felt that taking lessons on the platform made them more susceptible to being scammed. Given that the platform is a for-profit entity, it established these regulations to protect its customers (primarily learners and parents), ensuring they feel secure.

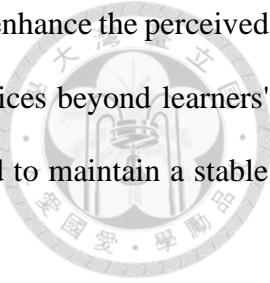
Additionally, Interviewee C shared her perspective that the platform's design of correlating different price ranges with varying assignment volumes is quite fair. If a teacher wishes to exceed the platform's regulated pricing and set higher prices, the platform interprets this as the teacher's ability to independently attract customers, resulting in zero match volume from the platform. Conversely, if teachers are willing to adhere to the price limitations, although they cannot set their preferred high prices, the platform compensates by providing unlimited match, aiding in teacher visibility and student acquisition.

The platform's vision is to ensure every teacher can find suitable students and make a living, not just favoring a few star teachers. The underlying logic is that if every teacher can develop well on the platform, the platform itself will be profitable. Understanding this logic, the platform's measures are quite reasonable and considerate.

2. Pricing Strategy

As discussed previously, the mentor system helps new teachers with pricing strategies to maximize their matches within platform guidelines. Interviewee E, a senior mentor with six years of experience on the platform, shared her team's approach: new teachers are advised to set their initial prices between USD 15 and USD 20. They should then gradually increase their prices by USD 2 every 100 lessons. To avoid competition and potential negative quality perceptions, teachers are advised to avoid the middle price range of USD 21- USD 25. If the

price exceeds USD 20, it's recommended to set it at USD 26 or higher to enhance the perceived value of the lessons. However, teachers should be mindful of setting prices beyond learners' budgets, which may lead to learner attrition, and adjust prices as needed to maintain a stable customer base.



2.A Price Increases

As teachers accumulate completed lessons and positive feedback, and meet the platform's criteria for price adjustments, many gradually raise their lesson prices. This often results in losing some customers who were attracted by the lower prices. However, some interviewees noted that learners who choose lessons based solely on low prices might not value or respect the courses as much. An interesting perspective shared by interviewees is that raising prices can be a way to respect learners who genuinely appreciate the teacher. Although raising prices might lead to losing some customers, it often retains those who truly value the teacher's services. This allows teachers to focus their time and energy on students who are a better fit, providing higher-quality lessons. Therefore, moderate price increases can benefit both teachers and students. Interviewee B mentioned, "Some parents do look down on cheap teachers; a higher price often implies better quality, which is also a marketing psychology." Thus, raising prices doesn't always have negative effects and can elevate the teacher's personal brand to a higher-end market position.

2.B Price Reductions and Discounts

Many interviewed teachers believe that when learners take responsibility for their own education or genuinely appreciate a teacher's instruction, teachers are willing to offer small discounts to support their learning. This reflects the teacher's respect and support for the student's educational efforts and provides recognition and encouragement for their hard work.

Some teachers also use discounts to retain their current good students, hoping to maintain their clientele by offering these incentives.



4.2.4 Maintaining Customer Relationships

Due to the platform's commission percentage decreasing as teaching hours increase within a certain period, teachers on the AmazingTalker platform must maintain a stable customer base to accumulate teaching hours consistently and thus maintain lower commission rates. Therefore, developing a long-term stable customer base can ensure more job security for platform teachers. Thus, the extent to which teachers maintain good relationships with students significantly affects whether they continue to repurchase courses. The nature of customer relationships depends on the age group of the customers. Some teachers primarily teach young children or middle and high school students, and the actual customers (those paying for the courses) are the parents. Interviewees provided several insights on maintaining good customer relationships:

1. Build Relationships

Most interviewees mentioned that due to the nature of platform work, with high teaching hours and back-to-back lessons, they tend to focus more on classroom interactions. Extra care outside of class is limited, partly due to limited rest time and differences in teacher personalities. They believe that overextending concern could potentially pressure learners if not balanced properly.

Many interviewees stated that they strive to make learners feel their genuine concern for their learning progress and issues during every interaction, whether in or out of class. They believe showing humanity is necessary and noticeable to learners. Some teachers might prefer to project professionalism, which can create a distant impression, something these interviewees

do not favor. They prefer to show friendliness and amiability, believing that learners on the platform appreciate such traits in teachers. The AmazingTalker platform's marketing describes teachers as "friendly like a friend," and these interviewees exhibit similar qualities. They may express care during classes or use self-deprecating humor to share their own past failures when students make mistakes or feel stressed, breaking down barriers and fostering a positive learning environment. For instance, 27-year-old Interviewee D, with extensive overseas living and working experience, teaches subjects like immigration and study abroad English. Many of his students are older, high-level managers, and he maintains an open and humble attitude, hoping to learn from his students through exchanging opinions and discussions, in addition to teaching English.

Interviewee H primarily teaches IELTS courses and shared that her customers often come to her under tight deadlines to prepare for study abroad exams. The gap between learners' current level and their target scores often creates intense time pressure, requiring rapid progress in every lesson. She might not have much time for casual conversation, but she believes learners can genuinely feel her dedication and care. By viewing learners' goals as her own and designing rigorous and intensive courses based on their levels, she stated, *"because we work together for a long time...I think it's through this combined effort that we produced it."* The shared effort toward achieving learners' goals helps build strong emotional bonds and maintains customer relationships.

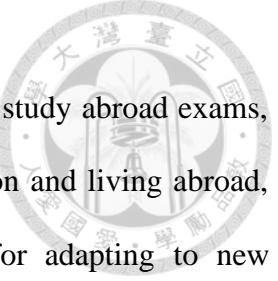
Good customer relationships can have far-reaching effects, as supported by brand reputation theory. Interviewee E mentioned, *"After all, it's a service industry, so having good relationships with students... will have a positive impact."* Several interviewees also shared that some of their clients came through recommendations from past students, highlighting the

importance of good customer relationships. “Brand reputation theory” posits that a strong, positive reputation can significantly influence consumer behavior and perceptions, leading to increased trust and loyalty. Establishing sincere relationships and human interactions can help teachers increase their customer base through positive word of mouth, bringing new clients and enhancing customer loyalty and satisfaction.

Interviewee F shared his experience, noting that his family had come across positive reviews about him on other Taiwanese forums, which he was unaware of beforehand. He noted that although he couldn't control this aspect, maintaining good customer relationships and receiving positive feedback not only boosted his confidence but also brought more teaching opportunities. These unexpected positive reviews have had a favorable impact on his personal brand development on the platform.

2. Offer Value-Added Services

Some interviewees mentioned that in addition to the teaching content, they occasionally offer extra services and advice. Basic services include additional homework assignments and supplementary information for language learning subjects, helping students continue to improve and refine their skills even after class. For example, Interviewee A, who has 20 years of teaching experience and started in the tutoring industry, mainly teaches high school students with the goal of academic advancement. However, the primary purchasers of the lessons are the parents. She understands that parents expect their children to have more homework practice, so she proactively assigns homework to meet these expectations. Some high school students preparing for entrance exams may require customized homework assignments tailored to their school's exam format to help them pass the exams. However, this also means the teacher has to spend extra time grading these assignments, which is an additional service.



Some interviewees noted that because they teach subjects related to study abroad exams, job interviews with multinational companies, or English for immigration and living abroad, they sometimes provide additional career planning advice or tips for adapting to new environments and cultures during class. These suggestions help learners smoothly transition to new settings and reduce psychological stress, making them feel that the value of the lessons extends beyond just learning English.

Interviewee B, 25 years old and a teacher on the platform for about two years, shared his keen observations of his clients. Since most of his clients are high school students, he understands that parents, out of concern for their children, hope the teacher can be a role model and take extra care of their children. Therefore, he sometimes positions himself as an older brother rather than a strict teacher during classes when parents are observing. The approach helps build closer relationships with students and gains parents' trust, maintaining good customer relationships.

3. Flexibility

3.A Beyond Platform Limitations

Interviewee A, with 20 years of experience in the tutoring industry, understands students' lifestyles, especially adults' busy work schedules. She tries to accommodate learners as much as possible, showing understanding and flexibility regarding class cancellations or schedule adjustments. She believes that only when students have the time and willingness to attend classes does she have an income. Additionally, many interviewees mentioned that they are willing to exchange private Line contacts with customers because the platform's UI design

is not particularly user-friendly, and messages can be easily missed in the chat box. This makes it easier for learners to quickly contact their teachers with learning issues. However, responding to learners' questions on Line can take extra time, and teachers stated that they manage the frequency of their replies. When learners have urgent questions, they can receive immediate responses from the teacher, increasing their satisfaction with the teacher.

Moreover, Interviewee B shared that because he mainly teaches high school students, the primary decision-makers for purchasing lessons are still the parents. Out of concern for their children, parents often prefer to communicate privately with the teacher on Line about their child's learning progress and issues, not wanting the child to know the conversation details. For the students themselves, sometimes adolescents may need to vent emotional stress from interpersonal relationships (e.g., breakup with girlfriends or boyfriends) in addition to academic needs. Interviewee B mentioned that he also uses Line to help students ease their emotions, believing that taking care of their emotional well-being allows them to better focus on their studies.

3.B Based on Learning Objectives

Despite the interviewees unanimously expressing that establishing a long-term, stable customer base is the optimal status for teaching on the platform, the subjects taught by each teacher vary. Some students may seek to improve their overall language skills out of interest in English or for daily communication needs. In contrast, other students might be seeking teaching services specifically for exams like TOEFL or IELTS. These different learning objectives mean that the customer turnover rate can be high, and once learners achieve their goals, they might no longer need classes. Therefore, for platform teachers, the key lies in

adopting an open and flexible attitude toward customer relationship management. For instance, teachers specializing in specific exams should continue to provide new value during the process of helping learners achieve their goals to encourage existing learners to continue classes. A teacher specializing in IELTS or TOEFL might offer academic English courses, as learners who successfully apply to study abroad may still need help with academic writing. Similarly, other teachers who specialize in IELTS or TOEFL might reach out to learners after the course ends to invite them to start new subjects, such as discussing their major for study abroad, whether it's finance or another field, thereby creating more opportunities for returning. Some interviewees also expressed their willingness to offer discounts to retain old students, as maintaining existing customers costs far less than acquiring new ones.

