BoothMate: Integrating a Terminology Management Application in Interpreter Training

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***Abstract* — Terminology preparation is a crucial component within interpreter training, particularly in specialised contexts where cognitive load and time constraints are significant. This study analyses the pedagogical integration of BoothMate, a digital terminology management application, in interpreting practice. The aim of the study is to learn if the tool can enhance students' terminological competence and preparation strategies. The research focuses on the implementation of the platform within a higher education setting, where it was used as part of structured simulated curricular activities designed to emulate professional interpreting scenarios.**

The study adopts a mainly quantitative, practice-based approach. Students were required to elaborate, organise, and use thematic glossaries as part of their preparation for interpreting tasks. Data was collected through a survey related to these classroom practices, in which students were asked to provide feedback on the tool's applicability. The methodology focused on guided terminology research, collaborative glossary building, and the use of prepared terminology during simultaneous interpreting tasks in a mock conference scenario.

The results seem to indicate that the use of a dedicated terminology management tool helps students to better prepare interpreting tasks in a more systematic way, improves conceptual understanding of specialised domains, and enhances their ability to retrieve relevant terms under time constraints.

The study concludes that integrating a digital terminology management tool into interpreter training can significantly contribute to the development of professional skills, provided that their use is embedded within a structured and reflective pedagogical framework. These findings have implications for curriculum design and for the incorporation of technology into interpreter training.

***Keywords* — interpreting, interpreter training, terminology management, boothmate, technology**

I. Introduction

The growing integration of digital technologies into professional interpreting practice has not only transformed interpreters' workflows but also the pedagogical approaches adopted in interpreter training. Terminology preparation has become a key element of interpreting competence in specialised interpreting contexts where professionals are often asked to process heavy terminology and domain-specific concepts under significant time pressure. Therefore, Computer-Assisted Interpreting (CAI) tools have increasingly attracted the attention of researchers and educators as they can help terminology management, cognitive processing and interpreting performance.

The emergence of this technology is also reflected in the growing presence of terminology management applications specifically designed for interpreter-students in higher education. These tools are intended to help bridge the gap between academic preparation and professional practice by exposing students to digital workflows commonly used in contemporary interpreting environments. Among the available CAI tools, BoothMate is a cloud-based application for the development of multilingual glossaries, collaborative preparation and fast terminology retrieval during interpreting tasks.

In this paper we examine the use of BoothMate in interpreter training at ISCAP, in the context of a mock conference activity designed in the course unit of Consecutive and Simultaneous Interpreting 2. The activity involves terminology preparation, glossary management and simultaneous interpreting practice in a simulated professional environment. In addition to describing the adopted pedagogical framework, the study analyses students' perceptions about the relevance of BoothMate and related preparation strategies for their interpreting training.

This study addresses the following research questions: How do interpreter-students perceive the usefulness of BoothMate during simultaneous interpreting tasks? Which preparation strategies do students consider most relevant when using a terminology-management application? To what extent do students perceive the integration of digital terminology-management tools as valuable for interpreter training?

II. Literature Review

The landscape of conference interpreting is currently undergoing a significant "technological turn" as millennial practices link with technical equipment and digital workflows. Pöchhacker and Liu [1] observe that while interpreting has long been an essentially human practice unaided by tools, the emergence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has reshaped the profession's status and working conditions [1]. This evolution is centred on Computer-Assisted Interpreting (CAI), which Fantinuoli [2] defines as a form of oral translation wherein a human interpreter utilizes computer software developed to support and facilitate sub-processes of the task, such as knowledge acquisition and terminology management.

The definition and scope of CAI tools remain a subject of academic debate, often categorized into "narrow" and "broad" senses [3]. Guo et al. [3] propose a unified definition where CAI tools are computer programs or digital devices used during the interpreting process to reduce cognitive stress and enhance processing capacity. Within this framework, Fantinuoli [2] distinguishes between first-generation tools, designed primarily for managing simple multilingual glossaries (e.g., Interplex), and second-generation tools that adopt a holistic approach to terminology and knowledge management, such as InterpretBank. These advanced systems

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often integrate automatic speech recognition (ASR) to provide real-time assistance [4].

