How can educators and learning designers enhance a sense of community in online courses? Exemplary online educators employ emerging technologies and practices that optimize meaningful interaction, facilitating an ongoing social experience to help create community (Perry, Janzen, & Edwards, 2012). In our experience many pedagogical strategies that facilitate this culture of community share one aspect: they are arts-based. Arts-based approaches include literary, visual, musical, or dramatic elements. We have labelled these artistic pedagogical technologies (APTs). APTs are distinguished from traditional online technologies in part by their emphasis on aesthetics and their link to creativity. How do APTs encourage interaction, create social presence, and facilitate a culture of community in the online educational milieu? Vygotsky’s (1978) Social Development Theory (SDT) and Janzen, Perry, and Edwards’s (2012a) Quantum Perspective of Learning provide some clues regarding the effects of APTs. Additionally, philosophical, theoretical, and pedagogical shifts influence the development, adoption, and use of APTs and need to be considered by educators and learning designers who may use APTs to facilitate online community building.

Advances in Internet technology continue to change the social and pedagogical perspectives of online learning (Pamuk, 2012). Many online educators have moved philosophically from objectivism to constructivism, theoretically from behaviourism to sociocognitive views of education, and pedagogically from supporting direct instruction to championing interactive learning (Bertin
& Nancy-Combes, 2012; chapter 3). There is a shift from teacher-centered pedagogy to more personalized, social, and participatory pedagogies that emphasize community in the postsecondary online classroom (Sun, 2011; McLoughlin & Lee, 2010; chapter 9). Often, the goal is transformative learning (Mayes, Ku, Akarasriworn, Luebeck, & Korkmaz, 2011).

Discussions regarding the theoretical underpinnings of APT techniques and the factors that influence their development and implementation remain sparse. Published literature regarding online teaching strategies often focuses on pedagogical practices such as computer-mediated conferencing (Baran & Correia, 2014; Mayes et al., 2011). Other relevant literature centres on emerging technologies on a macro level, describing how digital technologies can support pedagogy and create innovation (Aldosemani & Shepherd, 2014; Andersen & Ponti 2014; Li, Verma, Skevi, Zufferey, Blom, & Dillenbourg, 2014). In contrast, this chapter focuses on APTs as an emerging technology on a micro level, as we examine specific pedagogical strategies to enhance interaction, facilitate a shared social experience, and create a culture of community in online classes.

BACKGROUND

Exemplary online educators infuse a sense of presence into the classes they teach (Janzen, Perry, & Edwards, 2012). This sense of presence is both created and conveyed through the incorporation of interactive APT teaching strategies such as Photovoice, virtual reflective centres, and conceptual quilting (Perry & Edwards, 2010). Studies found that these APTs help stimulate interaction between students and teachers, among students, and between students and course materials. The result of such interactions is the enhancement of the experience of social presence in the virtual class, creating what we have labelled a “culture of community” (Perry & Edwards, 2010). Repeated experiences of an authentic shared presence help establish shared values, norms, and beliefs for a collective culture in the online class.

A plethora of literature supports the importance of interaction, social presence, and community in online education (Kang & Im 2013; Huahui, Sullivan, & Mellenius, 2014; Yuan & Kim, 2014). In foundational work, Moore (1989) defined interaction in online education as a student-content, student-student, or student-teacher exchange. Others added the interaction between student and self (Ornelles, 2007), and between student and technology (Paul & Cochran, 2013). In chapter 3 of this book, Anderson has further expanded the notion of interaction to include individuals, technology, and content. Positive outcomes of interaction
in online courses include creativity and collaboration (Hendry & Tomitsch, 2014), increasing higher-order thinking and retention (Pecka, Kotcherlakota, & Berger, 2014), and increased learner motivation and academic success (Hawkins, Graham, Sudweeks, & Barbour, 2013).

