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# WRITING FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES: AN ACTIVITY THEORY PERSPECTIVE

Abstract: As an important strand of Language for Specific Purposes, Writing for Specific Purposes has gained much attention in the last few decades. Inspired by Swales' (1990, 2004) pioneering work, a substantial body of research has examined the rhetorical features of various genres across disciplines. The significant impact of genre-based instruction is well documented, and a genre-based teaching approach has been widely adopted to equip students with knowledge and skills needed to effectively engage with various genres. Recent Activity Theory informed writing research indicates that, to fully support student writing, instruction also needs to address how students carry out their writing activities. Drawing from Activity Theory (Engeström 1999, 2001) and relevant Activity Theory informed writing research, this paper explores the implications of Activity Theory and related writing research for Writing for Specific Academic Purposes instruction.

*Keywords*: Writing for Specific Purposes; Writing for Specific Academic Purposes; English for Specific Academic Purposes; Activity Theory; Activity Theory Informed Writing Pedagogy

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) aims at understanding language use for specific purposes in various communicative contexts and helping students develop the ability and skills needed for achieving communicative purposes in the target contexts. As a major strand of LSP, Writing for Specific Purposes has received a great deal of attention in the areas of research as well as pedagogy in the last three decades. Swales' genre approach (Swales 1990, 2004), in particular, has provided significant insights into the rhetorical features of various written genres and has informed writing pedagogy in profound ways. More recently,

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Activity Theory (Engeström 1999, 2001), which accentuates the situated and mediated nature of writing, has shed important new light on writing. Given the new insights gained about writing from the Activity Theory (AT) perspective, it is instructive to examine the implications of AT and AT-informed writing research for pedagogical practices.

This paper explores the implications of AT and related research for Writing for Specific Purposes pedagogy, focusing specifically on the "English for Specific Academic Purposes" (Flowerdew 2016, 1) context. Although the focus is on English as the target language, the insights discussed here may be relevant to Writing for Specific Academic Purposes contexts involving other target languages. In the sections below, I will present Engeström's AT theoretical framework, discuss some relevant findings from AT-informed academic writing research, and address pedagogical principles for teaching writing from an AT perspective.

## 2. ACTIVITY THEORY AND ENGESTRÖM'S ACTIVITY FRAMEWORK

Considered an extension of Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky 1978), which has profoundly impacted language learning (including writing) related research and practice, AT has been gaining increasing attention and has informed a growing body of research in various areas, including writing in academic contexts. Emphasizing the mediated and situated nature of human activity, AT provides a powerful lens through which to examine human activity in context. In particular, Engeström's (1987, 1999, 2001) approach to activity provides an intriguing framework for understanding human activity in sociocultural contexts.

Central to Engeström's approach to understanding human activity is the construct of activity system (Engeström 1987, 1999, 2001), which depicts human activity as object oriented, mediated, and situated in sociocultural contexts. Activity system consists of several interrelated components (Engeström 1987, 1999, 2001). The *subject* is the actor of activity and the *object* represents the "problem space" toward which the activity is directed. The activity system illustrates a process in which the *subject* transforms the *object* into *outcome*, mediated by *artifacts* as well as *community*, *division of labor*, and *rules*. *Artifacts* including tools such as computers, pen and paper and signs such as language, concepts, and analytical frameworks may mediate, for example, a writing activity whose object is research writing. The *community* comprises the group(s) of people who share the same *object*, and *the division of labor* delineates the division of tasks and roles in the activity system, for example, reader and writer or teacher and student roles in a classroom writing activity. *Rules* encompass explicit and implicit regulations, norms, guidelines, and expectations that govern individuals' behaviors and interactions in a community (Engeström 1987, 1999). When applied to academic writing, activity system affords a framework for understanding learning and teaching academic writing in sociocultural contexts.

