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Teaching translation online: A *Community of Inquiry* study

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Abstract:

This study explores learning and assessment practices in online translation teaching in the changing educational settings. Using the Community of Inquiry (CoI) model as a framework, it aims to present a comprehensive list of recommendations for creating and implementing teaching, learning and assessment practices for online translation courses. This paper reports on the results of the CoI survey carried out with learners enrolled in an online translation program. The survey was conducted to understand the learners' perception of teaching, social, and cognitive presence in their learning experience. The participants were also asked to provide feedback on specific course components, i.e., tasks, assignments, and elements such as syllabus, instructor feedback, and reflective practice, concerning their impact on achieving course objectives. The findings highlight the importance of creating teaching, social, and cognitive presence in online translation teaching environments. Given the interconnected nature of learning and assessment activities in online education, these presences not only create an effective learning environment but also improve the assessment of learners' performance. While the findings are based on a small online community and may not be universally applicable, they can serve as a starting point for evaluating existing curricula and launching new online programs in translation.

Keywords: online education, translator training, translation teaching, Community of Inquiry

1. Introduction

In the 21st century, online courses have seen a surge in demand, driven by the widespread use of digital media, and the personal and professional development needs of adult learners. In response to this demand, universities have introduced a wide array of online programs, from graduate to non-degree courses. The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated the growth of online education, with online-only teaching becoming the sole option for continuing education during lockdowns. This has led to a significant increase in interest in online education, a trend that is expected to continue in a post-pandemic world. A 2021 survey of higher-education stakeholders in the United States revealed that 73 per cent of students expressed a desire to take some fully online courses in the future, and 68 per cent of students indicated an interest in courses that offer a blend of in-person and online instruction (McKenzie, 2021, para. 5). These findings highlight the potential for further growth in online learning and teaching, requiring continued research to meet the evolving demands and expectations of stakeholders, particularly learners.

Online teaching practices have drawn the interest of Translation Studies as well, especially with the global pandemic. This was marked by the publication of collective volumes, such as the 2021 edition of The Journal of Specialised Translation (Volume 36b) and Seresi et al. (2021), as well as the release of a dedicated monograph by Mazzei and Jay-Rayon Ibrahim Aibo in 2022, which extensively addressed the subject of teaching translation and interpreting online. During the post-pandemic period, a majority of the published papers examined the perspectives of instructors and/or students regarding their experiences with online teaching and learning. These studies spanned a wide array of geographical contexts, including works such as Alwazna (2020), Nugroho et al. (2020), Afolabi and Oyetoyan (2021), Almahasees and Qassem (2021), Bordet (2021), Kasperė and Motiejūnienė (2021), Libreros Cortez and Schrijver (2021), Su et al. (2021), Wu and Wei (2021), and Khoury (2022).

With this backdrop in mind, this research sets out to develop a list of suggestions for learning and assessment in online translation teaching, taking the CoI model as a reference. This study was conducted in collaboration with the Online Certificate in Professional Translation and Interpreting (OCPTI), an online program launched in

2018 in the Department of Languages, Literatures & Cultures, College of Humanities & Fine Arts at University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass Amherst). Cristiano Mazzei is the director of the OCPTI, who played an active role in the design of courses, and Volga Yılmaz-Gümüş was a visiting scholar at UMass Amherst in 2022 and observed the courses in the OCPTI. The first part of this study (under review in another journal), based on the analysis of course materials used in online translation teaching, has provided a wealth of recommendations, particularly with regard to assessment from the perspective of course designers and instructors. The second part of the study, presented in this paper, reports on the results of a survey of learners, which aims to provide further understanding of learning and assessment practices from the perspective of students.

The CoI model, used as a framework in this study, was first introduced by Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000). The model not only offers a comprehensive and well-organized framework for the design of online courses but also serves as a valuable theoretical foundation for conducting research on online learning. The CoI emphasizes the creation of a collaborative and constructivist learning experience through three interdependent elements (Garrison, 2011, p. 22): cognitive presence, social presence, and teaching presence. Cognitive presence refers to participants' ability to construct meaning through sustained communication; social presence involves projecting personal characteristics to foster a sense of real connection among participants; and teaching presence encompasses the design of educational experiences and facilitation of learning activities and assessments (Garrison et al., 2000, p. 88-90). These presences are not confined to specific actors but distributed across teachers, students, and course materials (Swan et al., 2014, pp. 74-75). This study seeks to understand how these types of presences are achieved, particularly in the context of learning and assessment procedures in online translation teaching.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research setting

The OCPTI is a well-established online translation program that offers a diverse range of learning and assessment activities. It is a short multilingual undergraduate program where applicants must demonstrate high proficiency in English and at least one language other than English (LOTE). To complete the program and earn a certificate, students must finish a minimum of 15 credits (equivalent to approximately five courses—most are 3 credits, but a few are 2 and 1 credit) and achieve a minimum grade of C. The online certificate can be completed in one year (3 semesters including summer), but students can take longer if needed. Each 3-credit course requires around ten hours of weekly commitment and follows an asynchronous format, allowing students to work at their own pace. If professors schedule live classes or meetings, those are recorded and made available to students who cannot attend (not required). However, they must meet weekly assignment deadlines. The course materials and interactions are in English while translation and interpreting assignments are done in the student's chosen language pair. External language experts who work in the same language pair as the students review some of these assignments.