Social presence is the ability of students and teachers to project their personal characteristics into the online class, thereby presenting themselves as “real people” (Rourke et al., 2000). The value of social presence for effective online teaching and learning is commonly highlighted. For example, social presence is one cornerstone of the widely supported Community of Inquiry Model (Rourke et al., 2000). The positive consequences of social presence in the online learning environment are many, such as the promotion of a sense of caring and belonging (Plante & Asselin, 2014), the creation of a warm and collegial environment that encourages participation and collaboration (Huahui, Sullivan, & Mellenius, 2014), and the development of increasing quality of cognitive presence and higher order thinking (Lee, 2014). Nevertheless, Kehrwald (2008) and Lowenthal (2009) cautioned that despite the general agreement among researchers that social presence is a key element for effective online teaching and learning, a shared understanding of social presence remains elusive.

The effective online classroom is a social environment that enacts community values such as the exchange of beliefs and ideas (Plante & Asselin, 2014). We define community as shared culture in the online classroom, including shared values, norms, and beliefs (Perry & Edwards, 2010). Others have defined community as a classroom in which knowledge is mutually constructed (Chang, 2012). The creation of an online learning community serves as the foundation for a successful learning environment (Chang, 2012). Learners in a community are able to make meaning from their learning experiences (Ziegler, Paulus, & Woodside, 2014), are encouraged to collaborate and provide reflection on their learning (Holmes, 2013), are more productive learners (Meyer, 2014), and have a sense of belonging or reduced feelings of isolation that may enhance the quality of their learning (Phelan, 2012). Moisey, Neu, and Cleveland-Innes (2008) found significant positive correlations between students’ satisfaction with their courses and programs and levels of the sense of community cohesion.

To facilitate the goals of increased interaction, social presence, and community in online learning environments, Hawks (2014) called for pedagogical changes and stated that new models of online education should be considered. Others agreed: Hou (2012) argued that innovative strategies, such as online role playing, are needed to assist learners in attaining a deeper level of interaction...
and higher cognitive skills; and Mayne and Qiang (2011) suggested that personal emails from instructors and the presence of a “coffee shop” informal discussion forum were effective strategies for enhancing interaction and social presence.

Beyond these examples, however, research on instructional strategy development and course materials design for effective online learning remains limited. Educators are left to create interactive teaching technologies to achieve these goals, yet the literature suggests that they are often not successful (Allen & Seaman, 2012). Ashbaugh (2013) reported that the current abundance of “less than excellent online courses threatens to undermine the value of the educational opportunities afforded by the Internet” (p. 97). Ashbaugh (2013) concluded there have been advances in instructional technologies; however, online pedagogies lack quality and fail to enhance learning. Often teaching strategies are developed and utilized without being first subjected to rigorous research-based assessment.

In summary, interaction, social presence, and community are widely accepted as important to effective online teaching and learning. Interaction and social presence are linked to creation of a sense of online community in educational environments. Educators are often without evidence-based guidance as to what teaching technologies will help to facilitate these goals. Artistic pedagogical technologies seem to help accomplish these outcomes in online postsecondary classrooms.

DEFINITION AND DESCRIPTION OF ARTISTIC PEDAGOGICAL TECHNOLOGIES

Online instructors need to develop, implement, and evaluate new and creative teaching technologies to maximize interaction, social presence, and community online. Our team published findings related to three such teaching technologies (Photovoice, virtual reflective centres, and conceptual quilting) demonstrating positive educational outcomes (Perry & Edwards, 2005). Specifically, both students and teachers reported that their virtual classrooms were effective learning environments, in part because of the inclusion of these teaching technologies (Perry & Edwards, 2005). Students reported benefiting scholastically from the sense of community that arose when they participated in these learning activities. One finding from our preliminary studies that requires further analysis is the link between Photovoice, virtual reflective centres, and conceptual quilting teaching strategies — they are all founded in the arts (visual arts and drama). Why do artistic approaches, which value aesthetics as well as reason (Maguire,
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Donovan, Mishook, Gaillande, & Garcia, 2012), seem to facilitate community in the online class?