Additionally, the interviewees mentioned that although there will always be some customer turnover, an effective platform-matching mechanism is crucial. Platform teachers rely on a well-functioning system to ensure they receive suitable customer matches, continuously attracting new learners. Teachers need to understand each student's needs and expectations to improve the match and reduce the likelihood of student attrition. Younger interviewees reported being satisfied with the current match system and preferred a relaxed attitude toward turnover, focusing more on delivering quality lessons to attract long-term customers. They stated that after the COVID restrictions were lifted, they noticed a decrease in the overall number of students, possibly due to a shift back to physical classes. Therefore, teachers now prefer to maintain relationships with existing students as a way to consolidate their customer base while continuing to improve their professional skills to remain valuable and attract new students to the platform.

4.3 Difficulties and Coping Strategies

4.3.1 Commission Rates and Teacher Retention

During the interviews, every interviewee mentioned that the most significant challenge in the early stages of building a personal brand on the platform is the impact of the platform's commission mechanism on new teachers. According to Sonu Im (2023)., the platform's commission structure affects teachers' working hours and earnings. For some teachers, the AmazingTalker platform's commission system may create a sense of disproportion between their efforts and their income. The AmazingTalker platform deducts a certain percentage of commission from each lesson's revenue, reducing teachers' actual income. Additionally, for those who wish to increase their earnings, the high commission rate can be a limiting factor as they would need to raise their lesson prices, potentially affecting their competitiveness in the market.

4.3.1A Platform Commission Mechanism

Although the commission mechanism of the AmazingTalker platform may initially seem to hinder teachers' personal development, in reality, online tutors of this nature often work across multiple platforms. However, by implementing the commission mechanism, which reduces the commission percentage as teaching hours and completed lesson income increase, the platform aims to encourage teachers to stay long-term and develop their personal brand. The arrangement not only motivates teachers to dedicate more time to teaching on the platform but also helps them build a stable student base, thereby enhancing their career development opportunities on the platform.



Teachers' income on the platform, according to both the official website and interviewees, primarily comes from two parts: platform transaction fees and platform service fees. Teachers' income on the platform, according to both the official website and interviewees, primarily comes from two sources: platform transaction fees and platform service fees. Table 10 explains the composition of platform income, while Table 11 lists the commission rates charged at different levels.

Table 10: Description of the AmazingTalker Platform Income

1 Platform transaction fees	This comprises a fixed fee of 8%, which includes various country taxes (5%) used to pay transaction taxes in each country, and payment processing fees (3%) for storing the course fees paid by students on a third-party payment platform. When teachers complete lessons and withdraw, the third-party payment platform charges a processing fee.
2 Platform service fees	<p>This is also referred to as the commission mechanism by the interviewees. The platform has two calculation methods:</p> <p>(1) Based on Income Amount: Primarily based on the accumulated lesson income of teachers in a month, the service fee decreases with each increase of \$100 in income, regulated such that for every additional \$100 in income, the service fee decreases by 1%. When monthly income reaches \$3000, the service fee is 0%.</p> <p>(2) Based on Lesson Hours: Teachers accumulate 50 minutes to count as 1 hour of completed lessons. This mainly applies to regular formal courses and customized small group courses. It does not apply to trial lessons or courses priced too low due to system promotion.</p>

Source: AmazingTalker. (2024) How to calculate your actual income while you teach on AmazingTalker? Retrieved from <https://amazingtalker.elevio.help/en/articles/402>

Table 11: Two Ways of the Commission Mechanism on the AmazingTalker Platform

1. Income Structure		2. Per-Session Rate	
Total income	Commission%	Per-Session Hours (per 50 minutes)	Commission%
USD 0-499.9	30% - 26%	0-29 hrs	30% - 26%
USD 500-999.9	25% - 21%	30-59 hrs	25% - 21%

USD 1000-1499.9	20% - 16%	60-89 hrs	20% - 16%
USD 1500-1999.9	15% - 11%	90-119 hrs	15% - 11%
USD 2000-2499.9	10% - 6%	120-149 hrs	10% - 6%
USD 2500-3000	5% - 0%	150-180 hrs	5% - 0%

Source: AmazingTalker. (2024) How to calculate your actual income while you teach on AmazingTalker?, Retrieved from <https://amazingtalker.elevio.help/en/articles/402>

Therefore, when novice teachers initially join the platform and are restricted by the system's pricing range, making it difficult to set higher prices for each class, they need to strive harder to reach the total income target for the month. They can only accumulate hours to avoid being subjected to a high percentage deduction, which may lead to significantly reduced actual income, making them feel like low-wage workers. An interviewee with 20 years of tutoring experience, Interviewee A, shared that it was indeed very challenging at the beginning because the client base is not stable initially, which could lead to situations where there are not enough class enrollments. She further stated that this mechanism may make it difficult for teachers from European and American countries to stay, as their higher cost of living would result in relatively lower income, making it harder for them to remain. This, in turn, could also affect the tutors who spend time mentoring new teachers, as these new teachers may feel reluctant to persist. Additionally, Western teachers who prioritize work-life balance may prefer to work for a period and then take a break, which could also affect their early earnings on the platform and potentially make mentors feel as though their efforts are in vain.

Due to the fact that the prices for individual classes mostly fall within the range of USD 12-15 at the initial stage, assuming teaching for 7 hours a day from Monday to Friday, this may still be subject to a deduction of approximately 26%, plus an additional deduction of 8% for platform fees. This would leave them with only around NT\$10,000 in monthly income. Apart from teaching, they also need to prepare materials, respond to messages from the system, and

actively engage with students to attract new enrollments, making the work on the platform exhausting and reducing the motivation of novice teachers to continue.



4.3.1B Teachers' Responses

Despite considering the platform's commission system a disadvantage in the teachers' development on the platform, there are many teachers, including the interviewees, are still willing to stay on the platform, discussing the reasons and thoughts behind their decision to continue on the platform as a reference for other novice teachers. Many interviewees admitted to having thought about whether they should continue on the AmazingTalker platform and even received private inquiries from learners about bypassing the platform and continuing classes through other means to avoid paying the platform's commission. However, they all stated that because there are regulations on the platform, being caught would result in suspension. Considering the personal brand businesses built by teachers on the platform, they weigh the pros and cons and consider whether it is necessary to take such risks.

Although the commission mechanism is not perfect, the AmazingTalker platform provides many conveniences to these freelancers. For example, it ensures that teachers always receive payment for their classes, sparing them the hassle of dealing with billing and payments. Additionally, almost every interviewee mentioned that the platform's scheduling system is very convenient, automatically releasing time slots if a student cancels or reschedules last minute, allowing other students to see and book those slots. Teachers do not have to manually adjust their availability. Therefore, these mechanisms allow teachers to focus on teaching without having to worry about administrative tasks.

Moreover, interviewees highlight the platform's role in consistently bringing in new customers. The platform continuously invests in a significant amount of online advertising to

assist teachers with traffic generation and exposure. Additionally, the platform maintains its own official YouTube channel, which boasts over 278,000 subscribers (<https://www.youtube.com/@AmazingTalker>). This channel serves as a central hub for promotional and informational content related to the platform's services, and it is updated weekly. This channel features videos promoting the platform, often with the participation of well-known celebrities and KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders), further enhancing exposure and driving traffic.

Teachers could teach privately, but leaving the platform would mean sacrificing access to this steady stream of traffic. Without the platform's resources for client acquisition, maintaining a steady flow of students becomes challenging. Therefore, the continuous stream of customers provided by the AmazingTalker platform is another compelling reason for teachers to remain on the platform, contributing to the ongoing development of their personal brands. The platform's extensive investment in online advertising is evident, with advertisements prominently displayed across platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and various websites. These efforts contribute to heightened platform traffic and increased opportunities for teachers.

4.3.2 Competition Among Teachers



Since its establishment in 2016, the AmazingTalker platform has been operational for a total of 8 years. According to the platform's official website, there are currently 9,318 online teachers. During the interviews, respondents generally acknowledged the existence of a fierce competitive environment on the platform. This is due to the large number of teachers offering various courses, and students can easily compare and choose courses from different teachers on the same subject. However, the respondents stated that they actually do not pay special attention to what other teachers are doing; they only focus on what they can control and redirect their focus to themselves. They emphasized that competition has always existed in their previous non-platform work experiences. As Interviewee A expressed, *"You can only make yourself stronger... prepare yourself, and then I will succeed."* The respondents are more concerned with how to improve their own abilities and attractiveness to their target audiences, so they can continue to provide value to the market.

Respondents also mentioned another reason, which is that despite the fierce competition on the platform, there is also a variety of learners. When teachers understand their client base, meaning they realize they don't need to worry about all the platform's competition and don't need to turn it into their pressure. Taking senior mentor interviewee E as an example, she analyzes her client base and the group of teachers she competes with, rationally concluding that she still has strong competitiveness in her market. Therefore, she does not need to feel anxious because she has a clear understanding of her positioning and knows which battles she needs to fight. However, she also noted that the competition issue still affects the entire online business on the AmazingTalker platform and hopes that the platform will become aware of this and enhance its competitiveness.



4.4. Advice for New Teachers

These experienced interviewees, who have successfully built their brands and established client bases on the platform, currently enjoy stable incomes and a continuous customer base. When asked to provide advice for new teachers who are just starting out on the platform or considering joining in the future, they shared insights regarding mindset and practical actions.