This study takes LLC401 Introduction to Translation as a case, a three-credit course offered in the OCPTI. This course was selected because it is taken by almost all enrolled students, making it the most widely attended course in the program. The program guidelines offer a suggested sequence of classes, with LLC 401 being one of the first courses to enrol, but students can tailor the certificate to meet their individual needs for training and education. It serves as a general and fundamental introduction to translation. The course focuses on basic translation and translator competence and is designed to accommodate learners from diverse professional, educational, and cultural backgrounds over a 13-week period. The Learning Management System (LMS) used when the study was conducted was Blackboard.

2.2 Participant demographics and background

The learners in the OCPTI were not a homogeneous group in terms of age, education, language pairs, and professions. The age of the respondents ranged from 20 to 50, with the majority being between 26 and 35 years old. Educational backgrounds varied widely, with learners holding high school diplomas (4), undergraduate (4), master's

(3), and doctoral (1) degrees. The students worked with a diverse range of language pairs, with English-Spanish (4) and English-French (3) being the most common combinations. The other LOTEs were Portuguese (2), Arabic (1), Italian (1), and Chinese (1). The respondents came from various professions, including teaching (5), translation and/or interpretation (4), and other fields. This information highlights the diverse needs of learners in the program and emphasizes the importance of considering this diversity in interpreting the results.

2.3 Data-collecting instrument

A survey was conducted with students enrolled in LLC401 Introduction to Translation in Summer 2022 and Fall 2022 semesters and consisted of three parts: 1) Background information (age, education, working languages, and current profession), 2) The CoI survey, an open resource under Creative Commons license, with 34 items related to teaching, social, and cognitive presence, rated on a 5-point Likert scale, and 3) Additional questions focused on learners' perceptions and evaluations of learning and assessment practices in the course.

The CoI survey, introduced in 2008, has been widely used for exploring a single learning environment, examining differences in CoI across contexts, observing relationships among CoI elements, and assessing the reliability and validity of data (Stenbon, 2018, p. 25). In this study, minor adjustments were made to the CoI survey to highlight the assessment focus, including rephrasing "learning activities" as "learning/assessment activities" and adding the phrase "translation challenges" in relevant items. Two statements specific to the course (items 31 and 32) were added to the survey based on recommendations from OCPTI course instructors, pertaining to students' reflection on their own translations and implementation of feedback from language reviewers. Participants were then asked to provide feedback on several course components to capture their first-hand experiences and gain deeper insight into their perspectives.

2.4 Data collection

The survey data was collected in December 2022 and January 2023. After approval was received from the UMass Amherst Human Research Protection Office, the survey link was initially sent out to 24 students who had completed the LLC401 Introduction to Translation course in Fall 2022. By the survey deadline, 10 students had completed the questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 45.5 per cent, which was slightly lower than expected. To increase participation, the survey link was distributed to students who had completed the course in Summer 2022, and two additional responses were received from this group. The total number of respondents was lower than anticipated, probably due to factors such as time constraints, as many students in the OCPTI are working adults, and the length of the survey, which included the open-ended questions that required additional time and effort to answer. Despite this limitation, the data provided by the participants is valuable and reliable, as most of them provided detailed answers to the open-ended questions. Unlike Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) that are taken by thousands of students, the number of students that enrol in an OCPTI course is a maximum of 25. The researchers are confident that the data collected from this small learning community will be valuable and contribute significantly to enhancing the quality of teaching, learning and assessment practices in online translator training.

2.5 Data analysis

The CoI survey and open-ended questions added to the survey allowed the researchers to collect quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the learners' perceptions of the online program. Descriptive analysis was used to summarize the important characteristics of the quantitative data collected. It was also employed to break down the responses by each type of presence in the CoI framework. IBM SPSS 29 was used to calculate the means of the survey items. Due to the small sample size, the demographic information, presented in the following section, was not used as variables for analysis.

The researchers reviewed and summarized the participants' responses to the open-ended questions. They analysed these responses to identify recurring patterns and themes. For each course component, they pinpointed specific themes that emerged

from the data, providing a detailed understanding of the participants' experiences and perceptions. In the Discussion section, the emerging themes were integrated with the CoI survey results and presented under each type of presence in the CoI framework.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 The CoI survey results

The CoI survey was conducted to obtain a broad understanding of the learners' perception of teaching, social and cognitive presence in their online learning experience. Table 1 illustrates the overall distribution of the participants' responses to the survey items.