BoothMate is presented as one of the most established examples of second-generation terminology management tools designed specifically for interpreters. Originally developed under the name *Interpreters' Help*, the platform evolved from a glossary-sharing environment into a comprehensive cloud-based ecosystem supporting terminology management, collaborative preparation, and workflow organisation for conference interpreters [5]. According to the developers, BoothMate was among the first tools to enable real-time glossary sharing and cloud synchronisation across devices, allowing interpreters to maintain updated terminology databases in dynamic professional settings. Its development reflects the broader shift within CAI research from static glossary consultation toward integrated knowledge-management environments that support both preparation and in-booth retrieval [3].

Terminology preparation is widely recognised as a "crucial component" of the interpreting workflow, especially in specialized contexts [2]. Corpas Pastor [6] emphasises that interpreters often face a "lexical and conceptual gap" between themselves and event participants, typically having minimal time to prepare domain-specific jargon. This gap becomes particularly evident in highly specialised conferences, where interpreters are expected to process unfamiliar terminology and complex conceptual structures in real time. In such contexts, insufficient preparation may compromise not only terminological accuracy, but also the interpreter's ability to anticipate discourse patterns and maintain fluency. Consequently, effective terminology management strategies are increasingly regarded as essential tools for reducing cognitive overload and facilitating faster retrieval of specialised knowledge during interpreting tasks. Specialised digital terminology management applications like BoothMate address these needs by streamlining the creation and retrieval of thematic glossaries [3], [6]. Ortiz and Cavallo [4] note that such tools aim to unburden the interpreter by automating tasks previously managed through manual, non-specialised software like Word or Excel.

Interpreting is considered one of the most stressful professions, with cognitive loads comparable to flight dispatchers. Karaban and Karaban [7] argue that the "lag in CAI development" disproportionately affects interpreters who must manage high-density specialized information under strict time constraints. Baselli [8] suggests that integrating CAI tools into curricula helps students manage "problem triggers," such as numerals and technical terms, which often impose a significant cognitive load during simultaneous interpreting.

The pedagogical integration of these tools into higher education is vital for the development of "information and technological competence". Tarasenko et al. [9] argue that interpreter training must minimize the gap between academic preparation and professional readiness through a symbiosis of human and computer interaction. This includes shifting training focus to the "plane of technologization" through specific modules such as "Fundamentals of Informatics" and "Scientific and Technical Translation" Furthermore, Tarasenko et al. [10] prove that practicing these tools in specialized laboratory environments allows students to create and utilize thematic glossaries more effectively in real-time scenarios.

Empirical research indicates that the use of dedicated CAI tools can significantly enhance performance. Guo et al. [3] found that these tools "reduce the cognitive stress that interpreters face" and improve the accuracy with which they render specific utterances, such as numbers and specialized terms, which is relevant for the present study. Baselli [8] reports in a pilot study that subjects showed a "remarkably better and more precise performance" when supported by a CAI tool compared to traditional Word-based glossaries.

The post-COVID-19 era has further accelerated the need for technological proficiency due to the rise of Remote Simultaneous Interpreting (RSI) [7], [8]. Karaban and Karaban [7] conclude that universities must undertake this technological shift rapidly to ensure that future interpreters are not only proficient in languages but also in the digital tools that define modern professional practice.

III. PROCEDURE AND METHODOLOGY

A. The BoothMate application within interpreter training

Interpreter training at ISCAP usually includes a mock conference during the second academic term within Consecutive and Simultaneous Interpreting 2, a course unit lectured during the 3rd year of the BA Program in Administrative Assistance and Translation. This activity is also an assessment module which occurs towards the end of the semester and is accomplished inside one of ISCAP's auditoriums, which has at least one booth equipped with a simultaneous interpreting console.

All interpreter-students are asked to suggest a topic of their own choice for an approximately 10-minute speech in Portuguese, based on a PowerPoint presentation, which then is rendered into English in a simultaneous interpreting task by a fellow student. The proposed theme should be linked to a specific area, and therefore students are equally requested to elaborate a list of terms as a BoothMate glossary. Other indications – for instance, the deadline for a timely submission of the PowerPoint presentation on the Moodle platform, so that fellow students could include such materials in their preparation work – are equally provided.

This activity additionally includes an introductory lecture in which students receive precise instructions in order to become familiar with the BoothMate application. They become acquainted with the different steps on how to manually insert the terms of their topic into the glossary or how to import these terms from a previously prepared Excel file, and to create the online link. Students also are given the opportunity to explore the application and its potential, i.e., strategies to efficiently search terms available within a glossary and their corresponding equivalents in the target language while performing a simultaneous interpreting task.

