

ACTIVITY THEORY

Alicia K. Long

IS_LT 9460 – Spring 2023

AGENDA

1. Research Problem
2. Theoretical Framework
3. Methodology
4. Findings
5. Design Implications
6. Thesis statement
7. Argument
8. Activity: Get ready!



MOVING COURSES ONLINE AS A CATALYST OF PEDAGOGICAL INNOVATION: AN ACTIVITY THEORY-BASED VIEW

Julia Khanova

Proceedings of the American Society for Information Science and Technology,
2012

1. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Context: Transition from face-to-face to online instruction in higher education

Questions:

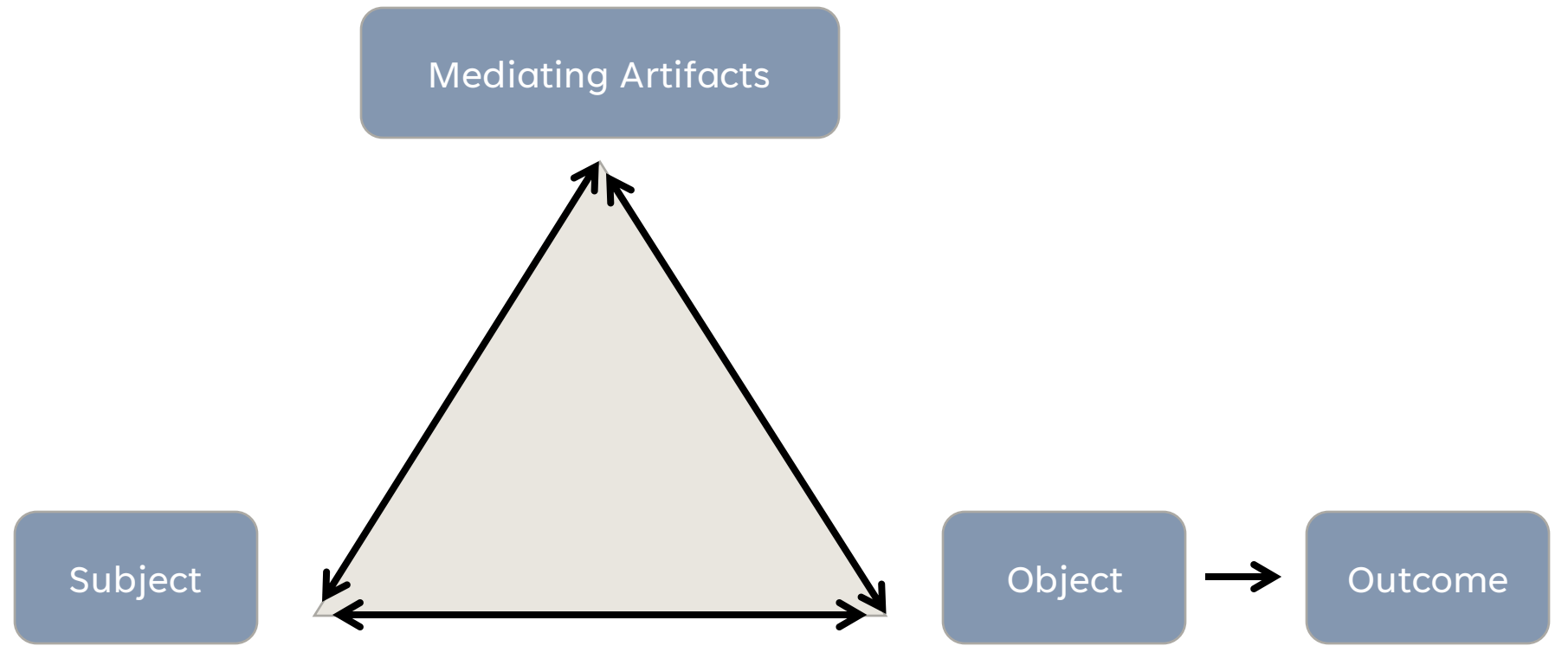
- (1) What was the process of online course conversion and its outcomes within the context of a case-study institution?
- (2) How can the use of activity theory contribute to such analysis?
(Pilot)