Table 1. Participants' responses to the items in the CoI survey

CoI Survey Items	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Teaching Presence					
1. The instructor clearly communicated important course topics.	0	0	1	5	6
2. The instructor clearly communicated important course goals.	0	0	0	6	6
3. The instructor provided clear instructions on how to participate in course learning/assessment activities.	0	1	0	5	6
4. The instructor clearly communicated important due dates/time frames for learning/assessment activities.	1	0	0	1	1
5. The instructor was helpful in identifying areas of agreement and disagreement on course topics that helped me to learn.	0	0	1	4	7
6. The instructor was helpful in guiding the class towards understanding course topics in a way that helped me clarify my thinking.	0	1	1	3	7
7. The instructor helped to keep course participants engaged and participating in productive dialogue.	0	0	3	3	6
8. The instructor helped keep the course participants on task in a way that helped me to learn.	0	0	2	4	6

9. The instructor encouraged course participants to explore new concepts in this course.	0	0	0	6	6
10. Instructor actions reinforced the development of a sense of community among course participants.	0	0	3	4	5
11. The instructor helped to focus discussion on relevant issues in a way that helped me to learn.	0	0	1	6	5
12. The instructor provided feedback that helped me understand my strengths and weaknesses relative to the course's goals and objectives.	1	0	3	3	5
13. The instructor provided feedback in a timely fashion.	1	0	1	2	8
Social Presence					
14. Getting to know other course participants gave me a sense of belonging in the course.	0	1	2	4	5
15. I was able to form distinct impressions of some course participants.	0	2	3	5	3
16. Online or web-based communication is conducive to social interactions.	1	0	6	4	2
17. I felt comfortable conversing through the online medium.	0	0	2	7	3
18. I felt comfortable participating in the course discussions.	0	0	1	2	9
19. I felt comfortable interacting with other course participants.	0	0	1	2	9
20. I felt comfortable disagreeing with other course participants while still maintaining a sense of trust.	0	0	3	2	7
21. I felt that my point of view was acknowledged by other course participants.	0	0	1	4	7
22. Online discussions help me to develop a sense of collaboration.	0	1	4	3	4
Cognitive Presence					
23. Problems (translation challenges) posed increased my interest in course issues.	0	0	3	3	6
24. Course activities piqued my curiosity.	0	1	2	3	6
25. I felt motivated to explore content-related questions.	0	1	1	5	5
26. I utilized a variety of information sources to explore problems (translation challenges) posed in this course.	0	0	0	4	8

27. Online discussions were valuable in helping me appreciate different perspectives.	0	0	2	3	7
28. Combining new information helped me answer questions raised in course activities.	0	0	0	7	5
29. Learning/assessment activities helped me construct explanations/solutions.	0	0	1	7	4
30. Reflection on course content and discussions helped me understand fundamental concepts in this class.	0	0	0	5	7
31. Reflection on translations helped me understand fundamental concepts in this class.	0	0	1	5	6
32. I implemented the feedback received from the language reviewer in my next translation assignments.	0	1	0	3	8
33. I can describe ways to test and apply the knowledge created in this course.	0	0	2	4	6
34. I have developed solutions to course problems (translation challenges) that can be applied in practice.	0	0	0	4	8
35. I can apply the knowledge created in this course to my work or other non-class-related activities.	0	0	0	3	9

The subsequent section provides a breakdown of responses by types of presence.

Table 2. The mean of teaching presence items

Teaching Presence					
	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	12	3.00	5.00	4.3333	.65134
Q2	12	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.52223
Q3	12	2.00	5.00	4.3333	.88763
Q4	12	1.00	5.00	4.5833	1.16450
Q5	12	3,.00	5.00	4.5000	.67420
Q6	12	2.00	5.00	4.3333	.98473
Q7	12	3.00	5.00	4.2500	.86603

Q8	12	3.00	5.00	4.3333	.77850
Q9	12	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.52223
Q10	12	3.00	5.00	4.1667	.83485
Q11	12	3.00	5.00	4.3333	.65134
Q12	12	1.00	5.00	3.9167	1.24011
Q13	12	1.00	5.00	4.3333	1.23091

Table 2 shows that all items, except one, had a mean score greater than 4. The lowest mean score was observed for the item relating to instructor feedback. The highest mean score was observed for the item relating to clear communication of important due dates and time frames for learning and assessment activities, which is likely due to the detailed and clear time frames provided in the online course syllabus.

Table 3. The mean of social presence items

Social Presence					
	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q14	12	2.00	5.00	4.0833	.99620
Q15	12	2.00	5.00	3.8333	.93744
Q16	12	1.00	5.00	3.4167	1.08362
Q17	12	3.00	5.00	4.0833	.66856
Q18	12	3.00	5.00	4.6667	.65134
Q19	12	2.00	5.00	4.5833	.90034
Q20	12	3.00	5.00	4.3333	.88763
Q21	12	3.00	5.00	4.5000	.67420
Q22	12	2.00	5.00	3.8333	1.02986

Table 3 presents the mean of items in the social presence component of the CoI survey. The results suggest that, as regards social presence, the mean values were lower than those of items in teaching presence. The lowest means were observed for items relating to forming distinct impressions of the course participants, social interaction, and collaboration. Positive perceptions of the respondents were mostly related to how they felt comfortable participating in discussions, interacting with the course participants, and disagreeing with other participants, i.e., the items related to the active role they played socially as a course participant.

