CHAPTER 1

Teaching Presence in Online Teaching

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[If we accept] successful teaching is a combination of intellectual commitment and embodied experience— that it is as much thought as it is action—then we need to advocate for the learning environment that allows both to play out.

—*Lucia Volk, "Teach It Like You Mean It," 2012, para 23*

In the U.S. movie *The Wizard of Oz*, a teenager named Dorothy along with her dog, Toto, are carried by a tornado to the Land of Oz. The movie goes on to describe Dorothy's quest to meet a well-known wizard to get his help to find her way home. She is accompanied by a group of three friends on her journey, namely the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Lion. The Scarecrow wants the wizard to give him a brain so he can be intelligent; the Tin Man wants a heart so he can feel emotion; and the Lion wants courage so he can be brave. Although no one has ever seen the wizard, they are all convinced he has the power to help them. Part of their quest involves following a yellow brick road. The movie ends with Dorothy and her friends realizing that it is not the wizard himself but the knowledge of him being present that enables them to discover their own strengths and help themselves. This realization comes about when they find out that wizard is an ordinary man creatively using tools at his disposal to make things happen. In a way, the story of the Wizard of Oz represents the potential of presence to be a powerful guiding force to productive outcomes. However, there is careful planning and work behind the presence that makes it effective.

In this chapter, I discuss the theoretical conceptualization of teaching presence and provide examples of its implementation from an online graduate program for new and in-service teachers of English as a second language (ESL).

Presence Theory

Presence as a theoretical concept emerged from social presence and teacher immediacy research (Lowenthal & Parscal, 2008). Social presence is defined by Short, Williams, and Christie (1976) as the "saliency" or mutual noticeability of interlocutors, or communicators, and the consequences of that noticeability. The medium of communication is central to this conceptualization of saliency in that it determines the nature of the presence (Lowenthal & Parscal, 2008). For example in video materials, there is both visual and audio presence whereas in audio-only materials there is only audio presence. Immediacy is another component of social presence, which in its positive sense, Mehrabian and Epstein (1972) define as linguistic and nonlinguistic communication that develops a sense of affinity between communicators. It is the ability to effectively project approachability, likeability, and interest in sustaining engagement into the communication situation while being aware of these attributes in others.

Saliency and immediacy thus constitute social presence in that it depends on interlocutors' engagement with others around them. In this regard, social presence is "a complex and nuanced aspect of teaching" not a "checklist of behaviors, dispositions, measures, and standards" (Rogers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 265) as it is often simplistically regarded in an education climate of quantifiable accountability. Social presence thus requires teachers' critical self-awareness and capability to develop relationships and construct safe and trusting environments so that learning can take place. Thus, this conceptualization of social presence can be seen as foundational to the concept of presence in teaching, which according to Rogers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 267) has three aspects: connection to self, connection to students, and connection to subject matter and pedagogical knowledge. Each of these aspects is described below.

Connection to Self

To be invested in all that teaching involves, Rogers and colleagues (2006) assert that teachers must experience teaching as a projection of themselves as both an individual and a professional. Their identity, experiences, backgrounds, expertise, trust in their abilities, values, and morality influence the infrastructure and climate and nurture relationships they create in their classrooms. If authentic self-projection is constrained by externally imposed policies and requirements, teachers are likely to experience tentativeness and anxiety, and their teaching will become "emotionally flat and routinized" (Talbert, McLaughlin, & Rowan, 1993, p. 53). The principle of authentic self-projection holds true in online teaching. To achieve authentic self-projection online, teachers need to express themselves, their thinking, and their ways of doing things. They also need to communicate their grand design for a course (Anderson et al., 2001), which is reflective of who they are as teachers and as individuals.

Connection to Students

Rogers & Raider-Roth's (2006) relational stance is a view that emphasizes a psychological connection in which learning takes place in relationship to others. In the classroom, teach-

ers who assume this stance emphasize relationship building, both between teachers and their students and among students as members of the classroom community. Rogers et al. emphasize the centrality of trust, empathy, authenticity and intersubjectivity (the ability to assume the viewpoints of others) in this stance, which allows for "expression, reciprocal appreciation of intentions and active work together" (p. 275) toward achieving meaningful ends. In this regard, teachers cannot cause learning but they can be influential in making it happen through the relationships they develop with students and through the materials and structures they put into place to support the relationships. As Johnson (2006) argue, teachers are in a "relationship of influence with students," a far more complex and deep relationship than the behavioristic "causal relationship" (p. 245) so often associated with two-dimensional views of teachers and teaching.