Figure 1 presents an example of a student's research paper writing activity in the field of Applied Linguistics. In this activity, the *subject* is the student writer and the *object* of the activity focuses on a research paper addressing a topic in Applied Linguistics. The student's writing activity aims at transforming the *object* into *outcomes* comprising not only the completed paper but also knowledge and writing development. The writing activity is mediated by a range of *artifacts* such as the computer, a corpus, Google, journal articles in Applied Linguistics, and language (e.g., English). The activity is also influenced by social factors which are embedded in the sociocultural context of the writing activity and relate to *community*, *division of labor*, and *rules* in the activity system. For example, the writing activity may be completed as an assignment in a particular class (*community*) and influenced by disciplinary discourse conventions and teacher-provided guidelines on the assignment (*rules*) as well as by the writer's consideration of the feedback from readers--the teacher and peers in the class (*division of labor*).

Activity system is dynamic and evolving, rather than static (Engeström, 2001). A key construct in Engeström's activity approach (1987, 1999, 2001) is contradiction, which denotes tensions or conflicts in an activity system or between activity systems. According to Engeström (1987, 1999, 2001), contradictions may exist within an activity system component, between activity system components, or between activity systems. While causing disruptions in an activity system, contradictions are also an impetus for innovation and change (Engeström, 2001). Resolution of contradictions provides an important opportunity for learning and development. Thus, contradiction is a construct essential for understanding activity, learning, and development.

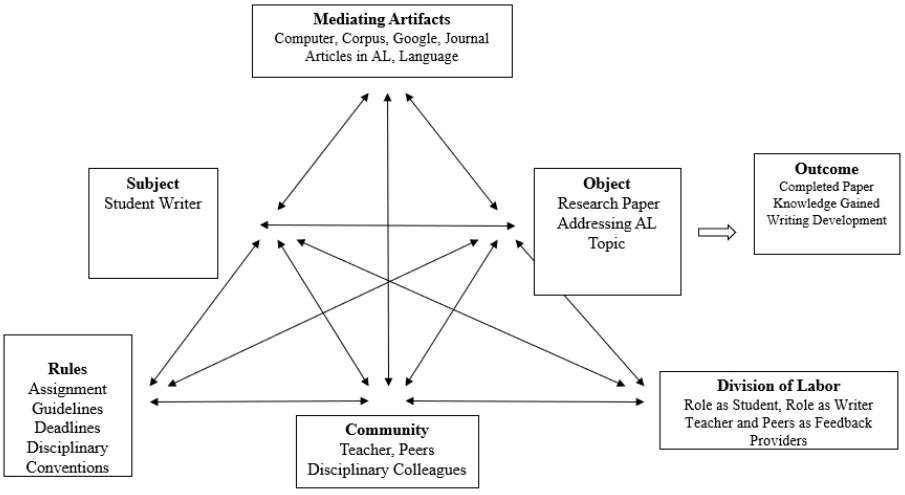


Figure 1. Activity System of Student Research Paper Writing in Applied Linguistics: An Example

Engeström's activity system (1987, 1999, 2001) provides an exceedingly valuable framework for understanding writing for specific academic purposes and for conceptualizing writing instruction. First, it represents writing for specific academic purposes as a sociocultural process and practice, situated in specific sociocultural contexts, namely the multilayered institutional, disciplinary, and classroom contexts. Second, it provides a framework for researchers and teachers to systematically examine factors which may influence student writing activity and to explore the possibilities for facilitating student writing activity through navigating the various mediators in the activity system. Third, the construct of contradiction provides a powerful lens through which to examine and reflect on tensions and conflicts in the writing activity system. Activity THEORY has informed a growing body of writing research; the next section provides a discussion of some of the relevant studies.

## 3. ACTIVITY THEORY INFORMED RESEARCH ON WRIITNG FOR SPECIFIC ACADEMIC PURPOSES

In this section, I focus on some studies representing two strands of AT-informed academic writing research: research on writing processes and research on peer collaboration and interaction. The studies discussed below were conducted in contexts in which English was the target language; the insights gained from these studies, however, may be relevant to other language contexts.