4.4.1 Positive Mindset and Perseverance

Interviewees with about one or two years of experience on the platform emphasized the need for perseverance and patience, as they have recently gone through the challenging phase of being new teachers with heavy workloads and unstable client sources. They proactively shared the importance of enduring initial setbacks and uncertainties, as well as the high workload and low pay during the early stages due to the high commission rates on the platform. However, they expressed that with effort, typically within a few months, once they overcome the initial phase, accumulate enough hours, and reduce the commission percentage, client sources become more stable, and they feel everything smoother. As for mentor interviewees, they stressed the importance of ensuring that new teachers joining the team are mentally prepared for the platform, as many may underestimate the initial effort required for working on the platform, leading to early abandonment. Mentors invest significant effort in mentoring new teachers during the initial phase, hoping that their efforts will not be in vain. Therefore, their advice emphasizes the importance of having the positive mindset and determination to overcome any difficulties. Interviewees stated that earning a six-figure income on this platform is achievable with determination and effort, but it ultimately depends on one's motivation and perseverance.

Furthermore, experienced mentor interviewees also emphasized the importance of understanding one's competitiveness on the platform to avoid misguided efforts. Additionally, understanding the platform's rules, such as how to attract more target clients under the influence of algorithms, is essential. However, everyone emphasized that ultimately, success depends on how eager one is to expand their personal brand on the platform and maintain a positive and proactive mindset.

4.4.2 Professional Strategies

Amidst fierce competition on the platform, several interviewees offered similar advice for individual teachers seeking success: establish a personalized solution regardless of their professional orientation, continuously improve themselves, and become experts in their field. Because one-on-one tutoring sessions often come with a significant cost, building a reputation and attracting a group of long-term students requires convincing customers to invest in their services, which ultimately requires demonstrating genuine expertise. Interviewees also cautioned that a crucial key to success is not to be a jack-of-all-trades but rather to understand their market and clientele, focusing on becoming an expert in their niche to establish their brand firmly and steadily in their chosen domain. Finally, mentor Interviewee J shared, *"if we're looking at it, that I wouldn't say that it's a brand, but it's more of just a way of doing things..."* suggesting that he may not see it as a grandiose issue of personal branding but rather as a method of operation. He believes that when one focuses on something, does it well, it will lead to good results and contribute to personal branding.

4.5 Other Research Findings

During the research process, it was discovered that the AmazingTalker platform has established a mentorship system. The main mechanism of the system is that a group of mentors, who are experienced and successful teachers certified by the platform through their teaching experiences or course sales, actively provide one-on-one consultations to new teachers. This helps the new teachers adapt to the platform operations, become familiar with teaching tools, improve teaching quality, and smoothly establish their personal careers. Consequently, it increases the likelihood of new teachers staying on the platform.

The reason for adding this chapter is to emphasize the crucial role of mentorship in the process of brand building and continuous development for new teachers. The platform's promotion of the mentorship program undoubtedly helps discover potential talents and retain new teachers. Through knowledge transfer, it reduces the cost of trial and error and walking the wrong path. Additionally, it provides psychological support and practical advice when new teachers encounter difficulties. These factors are crucial for new teachers to quickly adapt and grow on the platform.

According to the Harvard Business Review, a good onboarding experience helps newcomers integrate better into the organizational environment, and companies with well-developed onboarding processes see a 62% increase in productivity and a 50% increase in retention rates. Therefore, further exploration and emphasis on the impact and value of the mentorship program are needed in the research. The existence and operation of the mentorship program are not only a way for the platform to support new teachers but also a key factor in ensuring overall teaching quality and the long-term development of the platform.

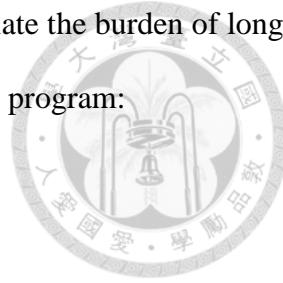
4.5.1 The Mentorship Program

Although Section 4.1.1 mentions that the platform provides some basic guidelines on how to get started, in practice, these basic regulations may still cause confusion and uncertainty among new teachers in their execution, so joining the mentor team can provide effective guidance and assistance.

According to an online article by Sonu Im (2023), the mentorship program structure on the AmazingTalker platform is quite similar to the concept of direct sales. It operates with a hierarchical structure, where the top mentor, who earns over \$2000 per month, can lead 12 mentors, and each mentor can further lead 12 teachers. Interviewee B shared that although there are quotas set by the platform, in reality, they are unlikely to be filled because a mature mentor can use downstream teachers to assist in coaching new teachers and expand their team.

Becoming a mentor on the AmazingTalker platform offers several advantages for experienced teachers. Firstly, many teachers naturally enjoy guiding and helping students improve, which makes them inclined to become mentors on the platform. For instance, Interviewee C, who has been a long-time mentor on the platform, expressed, *"I hope to be the voice that tells someone who is about to give up on teaching that there are actually ways to solve the problems they're facing and encourages them to give it a try."* She mentioned that by taking on the mentoring role, she has the opportunity to share her extensive educational experience, positively impacting novice teachers who are struggling or need assistance, which gives her a sense of accomplishment. Additionally, some interviewees shared that being a mentor can enhance leadership and communication skills, further enriching their personal development journey. Finally, becoming a mentor on the platform can increase passive income,

as this income comes entirely from the platform, helping teachers alleviate the burden of long working hours. Below are more detailed explanations of the mentorship program:



4.5.1A How to Become Mentors

Teachers who wish to become mentors on the platform usually need to have a certain amount of teaching experience and good teaching evaluations. Those interested in becoming mentors need to submit an application on the platform and provide past teaching achievements and student evaluations. The platform conducts interviews and assessments of teaching abilities to ensure that applicants have the capability to mentor others. Mentors need to have extensive teaching experience, good communication skills, and patience to provide practical advice for specific issues faced by new teachers.

4.5.1B How Mentors Choose Mentees

The platform matches suitable mentors based on the needs and characteristics of new teachers. This is typically based on considerations such as teaching subjects, teaching styles, and personal strengths. Several interviewees mentioned that mentors either found new teachers themselves or were assigned them by upper-level mentors due to having too many mentees. Interviewee D further explained that the selection of mentees is divided into two methods: mentees showing interest after seeing the teacher's qualifications and actively inquiring, or upper-level mentors distributing students down to assist less experienced mentors in practicing mentoring. Finally, mentors can also search for suitable mentees on the platform themselves, observing their professionalism, style, and compatibility with themselves, in an attempt to recruit them to join their team.

4.5.1C Assistance and Incentives

Platform mentors mainly assist mentees in the following areas: first, after a mentee joins the platform, they help them become familiar with using teaching platforms and various technical tools, provide guidance on interpreting platform data to give optimization suggestions, and offer career development advice to help mentees improve teaching quality and student satisfaction, more efficiently meet platform requirements, attract students, and increase income. Mentors themselves provide guidance services, and when a mentee's income reaches a certain threshold, the mentor can earn a commission. However, the commission comes from the platform itself, not from the mentee's payment. Therefore, mentors are more motivated to assist mentees in progress. For example, interviewee A assumed that if a mentor finds several talented mentees, the commission for that month can be substantial. Therefore, she also shared her line mentor's plan on the platform, hoping to earn passive income by mentoring new teachers. Mentor-provided guidance services for new teachers mostly occur at the beginning. As mentioned by interviewee K, the help at the beginning is significant for new teachers. However, once new teachers stabilize and their income exceeds a certain amount, mentors mainly receive passive income as long as these mentees are still part of the mentor's team, and the assistance provided is not as frequent.

4.5.2 Challenges of the Mentorship Program

While the mentorship program provides significant assistance to new teachers, from the perspective of mentors, there are also challenges. Experienced mentors themselves have teaching responsibilities to fulfill, and in situations where their schedules are already tight, they need to invest additional time in mentoring new teachers. When new teachers face challenges such as high initial commissions and periods of hardship, leading to frustration and thoughts

of giving up, mentors express that the efforts they put in during the initial stages feel wasted. As a result, Interviewee E, a senior mentor, stated that it has become increasingly difficult for mentors to sustain themselves and earn a corresponding income in the role. Many mentors may even be reluctant to invest time in educating new teachers because they do not want their efforts to go to waste. From the perspective of the platform's long-term development, such obstacles may result in the inability to pass on valuable experiences over the long term, affecting the platform's ability to retain potential high-quality new teachers. Despite the platform providing SOPs for novice teachers, Interviewee C stated, *"Some teachers are very distressed because they want to do something, but there's no one to tell them how to do it. They have many questions in their minds, but no one can provide them with solutions. I don't think this is something that can be solved by computers or big data."* It is suggested that the platform should value the feedback from mentors, provide them with more support, and optimize the system accordingly. Additionally, the platform could adjust the training guidelines provided to new teachers, develop more online resources and introductory tools for new teachers, to alleviate the workload of mentors. Furthermore, reconsidering the commission system to allow for adjustments may help reduce the confusion and frustration experienced by new teachers in the initial stages.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusions and Practical Implications

The research aims to offer practical assistance to individual teachers within the industry, aiding them in enhancing their personal professional image and implementing operational strategies. By providing tangible initiatives, the research endeavors to assist individual workers in distinguishing themselves in the fiercely competitive digital-era market (Yen, 2022). Furthermore, for those aspiring to enter the field of personal education in the future, the research can offer guidance to expedite the initial exploration phase and enable a more efficient commencement of their personal careers.

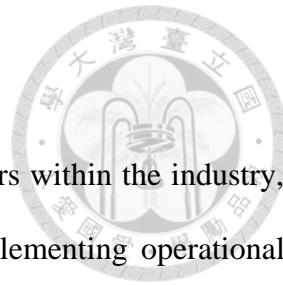
Moreover, through interviews with diverse cases, the research seeks to gain an in-depth understanding of how individual teachers develop their personal brands. This understanding can also unveil potential business opportunities or industry needs, thereby providing inspiration for teaching service providers or platforms to adapt, optimize services, and develop enhanced platform functionalities. Ultimately, this contributes to advancing the overall progress of the online learning industry.