Connection to Subject Matter and Pedagogical Knowledge

To achieve a strong pedagogical connection, teachers need in-depth knowledge of their subject matter, the mastery of which will free them to focus on what students are doing with that subject matter (Dewey, cited in Rogers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 280) and to respond to students' questions and need for support in a timely and informed manner. Teachers need to maintain a feedback loop that involves taking action, assessing students' responses, and using these responses to shape the next steps. Another important component of the pedagogical connection is teachers' understanding of the process of knowing the subject matter (for example, knowing not only the Pythagorean theorem and its logic but also how Pythagoras came to its conceptualization). This level of understanding is necessary for teachers to gain insight into students' thinking so they can adjust their curriculum and lesson planning to promote students' understanding. Finally, teachers also need full understanding of the context of the school and schooling (Freeman & Johnson, 1998) in which their teaching takes place to make decisions within a realistic framework. The pedagogical connection aligns with Shulman's (1987) concept of teachers' expertise consisting of both content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. Parallels are also evident between Rogers' three types of teacher connection (i.e., to content, to the process of learning, and to the context) and Anderson et al.'s (2001) three categories of teaching presence: design and administration of content, facilitation and support of students' learning, direct instruction and intellectual leadership within instructional and institutional contexts (Table 1.1). The nature of teaching presence and its instructional manifestations in an online environment is the central of this chapter and they are discussed in the sections below.

Teacher Presence and Teaching Presence: A Difference with Pedagogical Significance

Anderson, Rourke, Garrison, and Archer (2001), who developed the idea of teaching presence, likened online teachers to one room schoolhouse teachers in North America in the days of yore. These teachers were responsible for managing all aspects of their

classroom, from firing up the woodstove in the winter or opening windows in the summer to providing appropriate instruction for multiage and multilevel students. Today, while the specific tasks might be different, like their one room schoolhouse predecessors, teachers of online courses still need to maintain an environment conducive to learning and provide instruction that meets the needs of students from a wide range of backgrounds and levels of experience.

Anderson et al. (2001) wanted to understand the teacher's roles and their significance to students' learning in the online medium, which led them to construct the idea of teaching presence. They define teaching presence as "the design, facilitation and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes" (p. 5; Table 1.1). In this conceptualization, the comprehensive notion of teaching presence also includes teacher presence or "direct instruction" by teachers in leading classroom learning using their expertise and "greater content knowledge" (Anderson et al., 2001, p. 8). In other words, teachers being present in the classroom is only one part of teaching presence.

I explored teaching presence in two studies of online classes (Pawan, Paulus, Yalcin, & Chang, 2003; Pawan, Yalcin, & Kuo, 2008). The first study focused on the types of teaching configurations in three online classrooms that led students to higher levels of thinking (integration, synthesis and resolution). The second focuses on the outcomes of teaching interventions in an online class to increase the effect of teaching presence on students' critical thinking.

In the first study, my colleagues and I found that teaching presence engaged students in higher levels of inquiry through presence that consisted of instructors' effective design and modeling of expected engagements; through their active, timely and regular participation in discussions; and finally through instructors' critical inquiry into and questioning of intellectually challenging issues in discussions. We researched three online language teacher education courses of different topics (literature in language teaching, the teaching of reading skills and technology integration into language teaching). We focused on instructional design as well as analysis of, using Garrison, Anderson and Archer's (2001) practical inquiry model (PIM), the daily postings of instructors and students at certain points in a semester for each of the classes. PIM outlines four phases of higher order thinking (triggering, exploration, integration and resolution), which were evident in online postings and thus enabled us to track and code postings at those phases. (I will refer to PIM in Chapter 2 as it is also relevant in guiding reflective teaching online.) Table 1.2 shows the specific weeks when postings were retrieved; the units of analysis, which consisted of coded postings; and the percentages comparing the number of coded postings for each phase in relation to the overall total of 229 coded posting units. Our findings confirmed that, overall, without overt instructor presence, students were engaged at the beginning levels of inquiry, namely at the exploration level 66% of the time, during which they mostly brainstormed and shared personal narratives, descriptions, and facts. (See Table 1.2, Phase 2.) There were negligible attempts by students to analyze, integrate the positions of others, or critically justify their own or others' positions, which represent the higher levels of integration and resolution/synthesis. However, in Technology in