Interpreter-students are recommended to carefully prepare their simultaneous interpreting assignments. Studying their fellow students' PowerPoint presentations and gathering information through other sources are important steps to be accomplished, also because the links to the glossaries on the BoothMate application are at their disposal only shortly before speeches are held and the beginning of simultaneous interpretations *per se*.

B. *Methodology*

Assessing the potentials of the BoothMate tool and the strategies for an efficient search for terms on this application by interpreter-students during a mock conference motivated the present study. To have a better understanding of the impact caused by this resource while performing simultaneous interpreting tasks, a survey comprising a total of 27 questions addressed to the students had been elaborated. A total number of 53 students participated in the activity within the course unit Consecutive and Simultaneous Interpreting 2 lectured in the above-mentioned bachelor's degree in the academic year 2024/2025. These interpreter-students were distributed throughout three different groups, i.e., two daytime and one evening classes, made up mainly of female students and in the age range between 20-29 – s. figures 1, 2, and 3:

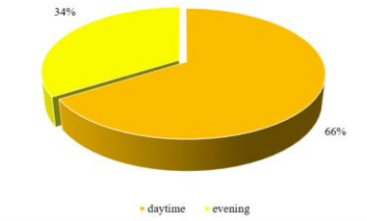

Figure 1- Distribution of students

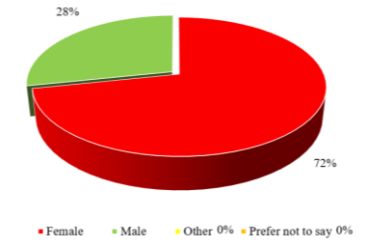

Figure 2 - Gender

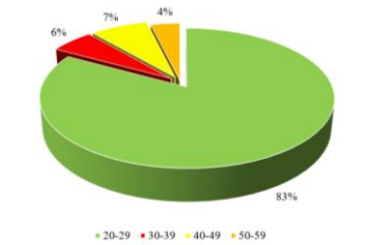

Figure 3 - Students' age range

The questionnaire was mainly based on the collection of numerical data and focused on the impact of handling the search of terms on glossaries available on the BoothMate application while performing a simultaneous interpreting task at the very same time. Students were asked to fill in the survey on the Microsoft Office 365 Forms platform immediately after accomplishing the assignment.

The present study should be regarded as being exploratory and pedagogical, focusing on students' perceptions of the integration of a terminology-management tool into interpreter training. It does not seek to establish causal relationships between the use of BoothMate and interpreting performance, but rather to explore students' perceived usefulness of the tool within a learning environment.

The questionnaire comprised 27 items organised into four thematic sections: (i) preparation strategies prior to the mock conference, (ii) use of BoothMate during the simultaneous interpreting task, (iii) perceived usefulness and usability of the application, and (iv) students' evaluation of the pedagogical relevance of digital terminology-management tools in interpreter training. It included dichotomous questions, multiple-choice questions, Likert-scale items ranging from 1 ("Less relevant") to 5 ("Highly relevant"), together with a "No opinion" option where appropriate, and a limited number of open-ended questions intended to collect qualitative comments.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following section will mainly cover those questions of the survey related to the interpreter-students' preparation of the simultaneous interpreting assignment and the impact on dealing with the BoothMate application while performing that task in a simulated mock conference.

Overall, the survey revealed a predominantly positive perception of the integration of BoothMate into interpreter training.

As regards the stage prior to the simulated event, the large majority of participants, i.e., almost 90% stated to have previously consulted the materials, i.e., the PowerPoint presentation available on the Moodle platform (s. figure 4). Additionally, more than a third of them established contact with their fellow students (s. figure 5). To prepare themselves for the interpretation assignment, slightly more than half of the students researched on other sources (s. figure 6).