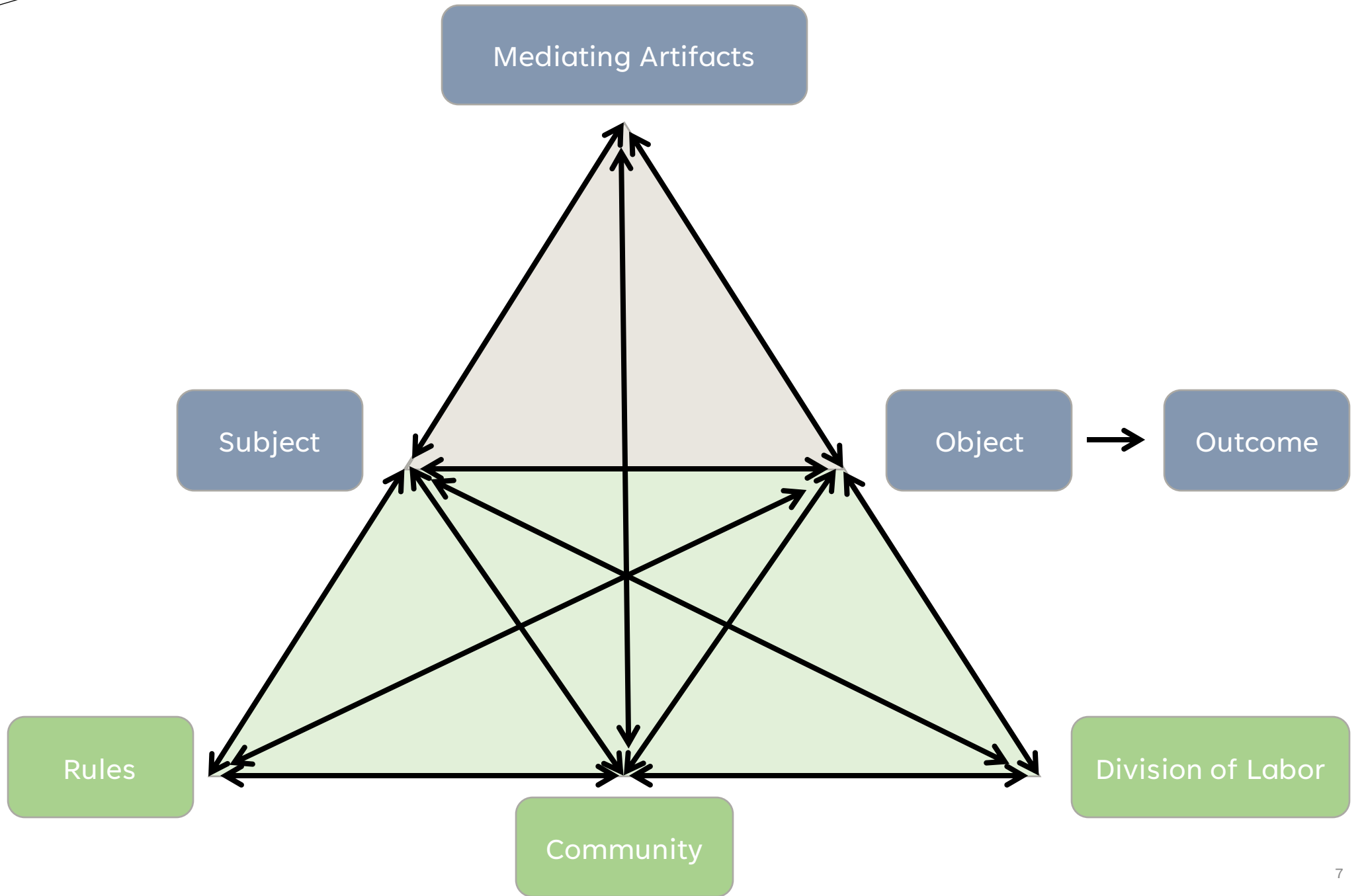
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Activity Theory (AT)

Set of descriptive tools for “interpretation of the **individual, other** people, and **artifacts** in everyday **activity**” (Nardi, 1996, p.8).

Originally developed in 1920s-1930s: Vygotsky / Rubinshtein / Leont’ev and further elaborated by Engestrom, Nardi, and others (1980s-1990s-2000s)





3. METHODOLOGY

- Type: Case Study
- Method: Qualitative - Semi-structured interviews
- Participants: 16 individuals
Faculty (main actors) & Administrators + Instructional designers +
Library/eLearning support staff (Influence and context)
- Data collection + Analysis: Questions about course conversion process.
Activity system diagrams were constructed for each of the four faculty

4. FINDINGS

COMMUNITY

Interaction between community and mediating tools was very salient.

TECHNOLOGY

The content delivery choices were shaped by available tools

DIVISION OF LABOR

There was minimal division of labor with the subject performing most of the actions of the course conversion activity.

INNOVATION

Even in the context of the same university, only the rules were the same for all.
Dynamic interplay.

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR DESIGN

AT FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

“Constructing an activity system diagram for each faculty member was helpful in comparing these cases and identifying the specific elements that aid in describing the transformations in the teaching activity”

(Khanova, 2012).