TABLE 1.1. TEACHERS' ROLES IN ONLINE TEACHING

Design and Administration: Thinking through the process, structure, evaluation and components of the course	Facilitating Discourse: Supporting and encouraging participation toward the attainment of learning objectives	Direct Instruction: Providing intellectual and scholarly leadership
1. Build curriculum 2. Customize (repurpose) materials (include online commentaries, personal insights) 3. Design and administer mix of group and individual activities 4. Set and negotiate timelines 5. Provide guidelines and tips 6. Model appropriate netiquette 7. Model effective use of medium 8. Provide sense of "grand design" for course (narrative paths could be used to make explicit and implicit learning goals apparent)	1. Comment upon and encourage student responses 2. Draw in less active participants 3. Curtail effusive/dominating comments 4. Help students find congruent links between opinions 5. Assess efficacy of discussion process	1. Present content 2. Initiate questions 3. Focus attention by directing attention to concepts 4. Confirm understanding through assessment and timely feedback 5. Diagnose and address misconceptions 6. Refer students to resources

Adapted from "Assessing Teaching Presence in a Computer Conferencing Context," by T. Anderson, L. Rourke, D. R. Garrison, and W. Archer, 2001, *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks, 5*(2) p. 1–17.

Language Teaching class, where the instructor had overt teaching presence by putting into place and actively using a participation structure of well-defined discussant roles (starter, provocateur, wrapper), there were more integrative and critical thinking questions posed, demonstrating the utility of a well-articulated design and transparent structure.

The results of the 2003 (Pawan et al.) study confirmed Garrison, Anderson, and Archer's (2001) assertion that "often students will be more comfortable remaining in a continuous exploration mode; therefore teaching presence is essential in moving the process to more-advanced stages of critical thinking and cognitive development" (p. 10). In particular, they state that the integration phase, in which students attempt to incorporate the views of others and to use them as a foundation to further develop their ideas, "requires active teaching presence to diagnose misconceptions, to provide probing questions, comments, and additional information in an effort to ensure continuing development, and to model the critical thinking process" (p. 10). In 2008 (Pawan et al.),

TABLE 1.2. ENGAGEMENT PATTERNS
FROM THE PAWAN ET AL. 2003 STUDY

Class	Week	# Units	Phase 1 Trigger		Phase 2 Exploration		Phase 3 Integration		Phase 4 Resolution		Off-Task	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Literature-based Instruction	13–14	22	7	32	6	27	0	0	0	0	9	41
	15–16	18	4	22	10	56	3	17	0	0	1	6
Critical Reading Skills	6	47	2	4	39	83	1	2	0	0	5	11
	8	62	6	10	54	87	1	2	0	0	1	2
Technology in Language Teaching	5	37	3	8	21	57	12	32	0	0	1	3
	9	43	4	9	22	51	8	19	0	0	9	21
Total		229	26	11	152	66	25	11	0	0	26	11

From "Online learning: Patterns of engagement and interaction among in-service teachers," by F. Pawan, T. M. Paulus, S. Yalcin, and C. F. Chang, 2003, *Language Learning and Technology, 7*(3), p. 126. Used with permission.

we undertook an in-depth study of the role-based student participation design and format used in the Technology Integration class that proved effective in the 2003 study. We used the design and format as a teaching presence intervention and found that they were effective in increasing engagement at PIM's higher order thinking phases of synthesis and resolution but only up to a point. This was because student variables also impacted student engagement.