5.1.1 Practical Implications

5.1.1 A Personal Branding on the Platform

1. Optimizing Personal Pages: Precise branding and student attraction strategies

The importance of personal profile pages is extremely high. Teachers should first understand their expertise and target student groups, then adjust the content and media on their personal pages to align with the platform algorithm's requirements, catering to the key points that target students want to see. Prioritizing key points and using concise phrases can quickly attract students and overcome their laziness or aversion to reading long sentences. Videos on



personal pages can help non-native teachers gain initial trust from students before teaching, while for native teachers, the performance of videos in different ways can help them stand out from the selection process for different student groups. As platforms evolve with digital trends, new features are developed, such as short video upload functionality, based on varying perspectives from interviewees regarding different age groups of platform teachers. Younger teachers generally have a higher grasp of and more positive response to new tools, while those less familiar with new technologies can still seek assistance through outsourcing to achieve good results.

2. Key to Student Attraction: Carefully design trial courses to showcase teaching skills

Trial lessons are the primary promotional tool for every teacher on the platform. Despite often having lower fees than regular courses and being offered through promotional or discounted means, teachers should put in full effort to design attractive trial lessons. Most interviewees view experience courses as carefully crafted performances. In addition to pacing, it involves identifying student learning issues within limited time, providing follow-up learning recommendations, demonstrating effective problem-solving to students, and envisioning continued learning with the teacher, thereby facilitating successful conversions.

3. Establishing a Friendly Image: Providing comprehensive value-added services and maintaining customer relationships

Almost every interviewee mentioned that students dislike teachers who appear distant and inaccessible. As emphasized by the platform, teachers should be like friendly tutors. Interviewees universally recommend being genuinely friendly to maintain good customer relationships. In addition to teaching, they should also proactively provide other value-added services to increase student retention. This includes meeting students' learning material needs

and providing motivation and channels for emotional expression, allowing students to learn more effectively in a less stressful environment. Some teachers do not strictly adhere to platform protocols but instead, focus on understanding and providing students with flexible and convenient services. Good customer relationships can create a long tail effect on the platform. When positive word-of-mouth recommendations from existing students are established, teachers can spread their personal brands through word of mouth.

4. Establishing Brand Image: Effective management of course reviews to enhance teaching reputation

Student reviews have a critical impact on a teacher's image and reputation on the platform. By actively managing and responding to these reviews, teachers can enhance their brand value and attract more students. Specific review content and frequency should be tailored to the teacher's teaching goals and student needs to achieve the best results. For short-term teachers, such as those focusing on exam preparation or interviews, the focus is on the outcomes achieved (scores, admissions to schools/companies, etc.), and the quantity of data is essential. For long-term teachers focusing on improving language skills, the emphasis is not on increasing the quantity of reviews but on the quality of each review, ensuring it is genuine and heartfelt, conveying the teacher's long-term dedication, which is the most effective review for attracting long-term clients.

5. Pricing Strategy: Adhering to platform regulations to enhance teaching value

Despite new teachers being constrained by platform pricing regulations when they initially join, the platform aids them by providing a substantial number of traffic to ensure a rich influx of clients. The support helps new teachers attract their own clientele and gradually build their reputations. As the number of completed courses and positive student reviews increases,

teachers can consider raising their prices based on students' affordability and the platform's order volume. Teachers of different nationalities also face pricing regulations that affect their compensation and client base. Moderate price adjustments help teachers maintain teaching quality and attract suitable students. Various mentor teams have their own successful rules (ex: "gradually increase prices by USD 2 for every 100 lessons" or "avoid the middle price range of USD 21- USD 25 to avoid competition"...etc.) to help teachers balance price fluctuations and teaching hours.

5.1.1.B Platform Resources

1. Platform Facilitation of Teacher Branding and Instructional Focus: Support for stable student acquisition and management tools

Through interviews with platform teachers about developing personal brands, attracting students for sales and teaching, and establishing stable long-term customer relationships, it was found that the platform mainly provides stable student acquisition and convenient administrative tools for individual teacher-student management. This support allows teachers to focus on their main teaching tasks, think about how to improve professionally, and deliver value, without having to divert attention to recruiting students or dealing with payment and administrative details. However, it is still necessary to make efforts to attract and retain students after platform acquisition. Therefore, despite general complaints from interviewees about the platform's poorly designed commission system and excessively high commission rates, leading to high initial working hours and a period of lower income for new teachers, they still expressed a willingness to stay on the platform. This is mainly because the platform still provides good exposure opportunities for personal branding and a stable source of students, which is a concern for teachers about the impact after leaving the platform.

2. Support for Mentorship Program: Helping new teachers optimize personal pages and increase brand exposure

The platform invites experienced senior teachers to mentor new teachers, which can effectively help new teachers adjust their personal pages to be closer to the platform algorithm in a more systematic way after joining the platform. This includes writing page descriptions, directing video production, page translation requirements, and even course scheduling, time setting, and pricing strategies, which can all be consulted with mentors. Even new teachers without digital marketing or platform data analysis skills can quickly grasp platform traffic secrets through mentor analysis. However, senior mentor respondents expressed that the platform did not properly care for and support mentors. Many mentors felt that their efforts were in vain as new teachers often quit midway due to initial high commission rates, with the mentor's return not proportional to their efforts, or even leading to situations where they felt they were working for nothing. This affects the willingness of mentors to continue their efforts, which may have long-term effects on platform operations.

5.1.1.C Survival Guide for New Teachers

Regarding survival advice for new teachers on the platform, interviewees all recommended the importance of having the correct mindset, which can help new teachers get through the initial difficult accumulation period. Regardless of whether building a personal brand is discussed, a responsible and diligent attitude towards work is the foundation of all success. Finally, since one-on-one tutoring sessions are not cheap, it is essential to rely on professional skills to make students willing to pay for lessons in the long term. This involves establishing one's own professional solutions tailored to their subject, understanding their target audience, improving deeply, and truly understanding the needs of their student base. In addition to relying on the platform itself, platform teachers should also keep up with digital community

trends. Balancing teaching with improving their own skills, absorbing knowledge of digital marketing, and using content marketing techniques creatively to create engaging teaching materials and showcase teaching experience and qualifications are key points shared by respondents for successfully building a personal brand on the platform.



5.1.1.D Platform Support for Teachers' Development

From the AmazingTalker's perspective, the platform offers resources and tools to support teachers in developing their personal brands. For example, the platform has a mentorship program that provides one-on-one guidance for new teachers, helping them quickly understand platform rules, establish a stable clientele, and thus develop their personal brands on the platform. Although the commission mechanism is widely regarded as a burden for new teachers, according to senior mentor Interviewee C, the design of this mechanism is intended to encourage teachers to focus on long-term development on the platform. The approach aims to retain high-quality teachers, enhance the platform's overall appeal, and attract more quality teachers to join.

Additionally, interviewees expressed satisfaction with the platform's traffic generation mechanism. The platform continuously invests in advertising to help teachers acquire a stable stream of clients and provides convenient administrative support (such as the course scheduling and booking system). These measures demonstrate the platform's commitment to creating an environment where teachers can develop their brands and achieve professional success. The support underscores the platform's dedication to the long-term development of its teachers, ensuring they have the necessary tools and opportunities to build and maintain their personal brands successfully.

5.1.2 Theoretical Implications

Within the realm of academic research, traditional focus within departments of education, literature, and language may have prioritized subject-specific skill cultivation. While teaching methods were addressed, this education may have been biased towards the role of teachers within traditional educational institutions. However, in the digital era, individual educators possess increased opportunities to showcase their expertise and cultivate personal brands. Therefore, academically, the theory and practice of brand building can also be applied within the education field. The goal positioning of university English departments in cultivating professional talents should also be adjusted accordingly.

1. Establishing Personal Branding in the Digital Age

In the digital era, personal branding manifests in various forms. This paper primarily explores the impact of individual workers in the education sector in the digital age through the AmazingTalker online tutoring platform. Thus, academically, it can delve into how individual educational workers showcase their expertise and build personal brands through digital platforms and social media. This may involve theoretical frameworks for personal branding, the theoretical basis of digital marketing strategies, and the new challenges and opportunities personal branding poses for the education sector.

2. Facilitating Interdisciplinary Research

Academic discussions can focus on how theoretical and practical aspects of branding in the education sector promote the advancement of interdisciplinary research. The theories and practices of branding can also be applied in the education sector, such as theoretical discussions on teaching methods, the integration of educational technology, and the impact of marketing and promotional strategies on educational effectiveness. Furthermore, exploring the impact of

interdisciplinary research on innovation and development in the education sector may necessitate adjustments in the target positioning of English departments in universities. Cultivating innovative and entrepreneurial talents benefits the comprehensive abilities of English majors (Huang, 2021). This may involve integrating theoretical concepts of integrated marketing and brand marketing, as well as the enhanced application of knowledge in educational technology, thereby fostering the progress of interdisciplinary research efforts.

5.2. Limitations of The Study and Future recommendations

The study delves into the process of personal brand building for teaching service providers on an online tutoring platform. The results, constrained by limited resources such as manpower and time, entail certain research limitations and shortcomings:

5.2.1 Limitations

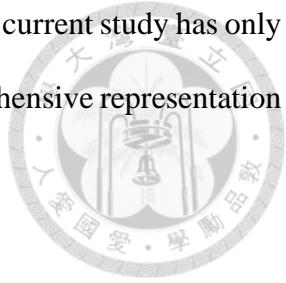
1. Limitation of external validity

Due to the study's focus solely on English teaching instructors on the AmazingTalker platform, the generalizability of the findings to other online teaching platforms or different tutoring subject domains may be limited. The research results may not fully capture the experiences of educational workers operating on platforms with different policies and user demographics.

2. Sample bias

The study was constrained by manpower and time limitations, with interviewees mainly consisting of Taiwanese instructors teaching in English and native English-speaking foreign instructors. Therefore, the results may not fully reflect the perspectives and experiences of

instructors teaching alternative languages and subjects. Additionally, the current study has only completed interviews with 10 teachers, which may not provide a comprehensive representation of the diverse teaching community on the platform.



3. Subjectivity and time constraints

Interview results are inherently subjective as they rely on the viewpoints and experiences of the interviewees. This subjectivity may introduce biases due to inaccuracies in past experiences and memories. Additionally, as interviewees gain more experience over time, their perspectives may change, potentially affecting the consistency of their responses and outcomes.