The worth of the arts has been recognized in face-to-face education. Specifically, art, photography, literature, poetry, music, and drama have been reported as contributing positively to the face-to-face classroom educational experience by stimulating reflection, improving intellect, promoting creativity and helping to achieve affective objectives (Logsdon, 2013; Turketo & Smith, 2014). However, these claims for the value of art-based teaching strategies are primarily anecdotal.

The translation of artistic-based pedagogy to the online classroom seems to be an untested idea. Brown, Kirkpatrick, Magnum, and Avery (2008) declared a need to move on from established online pedagogies that no longer fully satisfy today’s learner and to “develop and implement alternative interpretative pedagogies” (p. 283). APTs represent such pedagogical practices.

Recent research conducted by Perry and Edwards (2012) explored how APTs influenced postsecondary online learning environments and student learning. They helped provide a real and authentic medium for instructors and students to engage with one other, with technology, and with educational content (Janzen, Perry, & Edwards, 2011); created inviting learning environments; initiated, sustained, and enhanced interaction between students and instructors; and helped develop community (Perry & Edwards, 2012). Further, APTs stimulated creative thinking, captured student attention, extended the application of course content, contributed to positive learning outcomes, and helped develop a sense of professional fulfilment for instructors (Perry & Edwards, 2010). They also contributed to students establishing a sense of group identity, supported course engagement, enhanced the learning environment, and developed social connectedness (Perry, Dalton, & Edwards, 2009). Finally, students reported a positive influence on not only course interactions but their sense of community, as well as increased comfort in the educational milieu. They noted that APTs aided them in getting to know themselves, classmates, and instructors (Edwards, Perry, Janzen, & Menzies, 2012).

Photovoice

Wang and Burris (1997) developed Photovoice as a participatory-action research methodology. Perry (2006) transformed this research methodology into an interactive online teaching technology, which involves the instructor posting a digital image and a reflective question at the onset of each unit in the course. With this
platform, students are encouraged to discuss the question in a dedicated forum. Photovoice is not graded and optional.

Positive outcomes included encouraging engagement and interest in the course content; making the learning environment more appealing, creative, and interesting; and facilitating the development of social cohesiveness (Perry et al., 2008).

**Virtual reflective centres**
An example of an APT that involves the artistic element of drama is the virtual reflective centre (Ronaldson, 2004). Virtual reflective centres are role-playing simulation exercises that are reported to enhance critical thinking and promote social presence online (Ronaldson, 2004).

Cubbon (2014) used virtual reflective centres in an online graduate course for advanced nursing practice students. Through random assignments of students to either a patient or a nurse practitioner role, the instructor gave each student the information needed to fulfil the roles during a real-time online “appointment.” As a summation, the instructor distributed reflective questions related to the exercise and hosted an asynchronous group discussion. Participants in the virtual reflective centre exercise emphasized that it facilitated the development of a sense of community in this virtual classroom because it provided a safe, structured environment in which they could engage in an interactive learning exercise. Students commented that the dramatic element of the exercise helped to make the activity novel and engaging, which motivated socially meaningful interaction.

**Conceptual quilting**
Conceptual quilting was developed by the authors and has been used in online graduate courses as a summary activity. Students are asked to construct a virtual quilt that is comprised of ideas, metaphors, theories, and other details from the course that they found most meaningful. The “quilt” needs to be in a medium that can be shared electronically with the class. The construction of the conceptual quilt encourages learners to reflect as they interact again with course materials. Further interaction with the instructor and other students comes when students post their quilts to an asynchronous online discussion forum and respond to comments. This often results in a resurgence of dialogue around a course theme that was depicted in the quilt. Anecdotally, students comment that conceptual quilting helps them consolidate their learning and
bring closure to the course. From a social interactive perspective, the sharing of the completed quilts is a way for students to acknowledge the impact that others (teachers and peers) have had on their learning.

