

MICRO-BLOGS FOR *LANGUAGING*

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Outline

- Redefining literacy in a digital world
 - what does it mean to teach and learn languages in 2016?
 - Activity Theory (AT) at a glance
 - Tweeting seen through AT
 - Mediated discourse in Web 2.0
- Tweeting in a language course at UVic
 - quick overview of a case-study
 - going beyond the learning spheres
- Tweeting for learning: useful tips

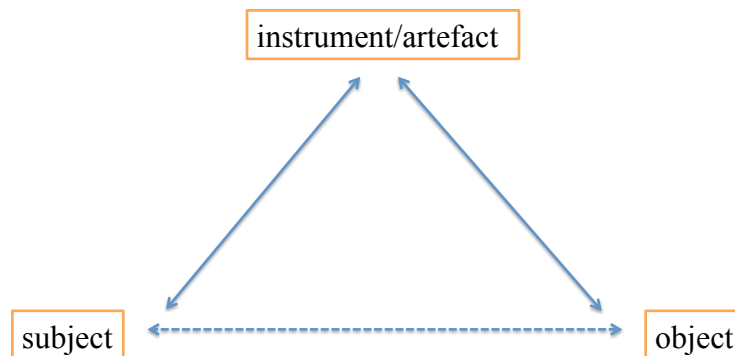


Redefining literacy in a digital world



Many people also fear that reading and writing are “dying” in the face of new digital media. What they really fear is not that reading and writing are actually dying, but that some of our previously favored ways of reading and writing are actually dying or becoming much less prevalent [...] Reading and writing are, if anything, increasing in the digital world, but they are also changing. (Gee & Hayes, 2011, p.21)

The activity mediated by instruments (Vygotsky)

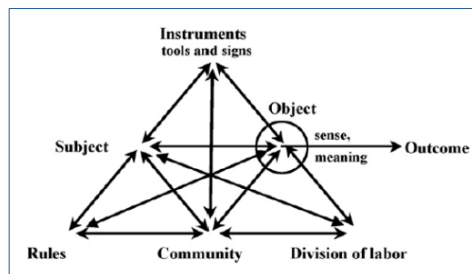


What is an *instrument* or an *artefact*?

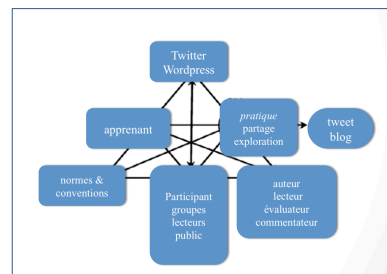
- A culturally constructed thing/ concept/process: hammers, books, pens, computers, computer programs, websites, texts, words, ...
- Artefacts contribute to the *mediation* of the activity. They are also created and *transformed* during the development of an activity (Kuutti 1996)
- Artefacts are often *dynamic* and *social* in nature and “assume their character from the activities they mediate” (Lantolf & Thorne 2006, p. 67)



Participating in an activity is performing conscious actions that have an immediate, defined goal (Kuutti, 1996)



AT system as represented by Engeström, 1987 (p. 78)



Mediated discourse in Web 2.0

- Creating an ability to build **connections** despite temporal or spatial gaps
- Using a tool that functions as a **dynamic** artefact with characteristics such as:
 - Being user-friendly
 - Creating impact and visibility
 - Enabling multiple language tasks
- Allowing learners to move beyond the pre-structured capacity of an online tool such as Twitter



Tweeting in a language course at UVic

- FRAN160 #fran160:
Words in context
- FSL 12 typically 1st year students- 50 students-
- Twitter = a place to practice language, share words, connect with peers, friends, native speakers



Going beyond the *learning* sphere

Activity occurs in phases through sets of actions and operations (Leont'ev)

- ★ • **Individual** > **operation** > one tweet/ 140 characters at one set time
- ↺ • **Group** > **action** > interactions between subjects via Twitter
 - RT/ Favourite/DM/Reply/FWD
- ↓ • **Community** > **activity** > #FRAN160 #lexico400 > recurrent **interactions** (learner to learner / learner to instructor/ instructor to learners) > **connections** with the outside (impact, new followers outside of group but connected by same outcome)

Tweeting for learning

- Always remember to create an [hashtag](#) to be able to generate stories and learner corpora
- Tweet [chat](#): chat online in a dynamic way
- Poll your participants using the polling feature within Twitter
- Tweet [competition](#): organize it or participate in one
- [Storify](#): create a story
- [Hootsuite](#) to manage your social media streams
- Be creative in using social media tools in order to engage your students and let them *explore* and *play* with the language