



## Social presence in digital/online teacher training, a case from Sweden

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This study examines qualitative aspects of digital teaching in Swedish teacher training education during the distance and hybrid mode caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. By investigating how the teaching interaction is (re-)shaped when university teachers, students and technology interact in digital teaching contexts, the aim is to shed light on different dimensions of **social presence/distance** in specific, unique, and situated digital (distance/online) teaching.

Eight teacher training educators, and their students were followed by video captures during seminars and lectures, focusing how teachers and students, who were separated physically, interacted in the digital teaching space. Diary entries and focus groups were used to follow up the teachers' and students' experiences of the teaching situations.

Results shows that the physical separation of bodies challenges the accomplishment of social presence and hereby what is sometimes addressed as the "silent" teacher competencies, often "invisible" in the physical classroom, but redefined in the different setting online. Communication becomes non-rhythmical, less fluid and social bodily behavior and conditions for participation change, both positively and negatively. This gives rise to central concerns: The absence of the traditional physical framing of teaching prompts the formulation of other (formalized) framing, enforcing online/digital teaching in teacher training. Such framing may involve a technical toolbox, but perhaps more important is that both teachers and students are informed by the different social and material conditions for teaching and learning, and how these may have an impact on both the individual and the collective of the teaching event. Issues of individual responsibility as well as power relations need to be addressed here. The aspects of redefining social presence in digital/online teacher training put forward in this paper are fundamental, presuming that digital teaching will play a considerable role in both form and content of different teacher training programs in the near future.

**Keywords:** social presence, socio-material framing, online teacher training