HOW ARTISTIC PEDAGOGICAL TECHNOLOGIES WORK

We propose that the educational impact of arts-based teaching technologies arises initially because of the enhanced interactions they help create. The interpersonal interactions among students and between students and teachers, and the intrapersonal interaction between student and self, are most relevant to this discussion. These interactions may lead to the experience of social presence, as those in the virtual classroom reveal elements of their personal characteristics and become more “real” and known to one another and to themselves. Social presence cannot be established, indeed cannot exist, without interpersonal and intrapersonal interactions. These interactions do not necessarily take place spontaneously in virtual classrooms. Specific teaching technologies that have social interaction (leading to social presence) as a goal are needed to facilitate this outcome.

Not all forms of social presence are equivalent. For example, certain activities aimed at social presence are deemed more authentic, perhaps experienced as more “human” or “real” by participants. The quality of social presence generated through APTs has been described as palpably “human” by the students. Because APTs are founded in the arts, which are human-centred (created by, valued by, shared by, and appreciated by people), APTs help to facilitate interpersonal and intrapersonal social presence that is less artificial.

Not all interactions are alike in terms of effect on social presence and the eventual formation of community. Frequency of interaction alone is not an adequate assessment of interaction levels. While the number of times that students interact with peers, teachers, course materials, and themselves may be important, it is the quality of those interactions that may be most critical to positive outcomes such as a sense of social presence and community. For example, a brief e-mail exchange containing superficial greetings exposes little of the values, attitudes, or beliefs of participants. To be meaningful to the establishment of social presence and community, interactions must reveal something important and relevant about participants to others or to self.

Further, social presence in the online class needs to be part of a course from the beginning to the end. That is, participants need to establish their initial presence when the course begins, but they also need to demonstrate ongoing
participation in the course (Kehrwald, 2008). Teaching technologies such as Photovoice that require student and teacher contributions throughout the course may help facilitate becoming known to each other at the beginning of a course and also can provide ongoing evidence of participation. Further, APTs such as Photovoice potentially allow participants to systematically reveal more of their personal values, beliefs, and priorities as the course proceeds. This may facilitate progressively more personal and perhaps more authentic and meaningful social interaction.

Essentially effective social presence in the online class is a dynamic experience. It evolves over the duration of the course with participants becoming more comfortable with one another through ongoing meaningful interactive experiences. Eventually this leads to the establishment of a culture of community.

The establishment and growth of social presence is related to three conditions: ability, opportunity, and motivation (Kehrwald, 2008). APTs help to meet each of these conditions. First, ability refers to students being able to reference their own experiences and bring these to the learning community in an appropriate way. Kehrwald emphasized that novice learners do not come to online classes with this skill; they may not have the ability to send and to read social presence cues. Students need learning activities that help them gain this ability. Photovoice invites learners to share something about themselves with the class. It becomes one vehicle for students to establish their social presence in the course, and because the same strategy is used often in the course, it teaches students how to share socially in the online milieu. Participants also model this skill for one another, and those students who may be unskilled at sending and reading social presence cues have the option of waiting, watching, and learning how to participate prior to making a contribution.

The second condition is opportunity for interaction. Opportunities need to be purposefully created in online courses to facilitate the frequent meaningful interactions that cultivate social presence. Because APTs are used regularly (in the case of Photovoice, weekly), there is a consistent, scheduled opportunity for participants to interact. While opportunities for interaction are easy to create, they need to be such that learners are not overwhelmed by the demands of interaction within large groups (Harrison & Thomas, 2009; Heejung, Sunghee, & Keol, 2009). Most APTs, such as virtual reflective centres, are suited to smaller class sizes, to allow for participation by all students. The Photovoice activity requires students to make one or two short responses. Long responses with references are discouraged in this activity. This keeps
participants from being overwhelmed by a large number of long posts they feel obliged to respond to.