5.2.2 Future Recommendation

1. Longitudinal study

Conducting longitudinal research can address the issue of time constraints and provide deeper insights into the evolving dynamics within online tutoring platforms. Long-term tracking of educational workers' experiences and strategies will offer valuable insights into the long-term effectiveness of personal branding efforts in the digital age and the sustainability of teaching professions.

2. Comparative analysis

Comparative analysis between different online tutoring platforms can deepen our understanding of how platform-specific policies and features influence educators' branding strategies and outcomes. By examining similarities and differences across platforms, researchers can identify best practices for personal branding initiatives and potential areas for improvement.

3. Broadening sampling scope

In future research, consideration should be given to increasing sampling to encompass educators from diverse age groups and cultural backgrounds. This will help understand the impact of age and cultural nationality on personal branding strategies and teaching outcomes. By comparing perspectives and experiences across different age and cultural groups, researchers can gain more comprehensive insights and determine the applicability and effectiveness of teaching strategies and platform policies.

4. Incorporating stakeholders' perspectives

Expanding the scope of research to include the viewpoints of platform administrators, students, and parents can provide a holistic view of the entire ecosystem of online tutoring platforms. Understanding the expectations and experiences of all stakeholders will help formulate inclusive policies and support mechanisms to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of online teaching practices.

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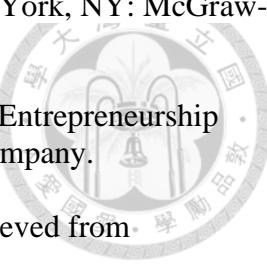
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Appendices

Transcript of teachers' interviews

4.1. Items for Establishing a Personal Brand on the AmazingTalker Platform

[Photo]

“平臺其實很厲害...它其實都有步驟教你...它是由文字步驟告訴你說你要怎麼做，還會請你上課。他說那個老師你如果想要好好招生的話，就是固定的 SOP”(Interviewee B)

“When you create an account, amazing talker has a guideline. They say, please put this type of information here, and this type of information here, describe this, describe that. So, they give you some type of guideline to follow, when that helps. But everybody has different opinions and ideas about how they describe themselves.” (Interviewee G)

“...with the profile picture, something that I get my mentees to do is to take eighty percent of the frame, to take a big portion of the frame. “(Interviewee J, mentor)

“我覺得頁面要吸引別人，第一個就是你的照片，有需要選的看起來生活，尺寸不能太小，原因就是這是你比賽的照片，不能太嚴肅，然後要讓自己容貌好看，就是人家看了會覺得舒服的...要很清楚，親和力要夠”(Interviewee B)

“I would say that the title and the profile picture probably the equally important. Because if the profile picture doesn't look warm and welcoming, you can't approach this person, they're not even going to bother. “(Interviewee L, mentor)

[Video]

“我想說我的成績和學歷也沒有太大優勢，我只是英文系畢業，那我用什麼去吸引學生，靠影片。”(Interviewee B)

“影片的設計就很重要...因為(平台上)老師很多所以我們都建議可以做很多的變化，然後我們就會給(導生)幾個參考影片，參考做得比較有特色的”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“organizing your profile well, another one is a video. The video is really important...I always like that need to update it. But that's a big one. I noticed that when I started, and I would get like, matches before I put up a video.” (Interview H)

“一開始時我沒有錄，但到後面發現其實學生很看重，就說我沒有看過你，但是我想聽聽你的聲音，想知道你不是詐騙，所以有人就會跟我說老師你有沒有影片，可能一開始我早期一兩個月沒有做，但我後來知道就趕快錄”(Interviewee D, mentor)

“像有個老師他是南非老師，他一開頭影片就是他拿一個綿羊還什麼東西的教學生，那他的對象就是小孩子，可是他表現得非常活力，所以當然家長就會喜歡這個老師，所以還是很快就衝起來了。然後我之前還有輔導過一個老師...他做的那支影片非常精緻...那個老師在第一個月就有 100 個學生，所以影片非常非常重要”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“I know that people would ask me for it. They'd be like, I'm not going to take your course until I see a video. Other people have videos. I want to see a video.” (Interviewee I)

“我的行銷方式是我把它做得像 YouTube 一樣。我是有認真在做的影片...那時候再精細地做一下，然後節奏都有調好，我覺得這個應該是吸引學生的特質。”(Interviewee B)

“我一開始影片弄蠻久的，因為我有去參考其他人的影片...我覺得學習歷程，你是可以跟學生是有一點共鳴...動機的部分是講到最多的...那這個是根據學理去做的。”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“I try to make it as personal as possible so people can get to know me, like me, trust me, something like that...So I try to build a relationship with someone on autopilot using a video, and I try to tell them how I'm going to solve their problem. So, I try to put that in a video format.” (Interviewee G)



“我自己會把自己當成觀眾。自己其實是一個蠻不耐煩的人，應該說急性子，所以我看到什麼點我會覺得很煩，像是講話的語速，及講話切重點什麼的，那些都與影片節奏有關。所以我會換位思考去做”(Interviewee B)

“I get them to put a little bit of background music.... I like them to put a little bit of editing and graphics. I also like them to keep it quite short, because I've noticed from statistics that I did check in the past. Students only really watch the first 10-15 second video, so they don't actually watch a lot of the video.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

“後來平台開放提倡短影片可能比較像 1 分鐘...我覺得好像沒有比較專業”(Interviewee A, mentor)

[Copywriting]

“通常都是建議老師如果是你有任何的 promotion，會放在第一行...後面就會寫老師最動人的經驗，或是最厲害的地方。...都不是冗長的一個句子...是短短的 phrase...然後我們會先跟老師說針對 3 門課就好了，然後再去增加其他個人因素在裡面...接下來...是體驗課，學生可以獲得什麼東西”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“our idea is that we want it to be very eye-catching in the beginning, very easy to understand. ...To be honest, I have a great mentor. And when I joined the platform, she really guided me for the initial stages. She explained to me what works, how to set up the platform, the profile. And she also gave me some really good examples and some good templates, so I could just use that.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

“這個導師很會做行銷，他就有教我方法，所以我現在的版本是有被導師批改過的。但那個導師其實還是以我本來寫的樣子去改 (Interviewee B)

“my mentor was the one that really helped me with that. ...I think having it simply, like, bulleted, definitely helps, because they can easily read through it, versus it's like reading a paragraph.” (Interviewee I)

“That's all by my mentors. He's so amazing...And he basically made my profile for me. He's probably the best.” (Interviewee I)

“students are a little bit lazy, and if they see a lot of writing, they will get scared and they don't want to read. So rather give them just enough for them...because they don't want to see too much writing.” (Interviewee L, mentor)

“應該說你要看自己的客群是什麼，假如說你今天就是多益專家，當然你一定要把多益成績打出來，或你是英文系畢業的...有些人就會強調他是臺大的...那如果今天要教學測這種，就可能要強調你學測考幾分，因為家長會看，會想說這個老師有經驗因為他有考過，那他應該也會教” (Interviewee B)

“what I do is I try to focus more on how I can help someone versus my credentials...And rather than talking too much about myself, I focus on how I'm going to solve their problem. That makes sense. So, I think that is one of the biggest things that students care.” (Interviewee G)

“學生最想要就先寫，如果今天身為消費者，你覺得哪些文字能夠最吸引你...就是我會把它列在最前面。然後一般學生在挑我的課程，也會因為我寫的這幾條，那學生的類別也基本上大部分和那邊相同。” (Interviewee D, mentor)

“because you want to look trustworthy. And yours is like lacking lots of information and you don't have a video. when everyone else has a video, you can't have to do, that's like you're not going to even be able to compete with them.” (Interview I)

“你要怎麼去呈現，那就是你個人風格的問題。所以 emoji 的選用，你排版的方式，以及你文字答出來的內容，那些都是你自己的風格”(Interviewee B)

[Managing Course Reviews]

“評論我們會說是我們的行銷手法，我們會請學生幫我們評論...有的學生是看評論內容而來的。”
(Interviewee B)

“會儘量去請學生去留言，因為如果留言評論多的話，系統的 algorithm 也會影響，那到最後可能在賣課時候，或是吸引學生點進頁面也影響得到。”(Interviewee D, mentor)

“打短線的老師，課評就會需要很強大的支持...那長期的老師需要的課評不是那一兩句，而是一段時間才需要有一個長篇大論的課評。那個課評會再引導下一個學生進來，看到這個課評，他就被感動...所以我的學生通常來找我的，跟我說老師我是看到你某一個學生寫你的課評”
(Interviewee C, mentor)

“我會跟學生說我們終於成長了...我希望你寫的課評，不是告訴人家我有多厲害，是告訴人家你的心路過程。...希望你寫的是你真實的樣子，以及你給一句自己鼓勵的話。”(Interviewee C, mentor)

4.2.1 Trial Lessons

“Something that I make sure that I do is giving more... very cheap it's basically free of, like, for like six dollars. It's honestly basically like, I'm giving my time for free. I'm giving a free hour.” (Interview H)

“讓我認可體驗課做得不錯的老師，他們真的賣課都會賣得非常快非常好，那體驗課如果做得普遍，不代表他不會成功，那體驗課很大部分就是互動跟糾正，你不能過度糾正學生你不能不糾正學生，所以說，你怎麼樣去引導你的體驗課的這個能力是很重要，課程設計能力也是很重要的。
“(Interview E, mentor)

“Like I said, I think the trial is like the most important. So, it's like trying to create a trust between you and the students, so that they feel like, oh, wow, I got some feedback from her, like, I can see myself into her class.” (Interview I)

“體驗課後基本上我能賣出課的成功率都算蠻高，因為我體驗課設計的教材都滿客制化...比方說今天有十個學生要上體驗課，基本上完會繼續買課的程度，基本上 67 成 78 成，少數兩個可能個性不太合就沒有”(Interview D, mentor)

“I think, as teachers, like, we're the ones kind of like a little bit more in control in the room.” (Interview I)