Table 4. The mean of cognitive presence items

Cognitive Presence					
	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q23	12	3.00	5.00	4.2500	.86603
Q24	12	2.00	5.00	4.1667	1.02986
Q25	12	2.00	5.00	4.1667	.93744
Q26	12	4.00	5.00	4.6667	.49237
Q27	12	3.00	5.00	4.4167	.79296
Q28	12	4.00	5.00	4.4167	.51493
Q29	12	3.00	5.00	4.2500	.62158
Q30	12	4.00	5.00	4.5833	.51493
Q31	12	3.00	5.00	4.4167	.66856
Q32	12	2.00	5.00	4.5000	.90453
Q33	12	3.00	5.00	4.3333	.77850
Q34	12	4.00	5.00	4.6667	.49237
Q35	12	4.00	5.00	4.7500	.45227

Finally, table 4 provides a representation of the mean of items in the cognitive presence component of the CoI survey. All items in the list had a mean score greater than 4. The highest mean scores were observed for items relating to developing solutions to course problems (translation challenges) that can be applied in practice and applying the knowledge gained from the course to work or other non-class-related activities. These results suggest that the learners were confident in their ability to apply their knowledge and skills in practical situations.

3.2 Learners' perceptions of course components

The learners were then invited to comment on specific course components in relation to their impact on achieving course objectives, including not only tasks and assignments but also relevant elements such as syllabus, instructor feedback, and reflective practice. Emerging themes were summarized with regard to each course component.

Course syllabus: The survey participants were asked to evaluate the course syllabus in terms of content and language. The syllabus plays a significant role as it sets instructor and learner expectations mainly in terms of course content, assessment methods, and timeline. The students' perceptions of the course syllabus were generally positive, with the majority of them praising its clarity and comprehensibility (10 out of 12). They found the syllabus helpful in understanding course expectations, assignment timelines, and planning ahead. One student mentioned that the syllabus did not provide sufficient information on the submission of the translation portfolio and that more information about this was not available on Blackboard, as opposed to what was mentioned in the syllabus.

Course readings and online discussions: The participants were then asked to comment on course readings and relevant online discussions on Blackboard. Their perceptions of online discussions are of particular importance as these discussions provide a platform for social presence and are a part of the assessment. The student responses indicate that the course readings were generally helpful, accessible, and relevant, with the main textbook Becoming a Translator by Douglas Robinson, playing a significant role in shaping the course content and discussions. The students appreciated the

enriching and multicultural discussions and the opportunity to interact with their peers. However, one student expressed mixed enthusiasm for the online written discussions, suggesting that the instructor's "more targeted" questions could enhance their productivity.

Furthermore, while some students enjoyed the density and theoretical nature of the readings, others found them challenging to digest. Three respondents highlighted that the course readings were "dense", "theoretical" or "philosophical" while, at the same time, mentioning that they were useful. This is probably due to the educational and cultural diversity of the course participants. Overall, the majority of the students found the readings and discussions beneficial to their learning experience.

Quizzes: The third component on which the participants were asked to comment was quizzes. The student responses indicate that the quizzes in the course were generally perceived as reasonable, easy, and manageable, with the open-ended format being appreciated. The frequency of quizzes was considered appropriate, and some students found them helpful as formative assessments to gauge their understanding of the course material. However, some students expressed mixed opinions about the quizzes' relevance to the course content and their influence on their learning outcomes. A few students considered the quizzes to be helpful in sharpening their knowledge while others did not see them as essential.

Translation assignments: Translation assignments, including the final project, were the main assessment methods in LLC401. The course participants were asked to comment on this course component in consideration of its impact on the achievement of course objectives. They were specifically asked to comment on the usefulness of the assignment descriptions, examples of good work, and rubrics provided by the instructor.

The student responses indicate that the translation assignments in the course were appreciated for their variety of topics and the opportunity they provided for the students to explore different types of translation. The exposure to various fields helped some students form opinions about potential career choices. Two participants specifically mentioned that they gained research experience while completing their translation assignments. However, some students mentioned vagueness in the rubric

and expectations, indicating that clearer and more detailed instructions could have been beneficial.

Reflective practice: Writing reflections was part of students' translation assignments. However, only a limited number of the respondents provided feedback on this aspect of the course. The comments were generally positive regarding the usefulness of the reflections, but the course participants did not provide specific information on how this component contributed to their development. The reflection process was beneficial, providing an opportunity to delve deeper into the translations and discover more options. Some students, however, mentioned vagueness in reflection guidelines and a lack of detailed feedback on their reflections. Several students expressed satisfaction with their performance and growth in research and analysis, referring specifically to reflection.