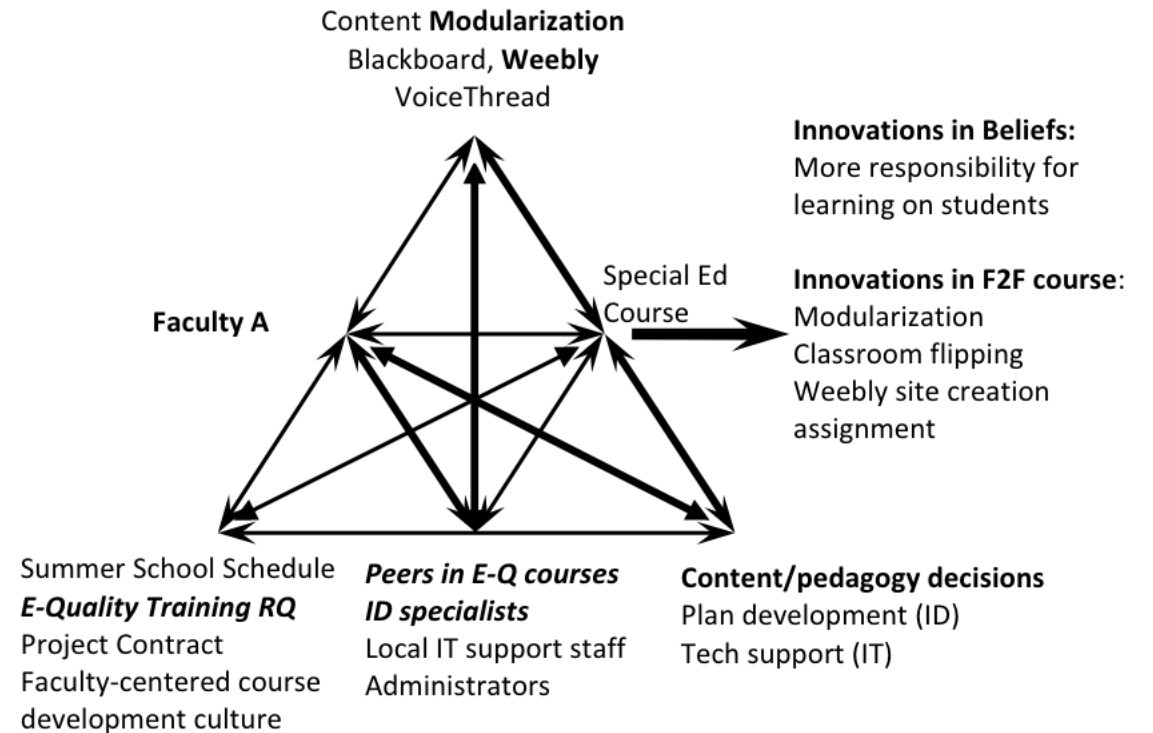


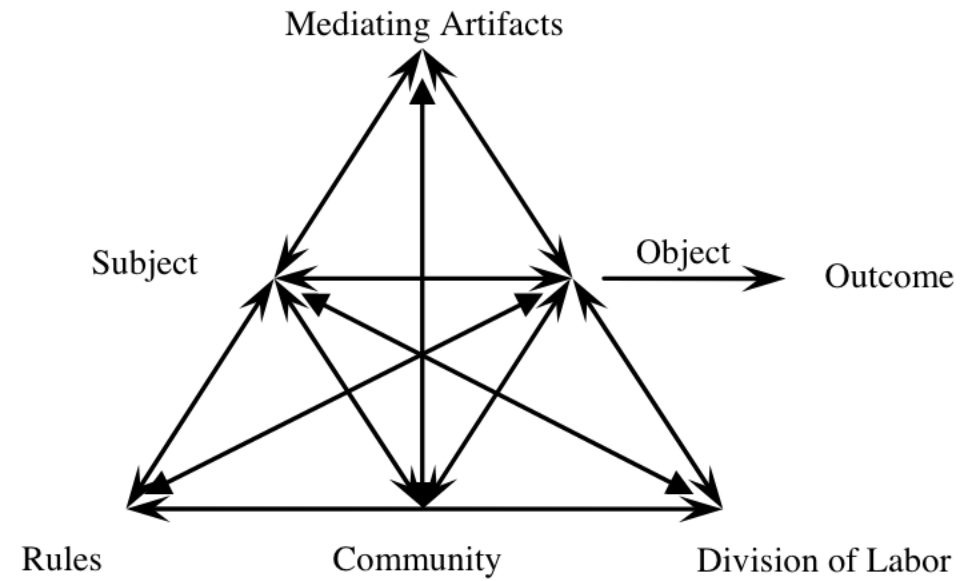
Figure 2. Activity System for Faculty A

6. THESIS

Activity Theory framework can be used to map and analyze pedagogical activities and design for many processes in the education field/edtech.

7. ARGUMENT:

Using the “fill-in template” shown, a problem involving people and technology in a complex information use context such as that of a higher education institution can be analyzed and replicated for activities involving learning and technology.