### 3.1. Research on Writing Processes

Several studies have examined writing processes from the AT perspective (Kessler 2020; Li 2013; Lei and Hu 2019; Park and De Costa 2015; Ren and Hu 2023; Ren and Zhu 2023) and findings of these studies demonstrate the socio-culturally mediated nature of writing. In particular, these studies have shown that writers use a wide array of mediational means to facilitate their writing activities. For example, in Ren and Zhu (2023), the undergraduate student writer, Wendy, experienced numerous difficulties when completing a required graduation paper, an empirical research paper she never had experience writing. To facilitate her writing activity, Wendy used several types of mediational resources. She consulted published research articles to create an analytic framework for her research and also reviewed an MA thesis on the same topic to gain an understanding of the rhetorical structure of the graduation paper and observe rhetorical conventions and strategies (artifact-related mediation). In addition, Wendy tried to follow program guidelines on format and citation conventions (rule-related mediation) although she found some of the conventions (e.g., citation conventions) too complex and difficult. For community-related mediation, Wendy incorporated feedback and suggestions from several sources into her revisions. Further, Wendy's roles as an undergraduate student and a

Chinese student mediated her writing. For example, Wendy was well aware of her undergraduate student status and purposefully used hedges, i.e., linguistic devices such as "may", to moderate the tone in her writing and avoid being viewed as arrogant.

Park and De Costa's (2015) study examined how a graduate student from Nepal coped with writing demands during the first semester of enrollment in a MATESOL program at a university in the U.S. and found that the graduate student, Alisha, used three types of mediational resources to facilitate her writing activity. First, Alisha used rules from various communities in which she was a member, including classroom-based rules (e.g., evaluation criteria), macro-level rules and conventions in the university (e.g., university rules on plagiarism) and rules from her professional discourse community (e.g., guidelines on APA format). Alisha's artefact-related mediation encompassed use of both sign (language)-related (e.g., note-taking) and tool-related mediational resources. For example, Alisia used reference resources such as a grammar book and a dictionary to enhance writing accuracy. The community-related mediational resources Alisia used included teacher and peer feedback.

AT-informed academic writing research has shown the prominent role technological tools play in mediating student writing. For example, the two doctoral students in Kessler's case study (2020) purposefully used various tools for content development and language learning as they completed writing assignments during their first semester of doctoral studies. The technological tools used included Shift-It, Wikipedia, Google, COCA (a corpus of American English), YouDao (a Chinese dictionary), Mendeley, and digital notes although the specific tools used by each participant differed somewhat. In Li (2013), the undergraduate students writing their policy papers for a Global Political Economy course used tools such as electronic dictionaries, data bases, webpages, and technologically supported note-taking as part of their efforts to address the difficulties encountered in completing their source-based writing assignment.

AT-informed academic writing research has also shed light on the nature of difficulties and challenges writers experience when completing writing tasks. Through analysis of contradictions, several studies (Li 2013; Lei and Hu 2019; Ren and Hu 2023; Ren and Zhu 2023) revealed that writing difficulties were rooted in the contradictions in and/or between writing activity systems. For example, in Ren and Zhu's (2023) study, the difficulties Wendy encountered in writing her graduation paper stemmed from, at least in part, a contradiction between the object of her writing activity (i.e., successful completion of her paper) and the rules available to mediate her writing. As a novice writer who lacked research writing experience and needed clear guidance, Wendy found the guidelines provided by her program too complex to follow. There was also a significant contradiction between her graduation paper writing activity and her previous coursework and learning activity in the program--her previous coursework did not prepare her for writing her graduation paper. Because of

these contradictions, Wendy's writing activity was imbued with difficulties and challenges.

In another study, Ren and Hu (2023) examined the writing for publication activities of two junior medical doctors. Both doctors lacked English language skills, explicit knowledge of the research genres they were expected to engage with, and skills in designing and implementing robust research; consequently, they experienced major challenges in their scholarly writing activities. Ren and Hu traced the challenges faced by the doctors to contradictions in their activity systems. For example, a primary contradiction existed in the subject component of the doctors' scholarly writing activity system, namely "between their status as junior clinician-researchers and their expected status as expert knowledge contributors" (Ren and Hu 2023, 303). Further, a secondary contradiction existed between the rules component and the artifacts component of the doctors' scholarly writing activity system, namely between the institution's expectations of publishing impactful research (the "rule") and the lack of necessary resources (artifacts) provided for the junior doctors to carry out their activities.

### 3.2. Research on Peer Collaboration and Interaction

Collaborative writing is a common task in various fields such as Business and Engineering, where it is well known that collaborative skills are needed to succeed. A few studies (e.g., De Costa, Lee and Li 2024; Yang 2014) have examined collaborative writing in disciplinary fields from Engeström's activity system perspective (1987, 1999, 2001) and shed light on the ways in which factors related to writers' activity systems (tools and artifacts, rules, community, and division of labor) interact and mediate collaborative writing.