Instructor/language reviewer feedback: Considering that feedback is an essential part of assignments, the course participants were also asked to comment on instructor and/or language reviewer feedback on their translation assignments. Especially in online courses where it is harder to establish teacher presence compared to in-person classes, thorough and constructive feedback is a sign of being attentive to learners' needs. The student responses indicate that the feedback from the language reviewer and the instructor was generally clear, valuable, and helpful. The students appreciated the corrections, encouragement, and guidance provided by the language reviewer, especially in exploring different genres.

While most students found the feedback on grammatical corrections to be beneficial, some expressed a desire for more interactive feedback and the opportunity to respond to comments. Additionally, a few students mentioned that they would have liked to receive feedback on their strengths occasionally, not just areas for improvement.

Overall, students acknowledged the enriching feedback that improved their translations and appreciated the instructor's timely and appropriate responses. However, a few students felt that the instructor's feedback could have been more detailed and varied.

Simulation of real-life work conditions: The respondents were further asked about the simulation of real-life work conditions in the course, such as course instructions and discussions on deadlines, the importance of naming files, asking clients for

clarifications, and building terminological glossaries. This was one of the questions that received the most thoughtful replies.

Several course participants highlighted that the instructor's professional experience helped them better understand translators' real-life work conditions. Specifically, they noted that the instructor's insights on the collaborative nature of translation, the significance of meeting deadlines, importance of cultural competence in translation, and the resources available to professional translators were particularly helpful. The responses indicated that the experience-based and real-life-related information provided by the instructor in synchronous meetings was extremely valuable for the participants.

Some respondents' experience with terminological glossaries was less positive than other issues raised under this question. Three respondents referred to the need for further guidance on building glossaries.

Interaction and collaboration with other course participants: When asked about interaction and collaboration with other course participants, the respondents referred to the synchronous Zoom sessions and online discussion boards. The Zoom meetings were defined as a platform where participants shared valuable insights and personal examples that professors used to illustrate real-life situations (R12).

It is worthy of note that one respondent referred to these platforms as an opportunity for making "the class feel more like a community" (R7). This comment suggests that providing learners with opportunities for interaction can help create a sense of community in online learning environments. Furthermore, two respondents mentioned that the diversity of backgrounds among classmates made discussions more engaging and compelling.

Notably, two respondents emphasized the distinction between interaction and collaboration. One respondent (R10) pointed out that while online forums served as effective tools for acquainting themselves with other students, they fell short of fostering true collaboration. Another participant (R8) echoed this sentiment, acknowledging that although online forums facilitated engaging interactions, substantial collaboration remained limited. Students had the chance to "put names to the faces from the written discussion boards" (R10) and share ideas and viewpoints with peers, fostering closer relationships.

Synchronous meetings with the instructor: The final course component that the respondents were asked to comment on was the biweekly synchronous Zoom meetings with the instructor and other course participants, which were optional given the fact that the students were scattered around the United States and overseas. The students who could not attend were able to review their recordings afterwards. They were requested to include comments on the frequency and content of synchronous meetings, and if any, advantages over asynchronous course components. The student responses indicate that the synchronous Zoom meetings were generally well-received and considered valuable for the course. The participants found the meetings productive and helpful for addressing questions, clarifying concepts, and discussing readings with the instructor and classmates.

The interpersonal aspect and the opportunity to interact in real-time with the instructor and peers were viewed as essential components of the meetings. The frequency of the meetings was generally seen as appropriate, and the availability of recordings ensured that the students did not miss out on valuable discussions.

Thoughtful contributions to this question drew attention to the role of instructors in synchronous meetings and suggested that they played a major role in reinforcing instructor presence in the online setting. Such opportunities to meet live served as a meaningful way to connect with the course material, the instructor, and fellow students, contributing to enthusiasm and motivation throughout the course. The respondents also expressed appreciation for the availability of recordings of the Zoom meetings on Blackboard. This allowed them to watch the sessions they were unable to attend.

3.3 Discussion

This section of the paper provides a discussion of findings to create a conclusive list of recommendations for learning and assessment practices when teaching translation online. The CoI framework is used to analyze the qualitative and quantitative data collected in the study.

3.3.1. Teaching presence

The CoI framework refers to the instructor's role in design and organization, facilitation and direct instruction. The indicators of teaching presence in the OCPTI included a detailed syllabus with the weekly description of course content and deadlines, detailed assignment descriptions, lecture videos uploaded by the instructor, active instructor role in discussions, synchronous Zoom meetings, and feedback from the course instructor and language reviewers (for translations into LOTE).

A detailed syllabus with weekly information about the class and deadlines, along with thorough descriptions of assignments served as a means of communication to explain and clarify course topics, course goals, how to participate in course learning and assessment activities, methods of assessment, and important time frames, setting instructor and learner expectations at the very beginning. In addition to written materials, the instructor reinforced their presence in the online setting by uploading videos or conducting synchronous meetings, which helped the learners realise that a real person was designing and facilitating the course. The instructor consolidated their presence in the online setting and further motivated the learners to get engaged in a productive dialogue by starting and adding comments to online written or audiovisual discussions.