In the case of students' limited experiences with the subject matter (language teaching in this case), despite instructors' efforts to guide students engagement through the discussion roles, to push their questioning and engagement to a higher level of inquiry, students in that situation were most engaged in asking one-way directional questions that sought clarification at the exploration phase. This finding converges with prior research showing that novice learners tend to ask more questions on easier material (see Miyaki & Norman, 1978). Also, students who had limited experiences with online course participation, were used to fixed rather than flexible time formats, or preferred the immediacy of engagement in face-to-face classrooms had issues of timeliness and frequency of participation. Without the pressure of regular engagement in a scheduled course, they often procrastinated in providing their responses and missed the teacher modeling. More often than not, these students would post at the end of the week, too late to be part of the engagement and feedback cycle, and in many cases, their postings were not read at all. Quality of posts was also an issue as, being aware of the situation; these students posted many rhetorical questions that did not require responses.

Another issue is that some students are less open to group work and critical discussion than others. We found that some participants were unwilling to expose themselves to peers whom they perceived as more online savvy or professionally experienced, an issue of "face" or self-protection. In several cases, we saw that students who kept to themselves were those who expressed an aversion to group work or were used to less contentious ways of engagement and sought to avoid the tension they experienced when they asked or were asked to justify positions. One student's statement illustrates such a perspective:

> As someone who tends to resist group work, I think that computers offer me anonymity, and I am probably more likely to make a comment in an atmosphere when I could not be openly ridiculed.

The indication that this student felt threatened by discussion involving counter-challenges to opinions points out the importance of learning style. There is no one-size-fits-all pedagogical approach, a principle that applies to all instructional settings. As Duffy et al. (1998) have noted, students can learn without being "quick and bold on their feet" (p. 63) in collaborative engagement. Thus, this study shows that the effectiveness of the teaching presence intervention through role assignments was moderated by students' variables.

Pathways of Practice: Developing Teaching Presence

The concept of presence in teaching has not often been taught in teacher education programs (Liston, 1995), largely because it is difficult to define and concretely demonstrate. However, the online environment provides facilities to trace and archive teaching moves through textual and multimodal means. My coauthors and I have taken advantage of those facilities in our teacher education program for English as a foreign language/English as a second language (EFL/ESL) teachers who are taking online classes to pursue licensing and certification.

Teaching presence as articulated by Anderson et al. (2001)—comprising course design and administration, facilitating discourse, and direct instruction—is the foundation for training sessions for instructors of the classes I supervise. I am informed by prior research, including the Pawan et al. (2003) and Pawan et al. (2008) studies described above, as well as instructional experiences. Below are a few examples of the teaching presence guidance I provide to instructors of online classes under my supervision.

Instructor Modeling and Timing of Participation

To make their grand design for a course apparent to students, instructors must clarify the planning of engagement and participation to themselves and make sure it is referenced throughout class discussions. If engaging students at the higher levels of thinking is what instructors want, they must make visible the various phases of engagement and questioning, such as those in the PIM model, that will lead students there. More important, instructors must model asking questions at those phases. For example, instead of asking,

"What do you think of semantic webbing," which might produce a simple valuative response (e.g., "I like it."), instructors ask more defined, inquiry-based questions such as, "What are the connections, contradictions, and surprises that you see in the concept of semantic webbing?" In this way, students are scaffolded and encouraged to think about issues from multiple perspectives so as to arrive at a more nuanced evaluation.

In addition to articulating their expectations of students, instructors should also clearly articulate how they will participate at regular, predetermined times throughout the week and how they will play a visible role in guiding students. For example, instructors could indicate that they will actively participate at the beginning and middle of weekly discussions and respond individually to at least one-third of the class membership each week.

The importance of continuously asserting this point to instructors is evident as shown in Table 1.2. Even in the Technology in Language Teaching class described above where the instructor's teaching presence positively impacted the quality of discussions at certain times of the semester, students continued to remain at the beginning levels of brainstorming and exploration for about 50% of the time. When asked about the situation, the instructor reported pulling back from continuously modeling higher order thinking questions to give room to students to push themselves onwards, a situation that seldom materialized. Accordingly, in the Literature in Language Teaching class, an undefined teaching presence produced lackluster student engagement. The instructor uploaded all the discussion questions for the course at the beginning and left it to the students to deal with them with little or no information about what his plans were to engage with students. His participation was unpredictable and uneven, which conveyed to the students that the instructor was not vested in the class nor in what they had to say. Such a situation contributed to students feeling disengaged and unmotivated to participate at higher levels of thinking.