De Costa, Lee and Li's (2024) study examined how two freshman engineering students, working with their respective team members, completed a collaborative design project in which writing was a major component in an introductory engineering course at a U.S university. While both teams were able to complete the design project, only one student, Katherine, and her team were able to achieve their goal of effective collaboration and teamwork. Katherine and her team's successful collaborative writing was facilitated by a strong sense of the community; that is, Katherine's team assumed a collective identity as members of the team. Their teamwork was also mediated by a thoughtful and fair division of labor—members divided the tasks among themselves by considering the skills and strengths of team members. In addition, team members created rules to regulate their teamwork, for example, by implementing a weekly schedule to meet and work together. In contrast, the other group did not experience successful teamwork due to a lack of thoughtful division of labor, a lack of sense of community, and a lack of rules which could effectively regulate teamwork.

In another study, Yang (2014) examined factors mediating English as a Second Language students' completion of collaborative writing assignments

in undergraduate business courses at two Canadian universities. Results of data analyses revealed the importance of language and rule mediation in the collaborative writing activities of the three groups of students who participated in the study. In particular, use of the students' native language, when the language was shared by group members, facilitated communication among group members and the understanding of content. Target language proficiency mediated students' individual writing as well as group interaction and task division. Rules regarding task division, internal deadlines, and group interactions mediated interactions among group members and collaborative processes. While each of these mediators played an important role in the collaborative writing process, it is important to note that "these mediational means did not function individually but combined and interacted differently according to each group's unique composites" (Yang 2014, 86).

AT-informed collaborative writing research has also provided insight into the dynamic nature of rules and division of labor which mediate student collaborative writing processes: Rules and division of labor are not fixed but emerge from student interaction during the collaborative writing processes. For example, in Yang's study (2014), rules regarding task division, internal deadlines, and group interaction emerged and evolved as the collaborative processes unfolded. In De Costa, Lee and Li's study (2024), division of labor in the collaboratively less successful group changed towards the end of the project, leading to a pattern of collaboration more conducive to learning. The rules and division of labor in these studies were negotiated by the students, indicating that rules and division of labor of a collaborative writing activity system are emergent and fluid.

AT-informed research on peer interaction has revealed the crucial role of dialogical interactions in facilitating student writing activity. Mochizuki and Starfield (2021) examined oral interactions in thesis writing groups in which graduate students, mostly doctoral students, met to discuss drafts written by group members. Mochizuki and Starfield (2021) argue that academic writing essentially is multi-voiced, wherein authors construct authorial voices by drawing from the voices of others, particularly voices of the disciplinary communities in which the writers are or wish to become members. Findings of the study revealed that in oral feedback exchanges and interactions, the graduate student writers shared their assumptions about writing and negotiated understandings of the practices and conventions of thesis writing, particularly the norms and conventions of disciplinary writing. In their discussions, the graduate students prioritized the expectations (i.e., rules) and roles of the disciplinary insiders, particularly the thesis supervisors and examiners. Through invoking the voices of authority of the discipline and of intended thesis readers, students' oral feedback exchanges mediated an understanding of the importance of disciplinary conventions and practices in thesis writing in addition to mediating revisions.

AT-informed research on peer interaction has also cast valuable light on needs associated with writing tasks involving peer collaboration and interaction.

Mochizuki (2017) examined contingent needs emerging from thesis writing groups based on an identification and analysis of contradictions in the thesis writing group activity system. Seven PhD students, six of whom were English as a Second Language writers, participated in two writing groups in which the participants exchanged oral feedback on one another's writing. Mochizuki conducted activity system analysis to detect contradictions within and between components of the thesis writing group activity system and also identified motives underlying the doctoral students' participation in the thesis writing groups. Contingent needs were conceptualized as ways to address the contradictions "between subjects and tool-mediated activity" (Mochizuki 2017, 623). Findings revealed that contradictions stemmed from "emerging rules and the division of labor" (Mochizuki 2017, 624), which were influenced by the community (i.e., characteristics and assumptions of group members) in each group. Although needs analysis is usually conducted at the task design stage, Mochizuki's study highlighted the importance of "contingent NA at the task implementation stage" (608) and the insights an AT lens can generate on the nature of emergent needs.