“I tried to put as much information as I could in 25 minutes to say, look here what I can do for you. But that's not the most efficient way. You need to curve your efficiency. But also make a person interact, feel like you participate. You're here.” (Interviewee F)

“體驗課的技巧，第一個你跟學生哈拉的技巧，你有沒有辦法讓他一開始就覺得很親切，因為沒有人想要跟一個很嚴肅的老師上課，就算是 business 的學生，他也不想要他的老師很嚴肅，因為沒有人想要邊學然後有很多壓力，所以老師本身跟學生跟你 present 的那種態度跟活力，在老師界我們會說你的演技，有沒有辦法到一個境界”(Interview E, mentor)

“the quality of your materials that you present in a trial lesson would be very important as well... just really being able to wow the student with why 25 minutes that you have with, to give them a really, like a good impression. Because, again, you have to be different than the rest of the internet.” (Interview L, mentor)

“我覺得還是實力，真的很現實你 25 分鐘他會決定要不要買一個課...絕對不是靠感情...他想說他有沒有收到有足夠到 1000, 8-900 這樣的東西...讓他怎麼覺得就是值回票價是這個很實際的東西”
(Interview A, mentor)

4.2.2 Skills for Course Promotion

“the main difference was in the physical class room, I was a lecturer for up to 100 students. So, I would have a lot of students in front of me, and I could really just give almost a one-way presentation.”
(Interviewee L, mentor)

“因為線下課程你可以買一本書，大家就用這本書去上課...你可以丟一個問題讓學生自己去討論...班控力要比較好，就是秩序...你的文法力跟口條都要很好...以前線下上課的話，我最多就是上三個小時...基本上都是你自己一個人在講。”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“一對一的話你要很會問問題...如果你學生僵在那裡，然後他講短短一句，你要怎麼繼續接下去講才能讓這個學生一直很專注地在上課。...所以互動比較多...線上的話我可以上十個小時都沒問題，因為你可以讓學生多講，學生也想要多講。”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“I went really to help a particular person. So that was the main difference. It wasn't really a problem. And to be honest, I kind of enjoyed it because, it was much more personalized on one-on-one”
(Interviewee J, mentor)

“如果是平台的話，第一個你要對科技是非常熟悉的，你必須要知道怎麼樣去用 zoom，或者是你
要怎麼去做問題排除，然後如果你會善用各種，像是影片，power point 這些，就可以把你的課程
大大加分”(Interviewee E, mentor)

[Business Knowledge and Marketing Skills]

“我現在在學創業，創業類的技巧跟行銷，這可能跟教學沒有什麼太多的直接的關係了，所以我
覺得那就等於是我在教學這方面，大概就已經到了一個我覺得頂端了，就不需要在這方面加強，
但是我會希望說自己在其他的類別的上面去做技巧加強。”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“how to become a freelancer, like that kind of rule. And then through that, I was learning a little bit of
marketing...a little bit of sales, and that I was doing my different jobs that required sales in marketing.”
(Interviewee H)

“I teach the best when I'm comfortable with the teaching material and the topic I taught before and I
know it well and effectively. So again, it's the point to niche down.” (Interviewee I)

[Marketing Practices]

“因為都有導師，所以老師們沒什麼技巧都沒差，不會很直接影響到他會不會賣課”(Interviewee
E)

“I am so secretive about what I do. I have family members who don't even know that I teach English. I'm
a youtuber and I've been on YouTube for eight years...Not a single person knows that I teach English
online. And I wanted to keep it that way, because there's a lot of crazy people on the internet”
(Interviewee G)

“像我之前還沒有很認真在我的自媒體上面推播自己，現在就是在想可以跟我自媒體的主題差不
多的方式，然後裡面的教學內容，可以帶到我的課程。”(Interviewee B)

“I'm actually building up an Instagram at the moment... The goal of it is not to get more the platform
fans. What I want to do is build up more of an audience there. And that eventually, like transmitting all
off the platform.” (Interviewee I)

“the reason I made this was for professionalism to show parents...because parents know the value in
their kid's education. So then, like, for Japanese parents... shows on this website shows that I'm like, ...a
lot of teaching experience. And I think for scores, I kind of prove that.” (Interviewee H)

“I just kind of created that, like, as my own for of my students, but then also to organize my materials
and things. And then it ended up being like, extremely effective in my organized, and kind of like selling
my course. “(Interviewee I)

“You know, when you work ten hours a day, 7days a week, on amazing talker, you just don't have the
energy to do the social media thing as well.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

“It is very hard to balance teaching and marketing, so then I haven't had time. But I do want to do Ads. I mean, like, in the future, maybe even in Taiwan. It's about balancing how to move it forward”
(Interviewee H)

[Content Creation]

“像我目前也有在跟一個老師去合作...那我比較是屬於歐美國家科技業，那他比較會是亞洲國家的科技業，那我們可以怎麼樣做結合，之後這樣方式也可以應用在印度的口音教材，那就跟印度老師做結合” (Interviewee D, mentor)

[Communication]

“那有時候我做不到，就是說可能今天跟這個學生之間在聊的時候，我沒有辦法抓到，他到底需要的是什麼...那以售課角度就是，這個學生可能上完一期之後自己也有感覺，他可能就不會再買課，那對賺錢的話，那就是後面可能就賺不到” (Interviewee D, mentor)

[Proficiency in Languages]

“people coming to me thinking that I speak Chinese and I don't. And I don't know if it's because my profile's translated. So maybe that's one thing that deters people eventually from, like, attracts people. And then to deters people from, because I said, I don't actually speak Chinese.” (Interviewee I)

“In a perfect world, I would be able to speak Mandarin, because then I think that I would be able to help a much Greater number of students, and I would be able to charge more.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

“it allows the teacher to have a profile in that language. So, if I change the ticker over here, I'm just going to change this over here to Taiwan. And then you can see that a Taiwanese student would see, this is what a Taiwanese student would see.”(Interviewee J)

4.2.4 Pricing Strategies

[Platform Regulations]

“平台現在有一個新機制，就是說你今天沒有滿，可能 500 堂還是幾堂，我其實有點忘記了，反正就好像卡在 200 還是 500 堂之前，你最高就只能 13 美金”(Interviewee B)

“我算是比較後期加入的...就是它會有區間，比方說你可能上到幾堂，應該是 0 到 500 堂課，建議的價格是什麼...我覺得他的建議價格還蠻符合學生的需求跟學生能夠接受的狀況...例如說，假設 500 堂到 1,500 堂，是說可能美金 17 塊到美金 27 塊，那你就可以在區間內調整。”(Interviewee D)

“Because a student, I believe, won't book a new teacher who costs fifty an hour, and they only have two lessons completed, compared to me, who has 8000 lessons, or 7000 lessons completed on amazing talker with five stars reviews, and I'm half the price they're going to choose. So, it is possible to price yourself out of the markets.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

“一開始新進的老師，他們有被國籍所限制，然後還有另外一個限制，就是一開始好像你在賣出課程，賣出 150 臺還是幾堂之前，你只能設 15 塊錢最高，不管是任何的國籍。那如果你國籍本身的最高點，並沒有到 15 塊錢。你就不能設 15 塊錢。他是有兩個條件，我們當時加入是沒有這個條件的，所以這是新進老師的第一個策略。”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“它對新老師的一些限制...他有時候還會看地區，看 GDP，如果在很落後的地區的老師，譬如說菲律賓或者是印度的老師，就算他們是能力很好，你就是只能夠拿十塊美金不到，可是他可能教的是專業的課程，你還是拿不到那個錢”(Interviewee A, mentor)

“我就覺得是不是也不太公平，因為老師的經驗，不應該是要用堂數去決定，有時候可能也是保證你真的會教這個課，但是我覺得中間的這個規定的話，是很不公平的。因為對於學生，你花多少錢就是說你幾分錢幾分貨，你花這個錢我就是會給你其他老師那學不到的。” (Interviewee D, mentor)

“So, the higher you go, the fewer students you will get, which means you have to be adding, you have to give more values.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

“I noticed, too, like, there's different ranges because of the algorithm on the platform, if once you go over, like, five dollars, like, I got 25, and then I got way less students. I started seeing less matches and less getting less students.” (Interviewee I)

“所以你覺得你要做高單價，在它這個價格區間之外，它就覺得你既然要收這麼貴，那你就需要有那個本事自己招生。AmazingTalker 幫你，是因為我們受到這個低價格的限制，我會給你無上限的 matching。我覺得這很公平吧？是一個 trade off。”(Interviewee C, mentor)

[Pricing strategy]

“And obviously, you don't want to price yourself too low, that you're working so hard. But you feel like you're not making money. So long story short, we have our own little system.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

“如果我要便宜的老師，我就不會找 25 塊美金。我會去找 15 美元, 10 美元，甚至是更低的老師。那我如果想要好一點的品質，我可能就會越過中段的老師，畢竟臺灣人會覺得說一對一家教 800 塊以上都 ok, 600 塊那是給大學生的價格，因為這個心理的關係，所以你如果訂這個這個價格，反而會讓大部分的受眾覺得你的東西不好”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“設定 30 美元的老師就是另外一個組距了…因為 30 塊以上的老師等於是花台幣加上手續費，你會一堂課花 990 塊錢臺幣，那願意花到這個錢的學生，他都有一個很強的目的性，他不會就是純粹錢多…那你的課程品質、你的學經歷，你的能力，就會完全影響到你可不可以領這個價格。”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“theoretically, you could increase and increase every 3-4 months, until you peek to where you'll reach a spot where people just are not willing to pay that price any more, and then just go down a little bit and then stay there forever. Technically that's what I could do, and it's probably for a business that is very wise. (Interviewee G)

[Price raising]

“其實價格比較低的時候，學生好像覺得可以濫用，可能我在上面試課的時候有的是那種他明明就是一點問題都沒準備的人，想要利用老師的課程 50 分鐘直接和他講答案，就不願意去動腦的，我覺得我的課程想要 focus 我可以準備給你東西，但你是不是也要去思考。”(Interviewee D, mentor)