Technologies that require students and teachers to contribute in a visible way signal that they are available for interactions (Kehrwald, 2008). APTs all have a tangible element that provides these signals. In the case of Photovoice, the weekly photo posting provides evidence of the participation of the teacher. Student involvement is evidenced by responses to the Photovoice question. Likewise, the conceptual quilts posted by students are evidence that they are members of a specific educational community. The responses and questions raised in reaction to the quilts are evidence of “attendance” and the involvement of other class community members.

The third condition for the establishment and growth of social presence is motivation. Teaching tools need to motivate students to participate. Motivation often comes because students believe that participation has some benefit for them. If the activity creates interest, motivation may be enhanced. For example, the Photovoice activity has mysterious elements (one student commented that she never could guess what photo would be hidden under the “electronic paperclip”), arousing curiosity and motivating participation. We speculate that perhaps part of what makes Photovoice motivational is that students find it engaging. It catches their attention; one student described it as a “hook” that captured her interest. Once students are focused on the course theme, the Photovoice activity engages them in dialogue with themselves as they puzzle over the image and think about their response to it. Because there is no correct response to art, their reaction is necessarily personal. As the class members begin to share their personal responses to the image in the public forum, there is some social expectation (motivation) to reciprocate by doing the same, and a public dialogue results in meaningful social interaction.

Students may be demotivated if they believe excessive time and effort is required to participate. There is no requirement to participate in Photovoice or conceptual quilting, which allows students to lurk without participating. Without exception, in our experience, over the time of the courses, all students eventually regarded the Photovoice exercise as worthwhile, and contributed. Keeping class sizes reasonable helps to prevent participants from being overwhelmed by the number of postings related to each Photovoice activity. Students receive positive feedback from peers and instructors regarding their participation in these activities, fuelling motivation.
Vygotsky’s (1978) Social Development theory (SDT) helps explain how APTs influence interaction, social presence, and the creation of a culture of community in the online class. Teaching and learning, whether occurring in a traditional or virtual classroom, are essentially social experiences. According to SDT, social interaction is fundamental to cognitive development. Consciousness and cognition result from socialization and social behaviour. Vygotsky focused on the connections between people and the sociocultural context in which they act, and interact, in shared experiences (Yasnitsky, 2011). SDT learning is characterized by mediation through language, the discovery of differing perspectives, and the achievement of shared meaning (Yasnitsky, 2011). Vygotsky’s SDT promotes learning environments in which students play an active role in learning. Teachers, rather than being transmitters of knowledge, collaborate with students to facilitate the acquisition of new knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Learning becomes a reciprocal experience involving the self and others.

When educators apply SDT to online education, learners require effective teaching tools to facilitate interacting from a distance, particularly with teachers and other students. When effective teaching strategies are used, online learners can achieve social connections with other students and teachers that, according to SDT, facilitate learning.

We propose that APTs stimulate these authentic human interactions required to promote social engagement in the virtual class. For example, music, artistic images, and literary works are infused with the humanness of the composer, artist, or author. When APTs are part of, or the foundation for, a course activity, they introduce into the course some aspect of another human. While a traditional learning activity in an online course may appear rather barren and anonymous, a song, photograph, or poem is often infused with the values, preferences, and beliefs of the one who created it. We suggest that when another “real” person is introduced into the online course using an APT, the potential for human interaction is enhanced. From the students’ perspective, now there is someone to interact with.

The stimulation provided by the inclusion of such a strategy seems to be a catalyst for interaction for several reasons. One respondent in a study involving the use of Photovoice wrote, “Seeing a new photographic image appear each week in my course forum was like seeing the artwork that might be displayed in my professor’s home. It told me something about her, about how she saw the world. It made her more real somehow and made it comfortable for me to e-mail her and ask questions.” Another student offered a comment that helps to further
the explanation regarding how the inclusion of an APT in a course stimulated meaningful interaction: “I felt like I got to know my professor because of the type of photos that were included in the course. I could tell that she had an appreciation for nature . . . and probably had a kind heart. I participated more freely because I felt like I knew her from the photos.”