## 4. IMPLICATIONS OF ACTIVITY THEORY AND RELATED RESEARCH FOR WRITING FOR SPECIFIC ACADEMIC PURPOSES PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

AT and AT-informed academic writing research has important implications for Writing for Specific Academic Purposes pedagogy and curriculum development. An important goal of AT-informed writing pedagogy is to promote an understanding of writing as mediated and situated social practice and to foster in students an ability to mediate their own writing activities. In the sections below, I explore several ways in which AT and AT-informed writing research may influence writing pedagogy.

### 4.1. Help Students Develop an Awareness and Understanding of Their Own Writing Activity

In order for student writers to be able to effectively mediate their writing activities, they first need to develop an awareness and understanding of their own writing activities. To promote such an awareness and understanding, teachers may provide opportunities for each student to identify the object directing their writing activity and the mediational resources available. In particular, teachers may draw student attention to two aspects which are of paramount importance in conceptualizing writing activities. First, what resources, be they technological tools, disciplinary artifacts, or conceptual/analytical frameworks, are available to facilitate the student's writing activity? Additionally, what is the nature of the sociocultural context in which writing takes place--who constitutes the community, what are the explicit and implicit community rules and expectations regulating writing activity (e.g., conventions, policies and criteria), and what

are the student's and others' roles in the writing activity? How may writing be influenced by factors related to the sociocultural context of writing? An awareness and understanding of their own writing activity systems can be an important facilitator for students when they carry out their writing activities.

### 4.2. Promote Effective Use of Mediating Resources to Facilitate Writing Activities and Address Writing Challenges

AT-informed writing research has shown that writers employ a variety of mediating artifacts to facilitate their writing (e.g., Kessler 2020; Li 2013; Park and De Costa 2015; Ren and Zhu 2023). An important part of helping students develop the skills to write for specific academic purposes entails introducing to students various pertinent mediating artifacts and promoting effective use of those artifacts through instruction. For writing performed in specific disciplines, the role of disciplinary artifacts such as published research articles and other disciplinary tools in mediating writing cannot be underestimated. Disciplinary artifacts not only contribute content information necessary for students to address the "problem space" (namely the object) of writing activity but also cast light on disciplinary discourse conventions. Employing disciplinary artifacts as instructional materials, writing instructors can guide students in an examination of discourse conventions and rhetorical patterns reflected in the disciplinary artifacts and provide students opportunities to reflect on their observations. Corpora of disciplinary writing (Cotos, Link and Huffman, 2016) may be a particularly useful tool to help students develop an understanding of disciplinary discourse conventions.

Disciplinary artifacts also provide an excellent source of learning of disciplinary citation conventions and textual borrowing practices, which constitute an element in the rule component of a writing activity system. Research has shown that lack of knowledge of citation conventions and other textual borrowing practices may impede writing activity (e.g., Ren and Zhu 2023) and that citation and textual borrowing conventions and practices vary across academic fields and disciplinary communities (Shi 2012). For example, Shi's study (2012) revealed important differences in perceptions and beliefs regarding citation practices between science and arts/social science participants, with such disciplinary differences indicating "the danger of following some general rules about citations that might not be valid in certain contexts" (Shi 2012, 145). Using disciplinary artifacts, writing teachers can focus students' attention on the specific citation and textual borrowing conventions used in disciplinary writing and provide opportunities for students to reflect on their own experiences with citation and textual borrowing and apply what they have learned to their own writing.

AT-informed academic writing research has shown that student writers use various technological tools to facilitate their writing (e.g., Kessler 2020; Li 2013; Park and De Costa 2015; Ren and Zhu 2023). Given the increasing role of

technological tools in all areas of education, including language learning, it is of paramount importance to promote effective and responsible use of technological tools. Recently, AI tools have garnered much attention among writing researchers, and the challenges as well as the potential AI holds for writing instruction have triggered interesting discussion and debate (e.g., Kubota 2023; Warschauer et al. 2023). To effectively and responsibly use AI tools, AI literacy is critical (Kubota 2023; Warschauer et al. 2023). Writing teachers may consider how to integrate AI tools in writing instruction and cultivate AI literacy in students. Warschauer et al.'s (2023, 3) "AI literacy framework, including five elements: understand, access, prompt, corroborate, incorporate" provides a guiding framework for integrating AI tools in writing instruction and promoting AI literacy development.