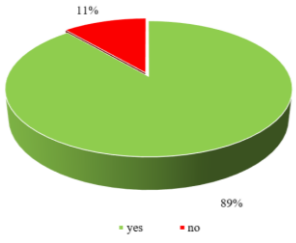

Figure 4 - Prior consultation of materials

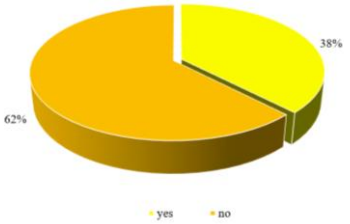

Figure 5 - Previous contact with fellow student (speaker)

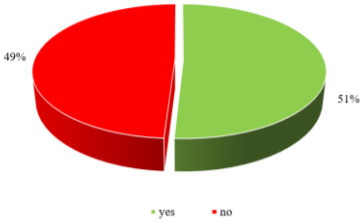

Figure 6 - Prior consultation of other sources

Among alternative sources and/or materials consulted students highlighted "Websites" (55%) related to the topic of speech they were going to render into English during the simultaneous interpretation excises – s. figure 7:

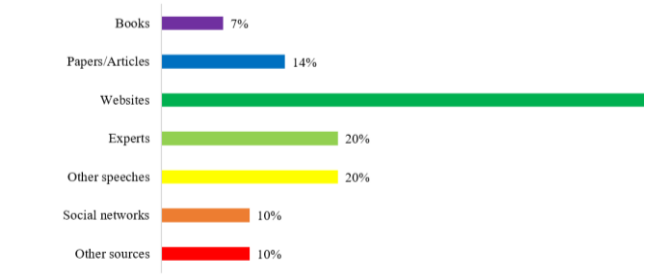

Figure 7 - Alternative sources

Other elements mentioned in this category included "Experts" within the specific area and "Other speeches" (each marking 20%). Reading "books" and/or "papers/articles" was, however, equally important – together graded slightly over 21% of alternative materials consulted. Additionally, 10% of the students mentioned to have prepared themselves for the task researching on "Other sources", which included mainly videos on YouTube (40%) or dictionaries (20%).

Those participants who, however, did not previously consult the available materials and/or other sources stated mainly reasons such as "Lacking time" (46%) or not feeling the need to do so because they were "Highly familiar with the topic" of the speech they would interpret into English (35%) – s. figure 8:

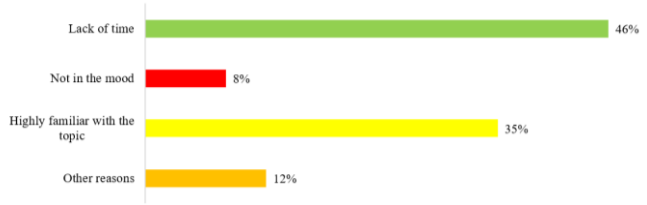

Figure 8 - Reasons for not consulting other sources

Regarding the utilisation of the glossary on the BoothMate application while performing their simultaneous interpreting task, almost ¾ of the participating interpreter-students pointed out to have included this resource in their assignment (s. figure 9). This result is consistent with a similar percentage of trainees who stated that using the tool during their simultaneous interpretation had actually been very helpful (s. figure 10).

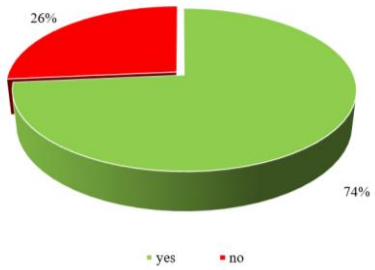

Figure 9 - Use of the BoothMate glossary

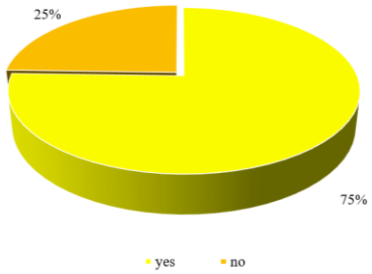

Figure 10 - Helpfulness of the BoothMate glossary

As highlighted in figure 11, almost 90% of the interpreter-students felt comfortable and dealt quite well with this resource tool while accomplishing their simultaneous interpretation assignment – s. figure 11:

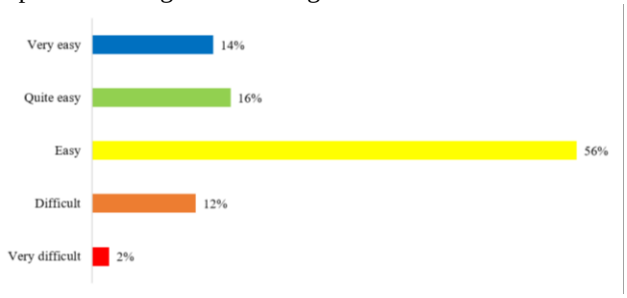

Figure 11 - Level of difficulty using the glossaries on BoothMate

Students did generally not look up more than 5 terms (85%) on BoothMate. A small number of participants, however, stated to have searched for between 6-10 terms on the application – s. figure 12 – but not more than that number:

