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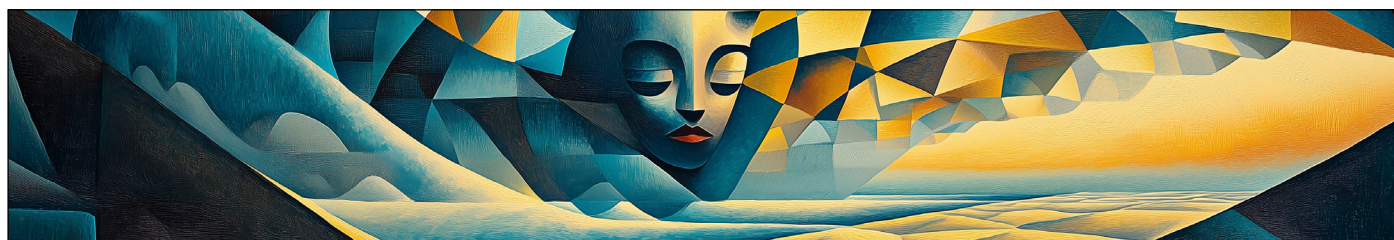
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Activity theory in technology enhanced learning research (part 2): An introduction to the special issue

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Abstract

Activity Theory (sometimes known as Cultural Historical Activity Theory, or CHAT) is often used in TEL research as well as in many other adjacent areas of scholarship. Activity Theory is generally considered to be a mature theory, yet it attracts perpetual and active development and critique, most notably by Activity Theorists themselves. Such endeavours have included a previous Special Issue of the journal *Studies in Technology Enhanced Learning* (Bligh & Moffitt, 2023). That previous special issue published a series of diverse submissions, which together contributed to making the theory more accessible and applicable to novice researchers; examined how the theory was being used in empirical research on TEL; and emphasised the mediating role of technologies for purposeful human activity.

This special issue builds further on these previous discussions. We sought contributions that critically examine the interplay of social and cultural mediation, along with the societal motives of learning activities, and their mediating technologies. We were interested in papers that explored macro- and meso-level policy-practice tensions, stakeholder influence and interest, and the varied implications for how tasks are allocated in technology-mediated activity. We aimed to be flexible concerning conceptions of what ‘learning’ or ‘technology enhanced learning’ is. We were specifically open to studies taking place in less conventional settings, with diverse

participants and stakeholders, and with contrary learning outcomes. We aimed to encourage diverse approaches to conceptualising and analysing mediating technologies, beyond the solely 'digital'.

References

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