“你要想今天不漲價，就在對喜歡你的學生不尊敬…他(*指導師)說你有沒有發現你現在很多課，都讓你的心情差並可能會影響到你，因為勞累。有的人是因為你便宜來買你的課，將就的上，但有的學生是真的喜歡你，但是你每一堂課都用同樣的心思去對待他們，那是對喜歡你的學生不公平。…所以你要漲價，然後喜歡你的自然會留下，喜歡你的家長自然會留下，那是剛好你這個錢對應他們的，剛好對等值”(Interviewee B)

“因為平台現在規定我只能漲到 USD 27 到最頂，真的有流失不少學生，但是還是會有學生，因為我必須說有的家長是真的看不起便宜的老師，老師貴一定有他的原因，這也算是一種行銷心理，所以導師有跟我說你什麼樣的價錢，吸引過來的人就完全不一樣”(Interviewee B)

[Price Reductions and Discounts]

“後來針對一些學生就是我覺得他比較是長期學習的學生，那我就會跟他們說，我都不管你買五堂十堂一次買我都是算你 20 堂優惠折扣…我覺得我是有點換位思考，會需要這個課程很多是社會新鮮人，他的收入是靠自己…我就想說那怎麼樣可以給他們一個學習報名績報的一個動機一直誘因這樣”(Interviewee A, mentor)

“ I could charge more, but I just choose not to. And I could work less, but I just feel like there's a lot of people who need help, I just try my best.” (Interviewee G)

“那照原價我現在再多給 5%，反應算還蠻不錯的，因為我會希望維持學生類型相同，希望我的學生繼續上課，那我會自己去推動我自己的一些 promotion。”(Interviewee D)

4.2.4 Customer relationship

[Build Relationship]

“I have some students that they've been working with me consistently, like, every week for like over a year. And they keep buying my classes. They keep coming. They just enjoy my class. They're improving. And they know that it's like a long-term thing. And so, I think just building the connection within the class” (Interview K)

“我不是很喜歡跟人家就是私下互動，我自己有跟學生加私 line...但如果他已經是結束課程，那我會覺得我自己不每次去找人家吵他，或是去行銷”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“just being a really good human, they pick up on that. So, I think that's important as well. You know, and just being a really awesome person...really listening to the students and showing them that you care, and that's difficult to find on the internet. (Interviewee H, mentor)

“我比較喜歡把事實跟學生講，我的學生基本上都知道我是說真話...我覺得跟學生之間，能夠彼此信任，學生放心地把他的問題交給你，彼此之間的信賴感。...我就很喜歡那種和諧，是我覺得能夠當一個好老師，或是能夠讓學生真的很信賴...就是我希望能夠這樣帶領學生”(Interviewee D, mentor)

“他們有時候和我熟了，就跟我分享學校發生什麼事，我覺得我聽到我覺得很嚴重的部分，我會說停下來，我們先解決你這個問題，他們就會對你有信任，當然我自己在教他們觀念，我覺得自己是正確的，所以我會去這樣子去建立關係。”(Interviewee B)

“其實到最後我就會跟學生講說如果單純把我當老師，那我覺得也沒有辦法，但我覺得我跟你之間，不是只為了賺錢，我反而希望我們這個關係是能夠長長久久，就是以老師跟朋友這樣子，可以互相交流” (Interviewee D, mentor)

“because we work together for a long time, we really have this relationship. They trust me, I've done them results, they rely on me... It's not like we've talked a lot about, like fun things, or like really both a relationship in the traditional set. But I think it's through this combined effort that we produced it.” (Interviewee H)

“我覺得一定會有好的影響，不管你要做什麼，因為畢竟都是服務業嘛，所以如果跟學生關係良好的話，如果今天他有學生有朋友要上英文，他一定會優先想到你，那當然就多多少少一定會有那個加分的效果。”(Interview E, mentor)

“I've also had many students on amazing talker who were referred to me by old students. ...So, I get a lot of word of mouth.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

[Offer Value-Added Services]

“如果是學生國小國中，甚至高中的，家長特別在乎作業，所以一定要派作業，如果這個算是一種關係維護”(Interviewee A, mentor)

“可能因為我的學生考生偏多，就會關心他們最近準備得怎麼樣，如果是出國的話...他們會有很大的就是心理上面的壓力，跟不知道怎麼讀書，那這時候就是我會跟他們聊一下，然後關心他們的狀況...蠻多到後面都是朋友了”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“我的學生其實目前很多都是以要歐洲移民為主...那我移民之前在歐洲住過四個國家，那在分享中的一些心理建設怎麼樣承受壓力，到最後上課除了教面試英語之外，也可能幫助壓力釋放的部分。像我有個學生，他其實心理狀況不是很穩定...可能就有空打打電話給我，就在電話那頭先大哭了”(Interviewee D, mentor)

“So, I add value to the classes past just English, where we might be talking about world politics, or finance, or even just life advice. So many times, I've had students crying in my class about their divorce. And I'm very good at giving advice about that as well. So, I think that also helps where it goes beyond the English.”(Interviewee J, mentor)

“我通常會講，老師跟你們年齡上算是相近。我也才 25 歲，我剛畢業 2 年，所以學生在想什麼我都知道，我也當過學生，我的頻率，你們喜歡什麼大概也知道。所以你平常在學校，你可能人際上有問題，你今天對誰暈床？你受傷失戀了，你也可以找我，你要聊你未來人生規劃。你也可以問我...我會跟他們這樣講但其實我知道家長也在旁邊偷聽。”(Interviewee B)

“比如說平臺的規定...你要取消一定要是 12 小時之前...我這邊都是儘量給學生方便，就算他上課前 3 分鐘、5 分鐘取消，就算他沒有來我都會把時數退給他...讓他可以再重新預約，就不讓他覺得有損失”(Interviewee A, mentor)

“對我來說因為平臺一個很大的問題，就是他頁面設計是非常差的，可能訊息上回覆很麻煩，然後 UI 設計不是很好，所以我後來就和學生說你不如直接在 line 上和我說。平臺就是購課和官方的東西在上面，但訊息會有 bug，但我和學生私下溝通的東西就避免”(Interview D, mentor)

“我會說你加老師 line，以後遇到任何英文問題，拍起來先傳給我，我有空我有看到我就會回應，所以這個也是我自己心甘情願的。”(Interview B)

“讓學生他們私下的時候，都可以透過 line 來跟我聯繫。那大部分的學生都還蠻吃這套，因為他們就覺得緊急要面試的時候就可以跟我聊，我也緊急加開課給他...他們也很喜歡這樣的方式。”(Interview D, mentor)

“我學生一開始會問說，老師如果有問題的話，可不可以使用 Line，那我也都可以跟學生交換 Line，但是會先跟他們說我沒有辦法及時的回覆，但好像實際問問題比例偏少，因為我覺得大家也是會不會怕打擾老師。”(Interviewee A, mentor)

“就是一定要加他們的 Line，媽媽的也更好...有時候她們會講，能不能請你再幫我鼓勵我的小孩一下這種需求的，所以我覺得這是一個蠻不錯的方法，因為有些需求能私下跟你講...不管從家長面來講或學生面來講也好”(Interviewee B)

[Felicity]

“大部分外師可能學生流失很快，就是這樣的原因，因為找外師的學生真的比較高比例考試過了就結束了，但是我的話是有教到學術英文，所以他們很多都是課程結束之後然後到英國就是或是到哪裡讀書，碰壁之後又再回來。但還是有你要一直教深的這種問題啦。”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“Always try and transfer them into a long-term relationship. Even if I have to give them a discount. I'm happy to do that, because I would rather be busy at a slightly lower rates than not working and have a high rate.” (Interview J, mentor)

“because my type of student is the IETLS test student. And what often happens is they pass the test and I don't see them. And I rely on AmazingTalker to bring me new students that need to pass the test. However, I do have about ten students who have been with me from the first day of amazing talk, And four or five years later, they still with me. And that's just because we've become friends. Their English has really improved a lot, and they see the value.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

“They just keep coming. I don't need to worry about it. They have new students matching system.” (Interview H)

“So, I'm pretty relaxed with that, I feel like, I'm lucky there's, there's been low right now, but overall people end and new people come as a start. And then you have the other people that are incredible, persistent.”(Interviewee I)

“所以在平台上也是要去想想看有沒有辦法持續地一直有新的學生。我覺得其實這是所有老師的擔憂，因為像我們從加入第一天開始到現在都做了這麼久了，你還是會覺得，是不是下個月就沒學生了，因為我們是 freelancer”(Interview E, mentor)

4.3.1 Commission Rates and Teacher Retention

[Platform Commission Mechanism]

“還記得我第一個月的薪水，好像只可能類似 5,000 塊臺幣...好像一開始是從 12 塊還是幾塊？然後你還要想說，他還要抽成，一開始一定不可能學生都滿堂，所以薪水就很少”(Interviewee A, mentor)

“I think it's been difficult when I first started...But it's interesting, because I still struggle with the commission, same thing, even being full time now, because I think that this job is very difficult.” (Interviewee G)

“可是我覺得就是很難的地方在於他的那個薪水制度，就是讓很多人一開始會撐不下來，然後以至於久了，2,3 個月之後他可能就會去找別的工作，而且他只要一個月沒有再接單，那個系統就判定說你這個帳號沒有在用，也不派單了，所以就變成一個惡性循環”(Interviewee A)

“我覺得有留下來的外籍老師，還有一部分可能比如說年紀比較大，然後他就當退休兼職，好像也順便聊聊天”(Interviewee A, mentor)

“其實我覺得都很不錯，就是那個抽佣比較高一點，跟他們收的那個服務費高一點...對新手老師其實是一個蠻不公平的...那些新老師如果真的招生一開始真的不順利，他們被抽 30%, 25% 以上左右...就會感覺好像沒有賺錢。”(Interview B)

“now your USD 500 is really USD 400 300, and the rest is just government fees and taxes. So, you can see you have to either work really, really hard and make a decent income, or all of your money is going to go to the government or the company itself, you see? So, you have to be very serious on this platform.” (Interviewee I)