A syllabus or any course material provides evidence of an instructor's intention to promote learning, perception of best practices, and willingness to communicate with students. However, the question remains whether the learners in the OCPTI courses perceived such intentions. The survey results indicated that the learners perceived a strong instructor presence (with a mean score of over 4 for all items on the list), defined in terms of explaining course goals, content, and timeframes clearly, providing clear instructions on how to participate in activities, guiding the course participants towards understanding course topics, keeping the participants engaged and guiding discussions, encouraging exploration of new concepts, developing a sense of community, and providing useful and timely feedback.

The responses to the open-ended questions provided insights into teaching presence in the online learning experience. The majority of the participants considered the synchronous Zoom meetings as the most effective way of getting connected with the instructor. Although the participants were working adults from different time zones, they were willing to join online sessions and appreciated the opportunity to watch

recorded sessions later when they were unable to join them. Thus, even if the course is fully asynchronous, it seems like a good idea to add optional synchronous sessions to enhance teaching presence while providing an opportunity for the learners to make sure that the course is facilitated by a real person. Using welcoming language and sharing personal experiences in synchronous meetings make the learners feel comfortable and make the course more engaging: "… it felt like real life lessons and the professor's passion for the work made me even more interested" (R10).

Feedback is another way of keeping connected with learners. Constructive feedback not only helps learners understand their strengths and weaknesses but also encourages them to do further research to improve learning. As several respondents mentioned, feedback from the instructor and language reviewers made them aware of alternative translation solutions, guiding them to improve their translations.

These are all not only learning but also assessment activities, considering that assessment is a way of increasing learner engagement and evaluating learner performance. Well-designed syllabi and assignment descriptions helped the adult learners plan the time they allocated to the OCPTI tasks and guided them to complete the assignments properly. Active instructor roles in the discussions and the synchronous Zoom meetings were the course components that fostered learner engagement by increasing their interaction with the instructor. Furthermore, the instructor's active participation in written or video discussions made the learners feel comfortable in joining discussions. Finally, feedback from the course instructor and language reviewers played a significant role in evaluating and improving learner performance.

These results related to teaching presence are consistent with what has been found in previous studies. For instance, in defining the key factors for student success and effective course design in online translation teaching, Bilić (2020) mentioned well-designed, clear and complete course materials, and detailed syllabus and course instructions. With regard to instructional design and delivery strategies, she referred to the instructor's role of encouraging students to participate actively in online discussions and providing feedback on a weekly basis. Jay-Rayon Ibrahim Aibo, Langdon and Mazzei (2020) discussed three pedagogical tools that proved to be effective in online translation and interpreting courses. These tools included self-

assessment rubrics (course and assessment design role of instructors), discussion boards with active participation of instructors, and VoiceThread (a robust multimedia tool facilitating video and audio presence of instructors). Valentine and Wong (2021) found out that interaction with the instructor played a key role in promoting learning through discussion boards, and that students needed instructor-guided questions or examples to make more informed decisions when translating. The findings of this study, alongside the insights from prior research, highlight the critical role of teaching presence in the design and implementation of learning and assessment activities in online translation teaching.

3.3.2. Social presence

In the CoI framework, social presence is associated with affective expression, open communication, and group cohesion. The main challenge in online learning settings is how instructors and learners present themselves as real people, how they remain open to learning together, and how they connect with each other. The OCPTI courses demonstrated social presence through the use of introduction videos and/or synchronous first sessions, personal information about the instructor(s) in the syllabus, self-disclosure when appropriate, clear communication channels (as indicated in the syllabus), inclusive and welcoming language in course materials and synchronous meetings, and promotion of collaborative learning. These indicators of social presence played a vital role in building a sense of community among the learners and instructors in the virtual classroom.

According to the CoI survey results, social presence had slightly lower mean values compared to teaching presence, but they were still high, mostly over 4 points. The items related to forming distinct impressions of the course participants, social interaction, and collaboration had the lowest means. However, the majority of the respondents reported feeling comfortable participating in discussions, interacting with other course participants, and expressing their disagreements, i.e., taking responsibility as a social course participant.

The responses to the open-ended questions provided additional insights into social presence in the online learning experience. When commenting on online discussions, the respondents mentioned positive experiences of interaction in the virtual classroom,

defining this platform as multicultural, refreshing, interesting and enriching. They also mentioned that diversity in the classroom made these discussions more engaging and compelling. The Zoom meetings were identified as a way of fostering not only instructor presence but also social presence. The synchronous meetings "made the class more real" as a platform where the instructor shared their personal experiences and passion for the profession, and where the course participants heard others' voices and were provided with ample space for reflection and opportunities to ask questions. Some course participants argued that interaction did not necessarily translate into collaboration, and that further encouragement was required to promote collaboration among classmates. This argument was echoed in the CoI survey, with collaboration being one of the items that received the lowest score. While the OCPTI courses do provide opportunities to foster social presence and build a sense of community, the results suggest that not all course participants developed a sense of collaboration in the online setting. This may be attributed to several factors, such as the participants not sharing the same language pair, living in different time zones, and having various responsibilities as adult learners. This may even be a personality issue or a matter of personal preference. However, given the fact that collaboration enhances learning in translation classes (see for example Huertas Barros, 2011; Sánchez Ramos, 2019, 2021; Thelen, 2016), it is worth focusing on ways to help learners collaborate better in online multilingual settings.