### 4.3. Provide Opportunities for Dialogic Interactions

AT-informed writing research has shown the significant role of dialogical interactions in mediating writing activity (e.g., Mochizuki and Starfield 2021). Both language and community are important mediators in human activity, and, encompassing both language-and-community-related mediation, peer groups can play a distinctive role in facilitating writing activity for specific academic purposes. Much of the classroom employment of peer groups has focused on the role of peers as feedback providers, yet peers can be an important source of disciplinary knowledge, and peer dialogical interactions can promote an understanding of writing as social practice: an understanding that writers write in specific social contexts where writers and readers assume specific roles and identities and navigate specific conventions and expectations. Peers can "collectively co-construct knowledge about academic literacy through the use of oral discourse within their collaborative groups" (Seloni 2012, 57) and help one another understand roles, identities, conventions and expectations that underpin and regulate writing. In other words, through oral interactions, peers can bring to one another's attention beliefs and expectations of writing (i.e., rules and division of labor in the writing activity system) that may remain tacit to student writers. Teachers may provide opportunities for group discussions of disciplinary texts and texts produced by the students themselves and encourage students to share their understandings of writing purposes, intended readers, writing contexts, and expectations. For feedback exchanges, peers should be encouraged to make explicit their reasons and intentions for feedback, as suggested by Mochizuki and Starfield (2021).

### 4.4. Enhance Peer Collaboration and Interaction through Cultivating an Understanding of Collaboration and Effective Task Design and Implementation

Given the importance of collaborative writing in disciplinary contexts, it is crucial to enhance students' abilities to perform effective collaborative writing.

To this end, writing instructors can promote what De Costa, Lee and Li (2024, 976) refer to as "academic collaboration socialization" and help students understand what characterizes effective collaboration. To prepare for and promote effective teamwork, teachers may provide opportunities for students to build trust and adopt a "collective identity" (De Costa, Lee and Li 2024, 975) for teamwork through a variety of activities such as class discussion, team building role plays, and reflection. Equally importantly, teachers should draw students' attention to what characterizes effective collaboration. Research on collaborative writing has shown that students who collaborate effectively mutually engage with one another's contributions and that they share responsibility in negotiating task direction and text construction (Li and Zhu 2017a, 2017b; Storch 2002). Further, students who collaborate effectively do not simply divide up the writing tasks and perform their share in parallel (Li and Zhu 2017a), and, in effective collaboration, group members bring convergent and collaboration-oriented goals to the writing task (Li and Zhu 2017b). To enhance students' understanding of effective collaboration, writing teachers can discuss features of such collaboration, share examples of successful collaboration, provide opportunities for students to reflect on their experiences with collaborative writing, and help students set goals for collaboration.

Writing teachers can also enhance collaborative writing through effective design and implementation of writing tasks. AT-informed research has cast light on the importance of rules and division of labor in mediating collaborative writing in disciplinary contexts (De Costa, Lee and Li 2024; Yang 2014); therefore, one area teachers may pay attention to concerns the creation of rules and division of labor which may facilitate collaborative writing. When designing and implementing collaborative writing tasks, teachers may consider creating requirements, timelines, and peer roles which may promote collaboration. For example, collaborative writing tasks may be divided into parts so that the tasks can be completed in stages and deadlines can be established for the completion of each writing stage. Team meetings can be built into the various stages of the collaborative writing process for students to plan and brainstorm ideas, share progress on their work, discuss any questions or future directions, and reflect on and evaluate their work. In addition, norms and expectations of group communication and interaction can also be established to facilitate teamwork. Because collaborative writing is not just about the final written product, evaluation of student performance should perhaps encompass their written work and performance in teamwork. Given that rules and roles may emerge and change during the collaborative process (De Costa, Lee and Li 2024; Mochizuki 2017; Yang 2014), it is important for teachers to be aware of the dynamics of the collaborative writing groups and the emerging rules and roles. This means that teachers need to assess and be aware of students' emerging needs, help students negotiate emergent rules and division of labor, and provide timely guidance and assistance when needed.