The situation in both classes demonstrates that to move forward, students need effective teaching presence (articulated and transparent design, facilitation of discourse, and direct instruction). Lacking that presence, students' online discussions remain at the lower levels that appear "more like a series of declarations" (Connolly & Smith, 2000, p. 19) independent of each other and devoid of progress toward higher level thinking.

Role Definition and Self-Coding of Responses

Anderson et al. (2001) also suggest establishing teaching presence unobtrusively by modeling and assigning specific discussion roles to provide guidance while giving students responsibility and authority. These roles, such as starter, provocateur, and wrapper (discussed in detail in Chapter 2, "Reflective Pedagogy in Online Teaching") can focus the discussion and encourage student reflection. Both instructors and their students also need an array of role options to be able to choose those that align with their personalities and level of comfort. Appendix 1 lists a selection of roles provided by Curt Bonk, one of our colleagues in the Department of Instructional Systems and Technology at the Indiana University School of Education. These roles encourage others to share their thoughts meaningfully, to be accountable not just in the comments they make but also in the ways they connect with the views of others, and to find ways to share and critique intellectual

and material resources. Without this guidance, students may find it difficult to initiate discussions, assume a perspective, and become relevant contributors. In online classes, novices to the medium are often seen making fly-by postings; that is, they flee after sharing their comments because they feel intimidated by the void or insecure about how their comments will be read and how they will be contextualized.

In that regard, I guide instructors to help their students self-code the discussion roles and types of postings they include in their discussions. This metacognitive strategy is based on the premise that awareness of the purpose and outcomes of collaborative interaction has educational value (Duffy, Dueber, & Hawley, 1998). The strategy encourages students to keep track of and reflect on how their responses relate to the collaborative learning objectives set by their instructors. Self-coding their own roles and responses may raise students' awareness, for example, of their participation in the four cyclical categories of postings in the practical inquiry model: trigger, exploration, integration, and resolution/synthesis. They can then title their postings accordingly, such as "Semantic Webbing: Integrating Responses Thus Far" or "Semantic Webbing: Exploring the Concept." Through these strategies, students remain in charge of their interactive behavior in discussions, and that may help them find purpose and a sense of investment in what they post.

Self-coding also includes students monitoring the length of their own postings, which could affect the quality of what they have to say and peer responses to postings. The frameworks my coauthors and I used in 2003 (Pawan et al.) and 2008 (Pawan et al.) studies demonstrated the importance of teaching presence. However, the frameworks did not allow us to articulate that we also saw that longer messages (300 words or more) did not necessarily result in higher quality postings. Frequently these lengthy postings did not incorporate issues raised by others or in the readings, indicating that students were not in a discussion mode but rather in a presentation mode when they wrote them. In addition there were fewer replies to extremely long messages compared to shorter messages, suggesting the longer messages were not being integrated into the flow of the discussion. I incorporate this information into instructor training as it reasserts the instructors' role to explicitly model for students their expectations, which in this case are appropriate self-coding as well as appropriate lengths in postings.

Making Puzzlement and Complexities Visible

Teaching presence includes direct instruction, which in its basic form is instructors' provision of content, readings, and resources. However, what is not often mentioned is that it also involves making visible the process of puzzlement, a process facilitated by the online medium and current technology. In training sessions, the instructors and I brainstorm about how this could be achieved. For example, we look to social media such as Twitter or blogs as places where we could make visible to students our questions and uncertainties as well as connections we are making as we read, in preparation for more structured and moderated discussions in our class discussion forums. Another effective approach to making the process visible is the creation of virtual discussion rooms for smaller groups to meet. Instructors can join one of the discussion groups and invite participants in other discussion groups to lurk and observe the types of questions, misconceptions, new issues,

and so forth. This approach can be likened to the "fishbowl" approach to discussions, in which others observe and learn from conversations publicly conducted by peers.