Bilić (2020) defined fostering a collaborative environment and creating an online community as key factors to student success in online teaching. Valentine and Wong (2021) also focused on interaction and collaboration in their study, finding that collectively produced translations were mostly better than individual products and that teamwork seemed "to have contributed to decision making albeit in an unstructured way" (p. 235). The course participants needed further instructor guidance to make more informed decisions. Several studies conducted with reference to online translation teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, i.e., emergency online courses, reported problems related to social presence. One of the main problems was a lack of motivation among students, which was linked to factors concerning social presence such as isolation, lack of direct contact, lack of control, and so on (see for example, Alwazna, 2020; Almahasees & Qassem, 2021; Libreros Cortez & Schrijver, 2021; Wu

&Wei, 2021). Bordet (2021) noted that synchronous classes and informal online meetings were a way of increasing learner motivation:

> The online class sessions and the teacher's regular individual feedback combined with informal online meetings strengthened the mutual relationship, especially since informal online meetings gave time for discussions about students' motivations and professional plans. (p. 242)

Thus, establishing a social presence has been a significant issue in emergency online courses. Now that education has undergone an essential transformation in the post-pandemic era and online education has become globally widespread, it is crucial to think more about the social presence and how to engage students more actively in learning processes in online learning environments, and to suggest best practices or principles that are adaptable to emergency online courses.

3.3.3. Cognitive presence

Cognitive presence is the extent to which course participants construct meaning through communication in a learning community. Fostered by teaching and social presence, "cognitive presence is the key element in critical thinking, a necessary element for higher levels of thinking and learning" (Kanuka & Garrison, 2004, p. 21). In the CoI survey, cognitive presence includes items related to translation challenges, exploration, interest in course activities, construction of explanations and solutions, the effect of reflection, the effect of feedback, and application of knowledge created. The indicators of cognitive presence in the OCPTI courses were the use of assignments that required exploration, research and problem-solving skills, authentic tasks, reflective practice and questions guiding learners for self-assessment, and rubrics for self-assessment.

The course materials suggested that, in the OCPTI, translation assignments were designed in a way to develop the learners' research and critical thinking skills. Particularly reflective practice, which was a part of all translation assignments, encouraged the learners to focus on specific translation problems and their solutions, leading to a deeper understanding of translating. Reflective practice provides data for

learners to "develop critical thinking skills regarding their progress and performance" (Mazzei & Jay-Rayon Ibrahim Aibo, 2022, pp. 37-38), and also for instructors to monitor learners' development throughout the course together with their performance in translation assignments. Self-assessment questions, rubrics and examples of good work were the tools that helped the students make critical decisions in translations and make a critical evaluation of translations.

The CoI survey revealed that the mean values for all items related to cognitive presence were higher than 4, with the highest means associated with the ability to develop solutions to translation challenges that could be applied in practice and to apply the knowledge gained in the course to work or other non-class related activities. It is significant that the learners were confident about putting knowledge and skills into practice since the majority of the learners in the OCPTI were career-focused. This indicates that assignments imitating real-life work practice and reflections on these assignments were useful in developing the learners' translation skills and providing them with the confidence to enter the translation market.

One of the highest scores in the CoI survey was related to using a variety of information sources to explore problems (translation challenges) posed in this course. This result was also confirmed in the learners' responses to the open-ended questions. Some respondents particularly referred to research experience they gained when completing translation assignments. With regard to translation assignments, the survey participants were also content with the opportunity to work with diverse text types that they were likely to encounter on the market. Their further comments showed that the instructor's willingness to share personal experiences also brought them closer to professional practices.

To wrap up, the results suggested that, in general terms, the OCPTI courses focused on cognitive presence, and the learners were satisfied with course components and instructors' approaches that were targeted at fostering cognitive presence. This provided them with the confidence they needed to enter the translation market. The research results pointed out that cognitive presence is affected by both course design (i.e., what is included in the course and how they are presented) and instructors' personal attitudes. Working with different types of texts in translation courses, simulating real-life work conditions in translation assignments (e.g., strict rules about

deadlines, and file submission), and getting feedback on translations from the instructor and language reviewers were carefully designed course components that helped the students construct meaning in translation-related courses. Complementary to such course components were the instructor's personal attitudes and approaches that boost learners' professional motivation. For instance, several learners indicated that the course instructor's passion for translation and willingness to share their personal experience regarding translation piqued their interest in the course, and probably in the profession. This also shows us how presences in the CoI framework are interconnected. The social presence of the instructor, i.e., the instructor's desire "to project their personal characteristics into the community" (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, p. 88), is integral to all components designed to foster cognitive presence.

