Chapter 9

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ABSTRACT
This chapter characterizes the way in which social presence technologies mediate digital identity, presence learning, and Presence Pedagogy (P2) in the context of higher education. It is argued that digital identity, presence learning, and P2 manifest themselves through the four social presence technologies in varying degrees. Against this backdrop, the chapter first provides a concise overview of digital identity, social presence, presence learning, and P2. Second, it presents seven projects to demonstrate how digital identity, presence learning, and P2 are mediated by these four social presence technologies. Third, the chapter outlines future trends likely to influence social presence technologies, digital identities, presence learning, and P2.

INTRODUCTION
The advent of Web 2.0 technologies has opened up new educational opportunities for higher education institutions (HEIs) that have adopted these technologies with a view to deploying them for teaching and learning purposes (Armstrong et al., 2008; Davis III, Deil-Amen, Rios-Aguilar, & González Canché, 2011; Selwyn, 2011). As hybrid and allied technologies, Web 2.0 technologies exist as tools, applications, platforms, and services. Typical examples are blogs, microblogs, podcasts, wikis, social networking sites, media sharing sites, mashups, RSS tools, instant messaging, virtual worlds, massive multiplayer online role-playing games, voice over the Internet protocol, and Internet television.

Collectively, these technologies not only have many and varied offerings but also have diverse affordances for HEIs. However, their offerings and affordances complement each other when they are integrated and deployed in a blended and convergent mode (Harris Interactive, 2007; Land & Bayne, 2008). This is particularly the case with social presence technologies as exemplified by MXit, Twitter, Facebook, and Second Life.

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That is, these composite technologies inherently provide heterogeneous benefits and efficiencies based on different user purposes and needs. For instance, HEIs can leverage these four social presence technologies for posting profiles (students’ and instructors’), course announcements, alerts, updates, commentaries, feedback, and expressing and exchanging ideas, views, or opinions (Chen, Siau & Nah, 2009; Moore, 2009). Additionally, HEIs can employ these technologies as delivery and deployment platforms for real-time and simulated teaching and learning on the one hand, while simultaneously appropriating them as virtual spaces for synchronous and asynchronous interaction with students on the other hand. In addition, social presence technologies can be exploited by HEIs as ideal environments for crowd sourcing by both students and instructors. Second Life, in particular, lends itself well as a medium for blended and convergent learning, experimental and simulated learning, and game-based learning (Messinger et al., 2009; Warburton, 2009a). Furthermore, there are other affordances, such as digital identity, presence learning, and P2 that the four instances of social presence technologies offer and mediate in varying degrees. It is this triple affordance potential as harnessed through MXit, Twitter, Facebook, and Second Life in the context of higher education that is the major focus of this chapter.

DIGITAL IDENTITY, SOCIAL PRESENCE, PRESENCE LEARNING, AND PRESENCE PEDAGOGY

Classically, the concept of identity is theorized as static, fixed, and self-containing; it is viewed as essentialist and centered. This is a structuralist view of identity (Belsey, 2002; Dobrowsky, 2012). In contrast, from a poststructuralist standpoint, identity is theorized as decentered and commingled, and as displaying multiple subjectivities and agencies (Blanch, 2013; Butler, 1990; Sawicki, 1991; Sharma, 2012; Weedon, 1997; Zappavigna, 2012). Identity, as mediated through social networking sites such as MXit, Twitter, Facebook, and Second Life, differs radically from its classical conceptualization as it is digitally constructed and configured. This digital construction and configuration of identity is engendered by digital multi-modal discourses utilized by users of these types of social presence technologies (Blanch, 2013; Bortoluzzi, 2012; Ellis & Anderson, 2011; Heivadi & Khajeheian, 2013; Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008).

Therefore, it is epistemologically limiting to theorize digital identity constructed on these four social presence technologies in singular and isolated terms. Rather, it is necessary to conceptualize it in plural forms as aggregated and multiple identities that are dispersed throughout the virtual spaces embodying these social presence technologies (Boon & Sinclair, 2008; DiMicco & Millen, 2007; Zhang, Jiang & Carroll, 2010). Moreover, such aggregated and multiple identities are not only fluid, partial, and fragmented (Blanch, 2013; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Cover, 2012; Weber & Mitchell, 2008), but are also evolving and transitioning with the plural virtual spaces within which they are embedded. Thus, such identities are in a perpetual state of flux.

Allied to multiple digital identities are multiple virtual presences (e.g., synchronous or asynchronous presences) prevalent in MXit, Facebook, Twitter, and Second Life and multiple virtual personas (e.g., profiles, different aliases, fakes, roles, personas, etc.) users can display on these social presence technologies. (Boon & Sinclair, 2008; Chen, 2013; Danzak, 2011; Davis, 2012; Donoso & Ribbens, 2010; Harrison & Thomas, 2009; Warburton, 2008, 2009a). For example, some of the modes through which digital identities are constructed and negotiated on Facebook include profiles, private and public pages, friendships, relationships, wall posts, messages, photos and video clips, status updates and comments, timelines, likes, site architecture filters,