### 4.5. Address Contradictions in the Curriculum and Course Activity Systems

AT-informed academic writing research has shown that student writers' difficulties can stem from contradictions within the student's writing activity system as well as between the writing activity system and other activity systems. To better support student writing activities, curriculum designers may adopt activity system as an analytical lens to ensure that relevant coursework (coursework activity system) is available to cultivate in students the understandings, abilities, and practices needed for the performance of major writing tasks (writing activity system). An analysis of the curriculum through the activity system lens may also help identify contradictions between components of a curriculum. Further, teachers may apply an activity system analysis to the examination of the course instructional activity system to identify if any contradictions exist between, for example, course object and mediating artifacts, course object and rules, and course object and division of labor. Such an activity system analysis may be conducted at the course design stage, at the course implementation stage, and/or at the course evaluation stage.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Activity Theory has provided an intriguing framework to conceptualize writing and writing instruction. AT-informed writing research has shed light on the wide array of sociocultural factors which mediate writing activities and on contradictions as a source of writing challenges and emergent needs. As a conceptual and analytical framework, Activity Theory has important implications for writing for specific academic purposes writing instruction and task, course and curriculum development. As such, Activity Theory and related writing research may be introduced to writing teachers in teacher preparation programs so that teachers can use AT-generated insights to inform their practices. Together with other theories important to writing instruction such as genre theory and process writing theory, Activity Theory can constitute a valuable part of teachers' theoretical knowledge base to inform teaching.

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## PISANJE ZA SPECIFIČNE SVRHE: PERSPEKTIVA TEORIJE AKTIVNOSTI

*Rezime*

Ovaj rad istražuje implikacije teorije aktivnosti i srodnih istraživanja o pisanju za nastavu pisanja za specifične akademske svrhe. Nakon kratkog uvoda, prvi glavni deo rada predstavlja teoriju aktivnosti (Engeström 1999, 2001), sa posebnim fokusom na koncepte sistema aktivnosti i kontradikcije. Objašnjavaju se elementi sistema aktivnosti i uloga kontradikcija u okviru aktivnosti. Naredni glavni deo rada daje pregled istraživanja koja predstavljaju dva pravca akademskih istraživanja o pisanju zasnovanih na teoriji aktivnosti: istraživanja procesa pisanja i istraživanja vršnjačke saradnje i interakcije. Istraživanja procesa pisanja informisana teorijom aktivnosti pokazuju da pisci koriste različite posredničke resurse povezane sa komponentama sistema aktivnosti kako bi olakšali proces pisanja, te da kontradikcije unutar jednog sistema aktivnosti i/ili između različitih sistema aktivnosti predstavljaju izvor poteškoća i izazova u pisanju. Istraživanja vršnjačke saradnje i interakcije zasnovana na teoriji aktivnosti ukazuju na to da pravila i podela rada unutar sistema aktivnosti imaju snažan uticaj na saradnju i timski rad, da pravila i podela rada mogu nastati tokom procesa pisanja, te da dijaloške interakcije olakšavaju pisanje. Poslednji glavni deo rada razmatra nekoliko nastavnih principa zasnovanih na teoriji aktivnosti i srodnim istraživanjima, uključujući: 1) pomoć studentima u razvoju svesti i razumevanja sopstvene aktivnosti pisanja; 2) podsticanje efikasne upotrebe posredničkih resursa kako bi se olakšale aktivnosti pisanja i prevazišli izazovi u pisanju; 3) obezbeđivanje prilika za dijaloške interakcije; 4) unapređenje vršnjačke saradnje i interakcije kroz razvoj razumevanja saradnje i efikasnog osmišljavanja i sprovođenja zadataka; i 5) adresiranje kontradikcija u okviru kurikuluma i sistema aktivnosti kursa.

*Ključne reči*: pisanje za specifične svrhe; pisanje za specifične akademske svrhe; engleski za specifične akademske svrhe; teorija aktivnosti; pedagogija pisanja zasnovana na teoriji aktivnosti.