“現在是 30% 往下扣，等於是你要賺 3,000 塊美金，你才會 0% 手續費，這也算是對老師來說的利多，因為它% 不是制式在哪邊的”(Interviewee E, mentor)

[Teachers' Responses]

“如果說被發現的話，平台就會馬上終止你教課。....一個是因為我是全職在這裡...那等於說如果是失去這個平臺，我覺得對我來說是損失工作機會。”(Interview A, mentor)

“我自己覺得為了這個被停權，滿莫名其妙，因為就是浪費你一手經營的帳號，我覺得這是不太值得”(Interview E, mentor)

“就是要跟學生說這件事情被平臺抓到，我們會付出代價的。”(Interview B)

“平台也有抽傭的問題嘛，但因為我如果自己接，我可能會都自己接到最後，平台上課上不到 USD 3,000，那我不就反而會讓平台抽更多”(Interviewee A, mentor)

“我們講的平台機制，今天課上越多，那個平台服務費抽得越少，因為我們的收入，其實是跟這個相互影響。”(Interviewee B)

“personally, I try to hit the 3000 dollars a month so that I don't pay commission. I try do that every month. I don't have a problem with that. And I understand why they would do that, in terms of taking students off the platform. It's against the Rules. And amazing talker, if they do find out, you will lose your job. So, for me, it's not worth the risk. I don't do that.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

“就是我全部的上課時間，我都看這邊，所以如果有的是私底下接的，有的是這裡，我覺得我會亂掉。”(Interviewee A, mentor)

“why it is nice to use amazing talker is that they handle the payments, and they handled the bookings, you know, the time table. ...And the students can choose the time according to your schedule. So, I think that helps.”(Interviewee J, mentor)

“因為我們的課程都是這個平臺會幫我們做好行事曆，所以我如果為了你私下接的話，那我的時間會打亂，這樣我還要麻煩我會怕忘記”(Interviewee B)

“畢竟在平台上面教課也算是比較有保障，就比方說，日後出了問題交易啊，或是學生對老師的教學有什麼問題，至少還能保障雙方的權益，所以還是會導回在這上面。”(Interview D, mentor)

“I would say the number one reason for me is traffic. Because I go out and try to do it at my own. Where am I going to find those people?”(Interviewee G)

“就算我教很好的，可是我不會招生，我希望平台幫我廣告，那等於說如果是失去這個平臺，我覺得對我來說是損失工作機會。”(Interviewee A, mentor)

4.3.2 Platform Competition

“因為平台上的老師現在已經達到 100 多頁了，脫穎而出的方式，其實我自己也沒有去跟別人比較...我自己的想法就是說我自己做我的優勢凸顯出來，那如果真的沒有學生找我，我應該要檢討自己。”(Interview B)

“在平臺上面我是沒有特別去研究這一塊，其實我其實根本就沒有在注意其他的老師...也是跟以前在補習班就已經很競爭，他是直接會在把老師然後做成立牌...當商品這樣讓學生選，所以其實一直就是在那個競爭的環境...你就是只能夠讓自己就變得越來越強...所以我在這邊的話也是一樣用以前的方式把自己準備好，我就起來了。”(Interview A, mentor)

“because I haven't looked at my competition...Because the students tell me this, and I can see by the results. So, I don't really know exactly how to answer that question... I don't know, because I don't compare myself. I just focus on what I need to do, and it seems to work quite well.” (Interview G)

“I'm not so worried with, I think there's so many students. I'm not worried about getting every single student, because frankly, I don't really want to teach every single student. And I think as more time has gone by, I've noticed that even more there's just some people that aren't really fit for, like, me. And vice versa. ... niching down and then just kind of like being yourself.” (Interviewee I)

“像我這樣子的老師不會被影響...因為吃的群眾不一樣...對我來說其實沒有太大影響，但是對我的團隊有很大影響...因為我們是可以看被動收入，所以可以說普遍全部的老師，他的收入在往下掉...我覺得一部分是競爭，一部分就是學生也是變少了，因為畢竟 COVID 結束學生需求沒有那麼多”(Interviewee E)

4.4.1 Positive Mindset and Perseverance

“The first one is like being willing to wait it out. You're not going to be successful at first. It's really annoying and frustrating at the beginning...and you won't earn that much. So ...yes, a struggle at the beginning. But like, being willing to wait honestly that's the main part, because you're going to get results. And like, three or four months...so keep trying!” (Interviewee H)

“being prepared to, basically get payed very little for many hours of work. But first, like, three to six months. But see each month it does get better. So...kind of just having perseverance” (Interviewee K)

“The first thing that I tell them all is that it's going to be hard work. Especially in the beginning. Many teachers, many people, think they're just going to join this platform and it's going to be easy, and it's not...If it were easy, everyone would be successful and amazing talker. And that's just not the case. “(Interviewee J, mentor)

“他們要評估好自己有沒有足夠的時間跟心力投資在這個網站上，因為其實如果今天有心想要在平台上好好教，其實是年薪破百萬...但當中要投入的心血其實是很大”(Interviewee D, mentor)

“先加入我的團體（笑）我覺得要先理解你是不是在這個平臺有競爭的可能性...你覺得你自己跟其他老師有得拼嗎？...然後第二個，就是你有沒有一個正確的態度，你要去理解平台的運作方式，譬如說最重要就是派單。就是由你的積極度去建立起來，所以你不積極，也沒有很認真，你沒有那個破釜沈舟的決心，你沒有辦法做起來。”(Interviewee E, mentor)

4.4.2 Professional Strategies

“最重要的忠告就是建立一個自己的系統去解決問題，個人品牌最重要的還是“專業”會說話”(Interviewee B)

“I mean, the number one thing is to develop a system that helps people solve the problem that they are trying to solve...Be an expert at what you do. And the students will come. Because the goal is not to convince them. I've never, not even once, convinced students.... So, I just really focus on becoming a good teacher, and that's it, because the business will just naturally come.” (Interviewee G)

“但是要給他們建議的話...就是你不要想說我什麼都會教，我全部教，不要。就把一個東西做精，你的學生就會多，這樣子以後未來的路也會比較好走。”(Interviewee B)

“The other one is definitely, narrow your niche, find your niche, narrow your market” (Interviewee H)

“if we're looking at it, that I wouldn't say that it's a brand, but it's more of just a way of doing things... you know, focus on one thing. Don't try and do it all. Just focus on one skill that you are particularly good at, and base your profile around that skill in a simple way. That's probably the best advice I could do, if in terms of branding.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

4.5.1 The Mentorship Program

“希望可以做到這樣子，就是至少有一個東西是可以讓某一些人覺得他已經要放棄教學這一塊的時候，有突然有一個聲音跟他說，其實這個是有一些方法可以解決，你要不要嘗試看看？”(Interviewee C, mentor)

“我覺得他的好處，你可以不用單打獨鬥這樣，你可以加入一個導師團隊，就是變成這些人一員，讓他們分享經驗教你。那他就是有一個經驗的傳承，會很快讓新進的老師很快上手...真的可以讓你的一開始這個成功率比較高”(Interviewee A, mentor)

“團隊還有一個好處是加乘。因為賣課是可以排名往前，但加個團隊你本來排名在第一頁，你的同個團隊的又在賣課，它是可以幫你 hold 在那邊。所以其實團隊跟團隊也是有競爭，但也不是競爭...我覺得真的很厲害這個機制”(Interviewee B)

“basically, they would have a video for you to watch, you would watch the video, and the video would give you the basic guidance. ... So, there's still a lot of freedom there. And that's why joining the team to you can help you. Because you might have the basic framework, but you might still not know in the most appropriate way.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

“比較大的契機是，可能當時是四五月，想說開始投投資料好了就把資料都上傳的時候，剛好當時有一個那種導師的機制，有一個導師就聯繫我...然後當時跟他稍微聊了一下，發現我們兩個是還蠻合的...因緣際會之下，我就開始教然後教到現在也很順利”(Interviewee D, mentor)

“有三種可能，第一個是有自己來找我，可能是看到我的教學結果，就是學生評論之後來找的。那第二個的話就是，算是我的另外一個導師和導師的導師分享給我的...第三個可能是，我會自己去大海撈針”(Interviewee D, mentor)

“Make sure they're the right person for my team. And if it works out, they can join the team. And I'll do my best to get them as, to get to get them doing well. If they don't have what I take, I'll just politely say good bye.” (Interviewee J, mentor)

“通常課程，我們不太會去做太多的輔導，因為我們導師並沒有義務去帶哪一個老師，我們是自己挑的，所以最優先的過程就是和老師聊，看他的情形，看他的教學方式，如果這些都是 ok 的，那我們就會把這個老師帶進團隊”(Interviewee E, mentor)

“they provide really good support. I felt supported from the very beginning. I think their mentor system is very good...I think it attracts me on the platform. Like this support.” (Interviewee H)

“mentee 開始教課了，我們還是會一直關心他們，最主要是因為有沒有接到單...教他們說怎麼樣做，學生可能會願意回應”(Interviewee A, mentor)

“像我的 mentor...他是希望可以根本就是輕輕鬆鬆地，可能一天教一個小時，兩個小時就好。然後主要收入來自這個”(Interviewee A, mentor)

“這個也算是一門行銷了，就是導師要花多少時間是自己選擇，因為學員可以退隊。你退隊，你就賺不到他的佣金了。所以他應該會嘗試會花自己的時間去教你怎麼做。”(Interviewee B)

“at the beginning, he was super, super helpful. And then I kind of got past that, like, initial phase. And since then, like, I almost don't talk to him.” (Interviewee I)

4.5.2 Challenges of the Mentorship program

“我們就發現很難...你前面的培訓的時間很久...然後整個弄到好。之後他說，我這個月都沒有單這個禮拜都沒有單，兩個禮拜過去，他可能就不想等了，之前教的那些花費的時間全部白費。
“(Interviewee A, mentor)

“其實老師流失率很高，所以我們後面導師不想做的原因就是這樣，就無償做了三個禮拜，然後老師說不做就不做，我們是沒有任何獎金的，導生要有高收入我們才有獎金。”(Interviewee E, mentor)