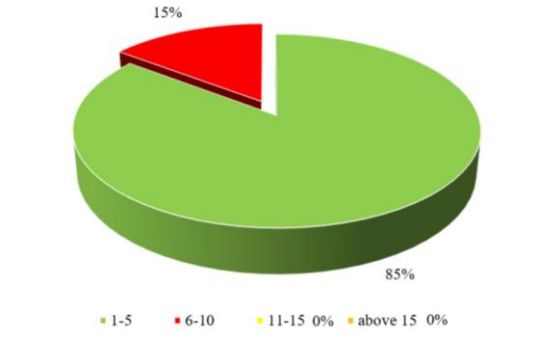

Figure 12 - Number of searched terms

The above figures also reveal that some students did not use the BoothMate application at all (26%), considered it a not very helpful resource (25%), and/or found it "Difficult" (12%) or even "Very difficult" (2%) to use. Main reasons for not using the available glossaries include factors such as "Distracting factor" or "Discomfort" (60% and 5%, accordingly), and "Incomplete glossary" (10%) or "Inadequate terminology" (5%), as shown in figure 13:

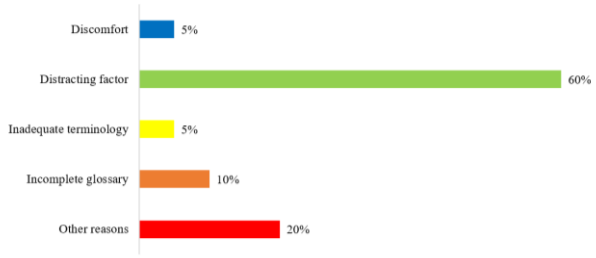

Figure 13 - Reasons for not using the glossary on Boothmate

Students were also asked to evaluate the relevance of some aspects related to the inclusion of this kind of activity and the involved logistics in their interpreter training. Generally, and as highlighted in figure 14 by means of a six Likert scale from 1-5, i.e., accordingly from "Less relevant" to "Highly relevant" and "No opinion", the interpreter students considered the five closed-ended questions within the range of "Relevant" to "Highly relevant":

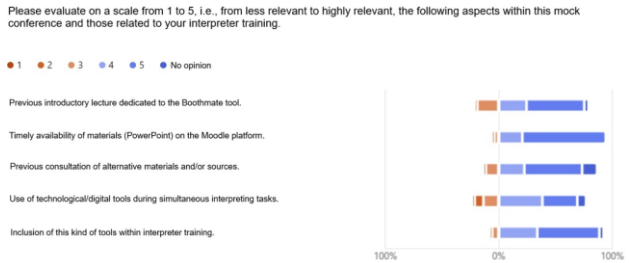

Figure 14 - Importance of aspects within the mock conference activity for interpreter training

Particular importance was given to the following aspects marked as Highly relevant: "Previous introductory lecture dedicated to the Boothmate tool" (roughly over 50%), "Timely availability of materials on Moodle" (almost 75%), "Previous consultation of materials" (roughly over 50%) and the "Inclusion of technological and/or digital tools within their interpreter training" (almost 55%).

The results of the present study seem to confirm the increasing importance of technological and terminology-management skills in interpreter training. Most participants showed a clear awareness of the importance of preparation strategies before the simultaneous interpreting task, especially by consulting PowerPoint presentations, using complementary online resources, and interacting with peers. These results are consistent with the literature review, considering that terminology preparation is a key factor in interpreting performance, particularly in specialised settings with high cognitive load and limited processing time [2], [6].

These outcomes also indicate that the integration of BoothMate into the mock conference activity had a positive impact in the students regarding preparation workflows and strategies for retrieving terminology. Many participants reported that the glossary included in the application was helpful for the simultaneous interpreting task and that they felt comfortable in general when using the tool. This tendency is in line with previous studies of CAI tools which have suggested that digital terminology-management tools can support interpreters by facilitating faster access to specialised terminology and easing cognitive overload during performance [3], [8].