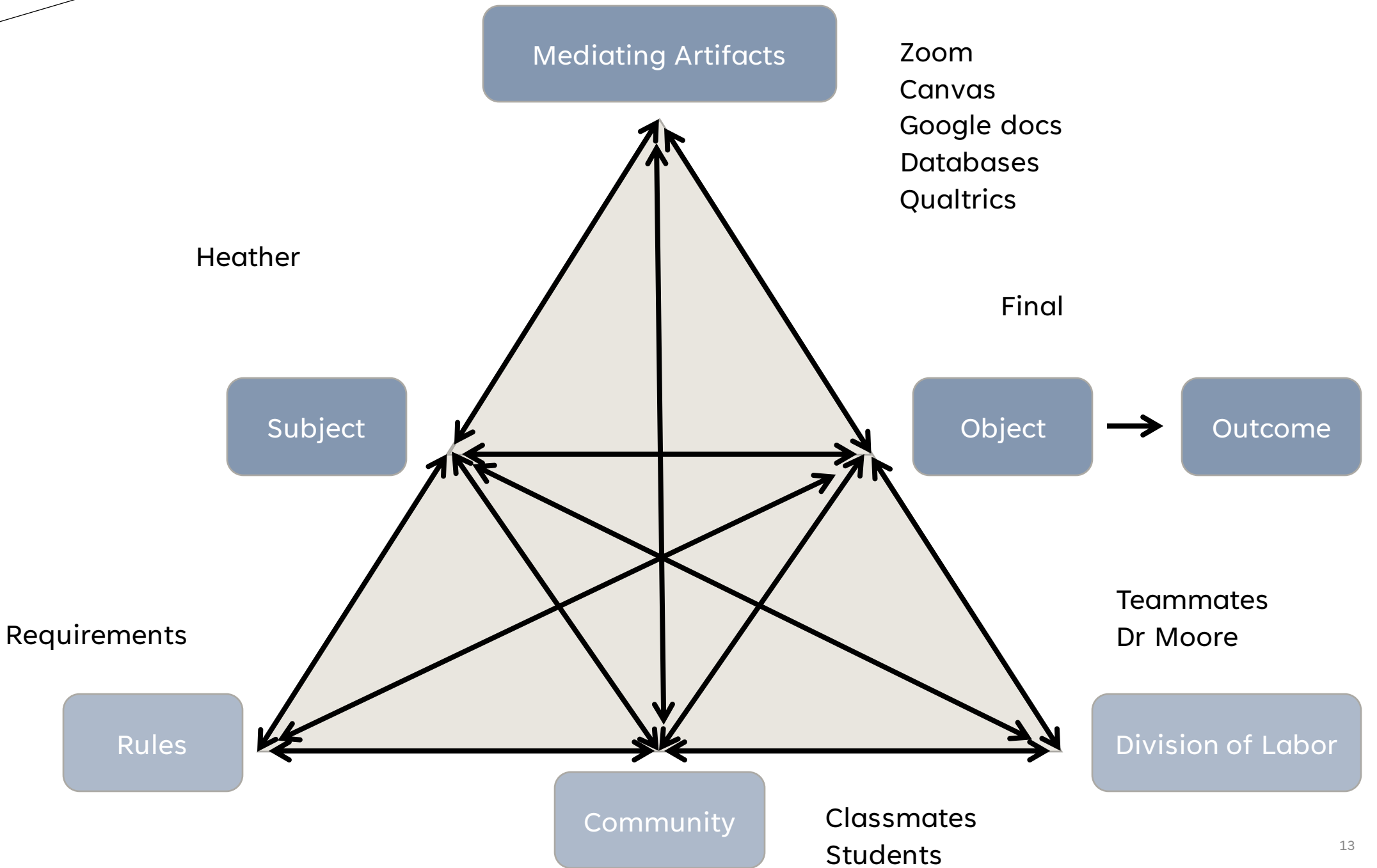


YOUR TURN!

How would you analyze the following learning situation using the AT template?

Research Project

You will implement a research project for an issue relevant to the field. Project activities include research methodology design, data collection, and analysis, along with progress reports. A project paper will be prepared as a manuscript that can be submitted to an HCI journal or conference proceedings. Students will evaluate the overall contribution and performance of each team member, which will be calculated into individual grades.





QUESTIONS?

Thank you!

Alicia K. Long

REFERENCES

Kaptelinin, V., & Nardi, B. A. (1997). Activity theory: Basic concepts and applications. *CHI '97 Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 158–159.

<https://doi.org/10.1145/1120212.1120321>

Khanova, J. (2012). Moving courses online as a catalyst of pedagogical innovation: An activity theory-based view. *Proceedings of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 49(1), 1–4.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/meet.14504901258>