Activity Theory
Chapter 16
What is Activity Theory

Bullet Point(105,250),(870,705)

- Focus on activities people do
- Tools the people use
- Relationship among the people doing the activity
- Goal of the activity
- Outcome of the activity
History of Activity Theory

- Kant & Hegel concept of activity
- Marx & Engels’ economic & political theories
- Vygotsky, Leont’ev & Luria psychological perspectives
Activity Theory is:

“A framework for studying…..both individual and social levels interlinked at the same time.” (Kuutti, 1990)
Elements of Activity Theory

- **Subject** - engaged in the activity
- **Object** - why do the activity
- **Tools** - required to perform the activity
- **Activity** - used to accomplish the object
- **Mediation** - where the subject, object and community indirectly interact
  - **Rules** – negotiation between subject and community
Description of Activity Theory

- Tools
- Subject
- Object
- Community
- Rules
- Outcome
- Division of Labor
Actions Hierarchy

Activity
  ↓  ↓
Action
  ↓  ↓
Operation

Motive
  ↓  ↓
Goal
  ↓  ↓
Conditions
Description of Activity Theory

- Library databases
  - Proquest, etc.
- English 101 students
- 5 research articles
- Research paper
- Community rules
  - 5 pages
  - don’t plagiarize
- Class
  - English 101
- Tool rules
  - keyword vs. descriptors
  - no full-text
- Division of Labor
Applications of Activity Theory

- How & why views change
- Learning of science and mathematics
- Human computer interfaces
- Introduction or new computer method
- Communication conflict or methods
Advantages & Disadvantages

- **Advantages**
  - Flexible
  - Comprehensive
  - Systematic way of identifying contextual factors
  - Puts performance in real-life context

- **Disadvantages**
  - May create too much information
Reference List


Questions?