Another important aspect that arises from the study is closely linked to the students' perceptions of the pedagogical value of technological resources in interpreter education. Most of the respondents highly rated the relevance of the elements such as the introductory lecture about BoothMate, timely availability of the materials on Moodle, and the role of the digital tools in the interpreter training. The results are aligned with Tarasenko et al. [9], [10] when they claim that interpreter training should include more technological components which allow simulating modern professional environments and developing information and technological competence.

Although these perceptions are generally positive, the results also point out some limitations and challenges of using BoothMate in simultaneous interpreting tasks. Some participants found consulting the glossary to be distracting or uncomfortable, while others experienced problems with incomplete glossaries or poor terminology choices. The results show that the effectiveness of terminology management tools depends not only on technological resources *per se*, but also on the quality of the glossary preparation, the students' familiarity with the application, and the development of efficient multi-tasking strategies while accomplishing simultaneous interpreting assignments.

Finally, the relatively low number of terms searched by most students may indicate that BoothMate was mainly employed as a support mechanism for occasional terminology retrieval rather than a continuously consulted resource during interpreting. This finding is particularly noteworthy because it suggests that the educational value of BoothMate extends beyond its function as an electronic glossary. Rather than encouraging constant consultation during interpreting, the application appears to promote a more systematic terminology preparation process prior to the assignment. Consequently, the glossary becomes a strategic support resource that students consult selectively, when necessary, while the preparatory work itself contributes to greater conceptual familiarisation with the topic and potentially reduces the cognitive effort required during simultaneous interpreting. This observation is particularly relevant from a pedagogical perspective as it suggests that students gradually develop selective and strategic uses of digital terminology tools, depending on the communicative needs of the interpreting task. The study thus highlights the need to incorporate CAI tools into interpreter training, within pedagogical frameworks that encourage guidance and reflection, rather than a purely technical training.

The present study should be interpreted in light of several limitations. The findings are based exclusively on students' self-reported perceptions collected immediately after a single pedagogical activity, which may not necessarily reflect long-term learning outcomes or actual improvements in interpreting performance. Furthermore, the study was conducted within a single undergraduate course at one higher education institution, limiting the possibility to generalise the results to other interpreter training contexts. Finally, although the survey provides valuable insights into students' experiences with BoothMate, no objective performance indicators – such as interpreting assessment scores, terminology accuracy, or cognitive load measures – were collected. Future studies could adopt mixed-method approaches combining perception-based data with performance-based measures to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the pedagogical impact of CAI tools.

V. CONCLUSION

The present study aimed at analysing the pedagogical integration of BoothMate in interpreter training and at exploring the students' perceptions regarding the usefulness

of digital terminology-management tools during simultaneous interpreting tasks. The results show that the use of BoothMate in a simulated mock conference activity had a positive impact on the students' preparation strategies, terminology retrieval processes, and awareness of the importance of technological competence in contemporary interpreting practice.

The results also support the hypothesis that simultaneous interpreting in nowadays' technological age does not solely depend on traditional interpreting equipment such as headsets, microphones, booths and interpreting consoles. The modern interpreter increasingly uses electronic tools and digital resources which may help with terminology management, preparation workflows, and information retrieval under considerable cognitive pressure.

The study thus shows the growing need to include training on the use of digital terminology management tools in interpreter training programs. Introducing interpreter-students to applications such as BoothMate allows them to familiarise themselves with technological workflows that are becoming ever more a feature within the professional interpreting environment, especially in the post-pandemic world, which has seen the proliferation of remote and technology-mediated interpreting practices.

Although not all students showed the same degree of confidence and an adequate skilled use of the BoothMate application, the overall results lead to the conclusion that the glossary tool was an important support mechanism for simultaneous interpreting tasks in the context of the mock conference activity. Most students found the application relevant and useful, especially when conveniently prepared and materials were available in time.

Finally, the study shows that the pedagogical value of BoothMate goes beyond the mere consultation of terminology. Its insertion in interpreter training stimulates more systematic preparation habits, collaborative learning practices, and a greater awareness of the technological dimension of contemporary interpreting. Future studies may further investigate the relationship between CAI tools, cognitive load management and interpreting performance with wider empirical studies with different interpreting contexts and levels of expertise.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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