To achieve genuine, appropriate, and authentic interaction that results in substantive discussion, debate, and reflection may require deliberate strategies on the part of the online teacher. We propose that the inclusion of APTs in online course design may precipitate engagement between students, and students and teachers, which—according to SDT—is necessary for learning.

APTs provide an opportunity for meaningful interpersonal and intrapersonal interaction. APTs require a contribution that provides class members evidence of the involvement of students and teachers in a course. Ongoing meaningful interactions facilitate authentic social presence, which lays the foundation for and facilitates the ongoing development of the culture of community. In a culture of community, participants embrace shared values, norms, and beliefs; a shared culture. A shared culture facilitates further meaningful interpersonal interactions, and the cycle is propelled (Figure 11.1).

![Figure 11.1 Development of a culture of community in the online classroom](image)

Recently, to further the explanation of the relationship between APTs and community in online classes, Janzen, Perry, and Edwards (2012b) proposed that APTs help create quantum learning environments that connect learners, instructors, and technology. Quantum learning environments describe learning
as multidimensional, having unlimited potential, holistic, and occurring on various planes simultaneously (Janzen, Perry, & Edwards, 2011). APTs, with their underpinnings of creativity, interaction, humanity, and layers of meaning, are compatible with the quantum view of learning. The potential for APTs to enhance community through creation of quantum learning environments is currently under further investigation.

FACTORS INFLUENCING APT DEVELOPMENT, ADOPTION, AND USE

Originally, Shea (2006) identified three foundational changes that have influenced online education: a philosophical shift from objectivism toward constructivism; a theoretical shift from behaviourism toward sociocognitive views of education; and a pedagogical shift from direct instruction to the facilitation of collaborative learning. More recently the shift from teacher-centered pedagogy to more personalized, social, and participatory pedagogies that emphasize community and aim for transformative learning has also been recognized (chapter 3; Sun, 2011; McLoughlin & Lee, 2010; Mayes et al., 2011).

Shea (2006) argued that these fundamental changes encourage teaching approaches that help to develop virtual learning communities. For example, student-centred, learner-directed, interactive, participative pedagogical methods are congruent with the establishment of community in the online class, with social interaction, and ultimately with learning. It follows that the development, adoption, and use of online teaching strategies, in this case APTs, is influenced by these learner-directed factors.

From objectivism to constructivism

Objectivists emphasize the accumulation of facts, and view learners as passive recipients of knowledge (Li, Clark, & Winchester, 2010). Differing views and individual experiences are often discouraged (Gulati, 2010). Constructivists embrace different worldviews and emphasize social relationships and cognitive interaction in learning environments (Bruner, 1966). Constructivists view knowledge as contextual and relative, and reject the notion that knowledge is an innate commodity that can be objectified or discovered (Bruner, 1966). In education, a constructivist approach assumes that teaching is not a process of transmitting intact knowledge to learners. Constructivists do not view learners as empty vessels awaiting filling or blank slates awaiting words. Rather, learners are viewed as builders who are continually creating mental representations of events and experiences. Key principles of constructivist thinking that guide
teaching and course design include connecting all learning activities to a larger
goal, encouraging learner responsibility, and ensuring that required tasks reflect
the complexities of practice (Savery & Duffy, 1996). Teaching technologies that
encourage learners to construct knowledge through activity and experience are
favoured over lectures (Melrose, Park, & Perry, 2013).