4. Recommendations for designing learning and assessment practices in teaching translation online

Building upon an earlier version of the list that particularly focused on assessment (forthcoming) and originated from hands-on practices offered in a course in the OCPTI, the present study revises the list of recommendations, drawing upon insights from the learners' survey responses. Remarkably, no major changes were made to the initial list, which indicates that the learners validated the assessment practices inferred from the course contents and instructors' approaches in the OCPTI. Although some of the recommendations discussed in this study are not exclusive to online teaching and learning, and not all are specific to teaching translation, instructors can still find value in integrating these general frameworks into their teaching and assessment practices. These recommendations were derived from a particular online translation program with unique characteristics but can be adapted to other contexts.

Teaching presence:

- Different learner needs should be addressed through constant communication, collaboration, and flexibility.

- A wide array of assessments (especially formative assessments from low-stake to high-stake) as well as learning activities should be designed, using various media that provide learners with the opportunity to get engaged in learning (e.g., online discussions, translation assignments, reflective practice).
- A detailed syllabus with clear information about course and assessment procedures (e.g., assignments, deadline, grading policy and breakdown) should be provided at the very beginning of the classes, and information in the syllabus should be discussed with learners to avoid ambiguity and misunderstandings.
- Courses should include detailed assignment descriptions, presenting information about what learners are required to do, resources they can use, formatting and style requirements, assessment criteria (rubric), academic honesty, and how to submit the assignment.
- Rubrics and exemplars of good work (e.g., a sample reflection on translation; examples of excellent, good, fair, and incomplete comments in a discussion thread) should be provided as self-assessment tools.
- Software that allows flexibility for learners (e.g., written, video and audio options in VoiceThread) should be used, and learners should be informed about available technical support.
- Timely and constructive feedback should be given, and learners should be invited to provide peer feedback. In the multilingual translation classroom, language reviewers speaking the learner's working languages provide feedback, which almost all participants found useful. It should be added here that feedback mostly focuses on weaknesses and areas that need to be improved. Feedback on strengths is likely to encourage learners to get more engaged with assessment activities.
- Instructor presence in the virtual class should be fostered to promote learners' online engagement in learning and assessment activities (e.g., by starting dialogues and commenting on learners' input in discussion boards). The learners mostly referred to the effectiveness of the synchronous Zoom sessions with the instructor and fellow learners. These sessions motivated

them to get more engaged with learning and assessment activities in the online course. Therefore, either compulsory or optional, regular synchronous meetings should be a part of all online learning programs.

Social presence:

- In some cases, a personal touch can be added to feedback to encourage interaction (e.g., examples from the instructor's own experience of improving specific translation skills). This may also be an example of teaching presence. However, considering its "humanizing" effect, this item is placed under social presence.
- Learning and assessment experience should be humanized by adding a personal touch to course materials and activities that allow learners to feel that they interact with their instructor and peers. The researchers' observations and learners' comments indicate that such a personal touch, especially from the instructor, is quite effective in increasing motivation. The syllabus, feedback on student assignments and the synchronous sessions were the course components where the instructor shared personal knowledge and experience with learners.
- Inclusive and welcoming language should be used in the syllabus and other communications with learners so that they feel comfortable participating in online discussions and working with peers in group projects.

Cognitive presence:

- Reflective practice should be used especially in translation assignments to encourage learners to justify translation decisions with specific reference to problems and challenges so that they develop a deeper understanding of translating.
- Summative assessments should include authentic tasks simulating real-life work conditions of translators.
- Activities that promote collaborative learning should be designed (e.g., translation projects where each member assumes a different role). The survey results suggest that interaction does not always mean collaboration. There is

probably a need to design collaborative activities in consideration of learners' needs and conditions. In a program, whose target is mostly working adults from different time zones with different language pairs, collaboration may be harder. It is of particular importance to elaborate on how collaborative activities can be adapted to the needs of a specific learning community or even the specific needs of individuals in a small learning community.

5. Conclusion

This study aims to present recommendations for designing teaching, learning and assessment activities in online translation teaching. The CoI framework was used as a reference to categorize findings and gain a comprehensive understanding of learning and assessment practices. The results emphasize the importance of building teaching, social, and cognitive presence in the online learning community. These presences not only create a powerful learning environment but also enhance the effectiveness of evaluating learners' performance, given the intertwined nature of learning and assessment activities in online education settings. This study was conducted in a small online learning community and, obviously, the resulting recommendations should not be construed as one-size-fits-all, but they can serve as a starting point for evaluating existing curricula and launching new programs in translation.

The findings also highlight the interconnectedness of different types of presences in online learning communities. For instance, instructors can enhance their teaching presence and build social presence by incorporating personal information or experiences into their feedback, which encourages open communication with learners. This approach also facilitates cognitive presence by providing a social setting for learners to construct meaning. Overall, teaching presence plays a crucial role in fostering a supportive learning environment and promoting engagement, which in turn supports social and cognitive presence. It is clear that these three types of presence are interdependent and work together to create a successful online teaching, learning and assessment experience.

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