I began teaching my first online in the fall semester of 2001. Because the class was for ESL and EFL teachers, the class consisted of individuals with varying experiences and national origins. Half the class was teachers from overseas, including the Middle East. The tragic events of September 11 took place in the third week of class and after that, there was total shutdown, meaning there were no postings in class for about a week and a half. I sensed that people feared their comments would be perceived as inadequate given the horrific circumstances or they would be challenged and ridiculed for their comments, given who they were and where they were from. During that entire time, I made visible and shared freely reactions at the national and state levels, as well as those of my colleagues and students on campus. I also made visible my own individual fears and struggles, several of which stem from the fact that I am not originally from the United States (Malaysian by birth), and I have Sanskrit-based first and last names. After a week I saw students coming back to class connecting with what I was sharing. Each week that semester we continued to bring forth what we were thinking and experiencing in the online space I created. The experience taught me that part of our effectiveness as online instructors consists of our ability to project ourselves and to be present as individuals as well as to help our students do the same. This includes sharing the complexities that make us human, which can provide a meaningful subtext for why we should stay together as members of a class.

Conclusion

Teaching presence encapsulates the roles of the teacher and the acts of teaching in an online environment. When effectively manifested, the online medium becomes a means for instructors and students alike to engage in critical thinking and meaningful engagement. Teaching presence in that regard is like the wizard whose presence led Dorothy and her three friends to take the perilous yellow brick road, a journey that enabled them to uncover the capabilities they had to help themselves.

R Questions for Further Discussion

1. What is your definition of teaching presence, and how does it differ from teacher presence, as described in the chapter?

2. Using a class you are familiar with as an example, how do you (or how does the instructor) establish teaching presence? Try to identify at least three aspects of the teacher's activity that constitute teaching presence and provide examples.

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R Appendix 1.1

Adapted from "Role Controversy: The 28 Roles and 28 Explanations of Roles" by C. J. Bonk, 2001. Bloomington: Indiana University. Bloomington. Retrieved from http://www.indiana.edu/~bobweb/r546/modules/cooperative_learning/bob_handouts/28_roles_explanations.html. Used with permission.

Role Play Explanations

- Your job for this week is that of Reporter/Summarizer/Reviewer/Commentator: As a result, you can only summarize across, review, and comment on points made when addressing this problem.

- Your job for this week is that of Editor/Refiner/Perfecter/Improver. As a result, you can only edit, refine, perfect, and improve points made when addressing this problem.

- Your job for this week is that of Controller/Executive Director/CEO/Leader. As a result, you can only oversee the process, report overall findings and opinions, and try to control the flow when addressing this problem.

- Your job for this week is that of Connector/Relator/Linker/Synthesizer. As a result, you can only connect, interrelate, and link ideas made when addressing this problem.

- Your job for this week is that of Decider/Judge/Settler. As a result, you can only make decisions, evaluate, settle, and judge ideas when addressing this problem.

- Your job for this week is that of Devil's Advocate/Critic/Censor. As a result, you can only take opposite points of view for the sake of an argument and be an antagonist when addressing this problem.

- Your job for this week is that of Reflector/Thinker/Speculator/Observer/Watcher. As a result, you can only observe, watch, reflect, think meditate, and speculate on the discussion when addressing this problem.

- Your job for this week is that of Warrior/Debater/Arguer/Conqueror/Bloodletter. As a result, you can only take your ideas into action, debate with others, persist in your arguments and never surrender or compromise no matter what the casualties are when addressing this problem.

- Your job for this week is that of Idea Squelcher/Biased/Preconceiver. As a result, you can only squelch good *and* bad ideas of others and submit your own prejudiced or biased ideas when addressing this problem.

- Your job for this week is that of Slacker/Slough/Slug/Surfer Dude. As a result, you can only sit back quietly and listen, make others do all the work for you, and generally have a laid back attitude (e.g., go to the beach) when addressing this problem.

- Your job for this week is that of Artist/Idea Person/Visionary/Muse. As a result, you can only create; draw; and present proposals, alternatives, provocations, and new ideas when addressing this problem.

- Your job for this week is that of Planner/Predictor/Guesser/Flowcharter. As a result, you can only think ahead of the rest in a rational, logical, and structured way and then plan, predict, and guess where we should head or what we should do next when addressing this problem. As a result, you can only initiate and organize large scale change, flowchart possible growth patterns, and generate new ways for doing things when addressing this problem.

- Your job for this week is that of being Emotional/Sensitive/Intuitive. As a result, you can only be the fire and warmth of emotions, feelings, hunches, and intuitions when addressing this problem.