Online learning environments are excellent venues for constructivist teach-
ing technologies (Kehrwald, 2008). The potential for connectivity afforded by
online communications facilitates opportunities for human-human interaction
that, according to constructivists, precipitates learning. APTs such as Photo-
voice, conceptual quilting, and virtual reflective centres all purposefully create
social interaction. In keeping with a constructivist philosophy, such interactive
learning may involve the modification of attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge in
all participants, including students and teachers.

From behaviourism to sociocognitivism

Behaviourism focuses on observable and measurable behaviours (Good &
Brophy, 1990). For example, Bloom’s (1956) taxonomy of learning is the basis
for the development of behavioural learning objectives in which learning tasks
are broken down into specific measurable tasks. For behaviourists, the achieve-
ment of objectives equates with learning success. Cognitive theorists view
learning as involving internal processes, such as comparing new information
to existing knowledge. This makes learning more active and complex. Learn-
ing strategies such as metaphors, chunking information, and the organization
of instructional materials from simple to complex are used by cognitivists to
facilitate learning.

Cognitivists view APTs favourably. Photovoice activities, for example, require
students to engage in higher-order thinking, asking that they compare some-
thing they know to the theory of the course. For example, if the image presented
is a photo of a tree with leaves changing colour, and the topic in the course is
factors that influence organizational change, students are asked to recall what
they know about weather, light, temperature, and seasonal influences on trees
in the autumn, and to translate this into determining factors within an organi-
zation that might also create change. An internal thought process is needed, as
changes in nature become a metaphor for changes in organizations. Likewise,
in conceptual quilting students use internal mental processes to seek and find
relationships between key themes in the course, and to find ways to weave
these together in meaningful patterns that they can then display and explain.
From direct instruction to collaborative learning

The hallmarks of direct instruction are teacher control of one-way transmission of information, and measurable learning. Collaborative learning, on the other hand, involves joint intellectual efforts by students or students and teachers as they work together to seek understanding, meaning, or solutions. Students depend on and are accountable to one another as they participate in learning activities, and there is usually an end product to the collaborative learning activity. Collaborative learning online may result in the establishment of a community of learners. According to Jo Coaplen, Hollis, and Bailey (2013), collaborative pedagogical practices help build learning communities in the online classroom.

APTs can facilitate collaborative learning. For example, virtual reflective centres involve the active participation of all students, as each is assigned a role and invited to participate in a shared experience. Participants depend on one another to play their parts so the activity succeeds. Similarly, in a Photo-voice activity, while students initially contribute their own interpretations of the photo, the resulting online discussion becomes a collaborative learning activity, as learners work together to formulate common understandings of the relationships between the photo and course topics.

APTs are congruent with constructivist learning’s fundamental premise that knowledge is a human construction and that the learner is an active participant in the process of learning (Vygotsky, 1978). As online educators come to appreciate more diverse ways of knowing and understanding and focus more on social relationships in the class, educational technologies that have a human element, such as APTs, may become more common.

The shift from teacher-centered pedagogy to more personalized, social and participatory pedagogies that emphasize community (Sun, 2011; McLoughlin & Lee, 2010) is congruent with constructivist philosophy. Transformative learning is often the goal with a meaningful community experience the catalyst (Mayes, Ku, Akarasriworn, Luebeck, & Korkmaz, 2011).

CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a new understanding regarding emerging practices, specifically, APTs. Teaching strategies founded in the arts may assist online educators who aim to make online courses more meaningfully interactive. With meaningful interaction comes the potential for the experience of authentic ongoing social presence and the eventual establishment of a culture of community, which may bring with it many pedagogical benefits, including transformative learning.
As described in chapter 1, there is limited investigation of emerging practices in online education. The explanations presented in this chapter of why APTs are effective teaching strategies are only a start. Further research on the link between APTs and quantum learning theory might provide greater insight. The potential educational impact of such emerging technologies and practices (on students and teachers) has not yet been explored completely. This chapter contributes to these discussions and encourages educators, course designers, and researchers to experiment with including aspects of the arts in learning activities in online courses.

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