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Being a videoconference swim coach

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Title: Being a videoconference swim coach

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GOAL

To show how an impediment to activity could generate a completely new activity through an instrument switch.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A work psychology intervention based on a French-specific clinical approach to activity (Clot, 1999, 2008), with major references to Lev Vygotsky's historical-cultural theory.

METHODOLOGY AND INTERVENTION

- A swim coach had been observed in distance mode throughout the Covid-19 2021 lockdown in France. He figured out a way to stay in touch with his swimmers and "practice" through videoconferences: dry land training, swimming talks and video analysis.
- Two months of distance mode observations, video recordings and interviews.
- A visual elaboration of the clinical approach three-poles model, where the rise of a new activity from an instrument switch (from pool to videoconference software) is showed.

ABOUT THE MODEL

In a regular swim coach activity, the three poles are: Subject (S)-Swim coach, Object (Ob)-Swim practice and Others (O)-Swimmers. Pool is the instrument (I).
 In the new activity: (S')-Teacher, (Ob')-Staying in touch with swimming, (O')-Pupils. As pool became unavailable (lockdown), a new instrument is discovered: (I')-videoconference software.
 Some back-and-forth tensions (arrows) exist between the regular and the new activity, partly in an active form ("Going towards new activity" – Green arrows) and partly in a passive form ("Going back to regular activity" – Red arrows).

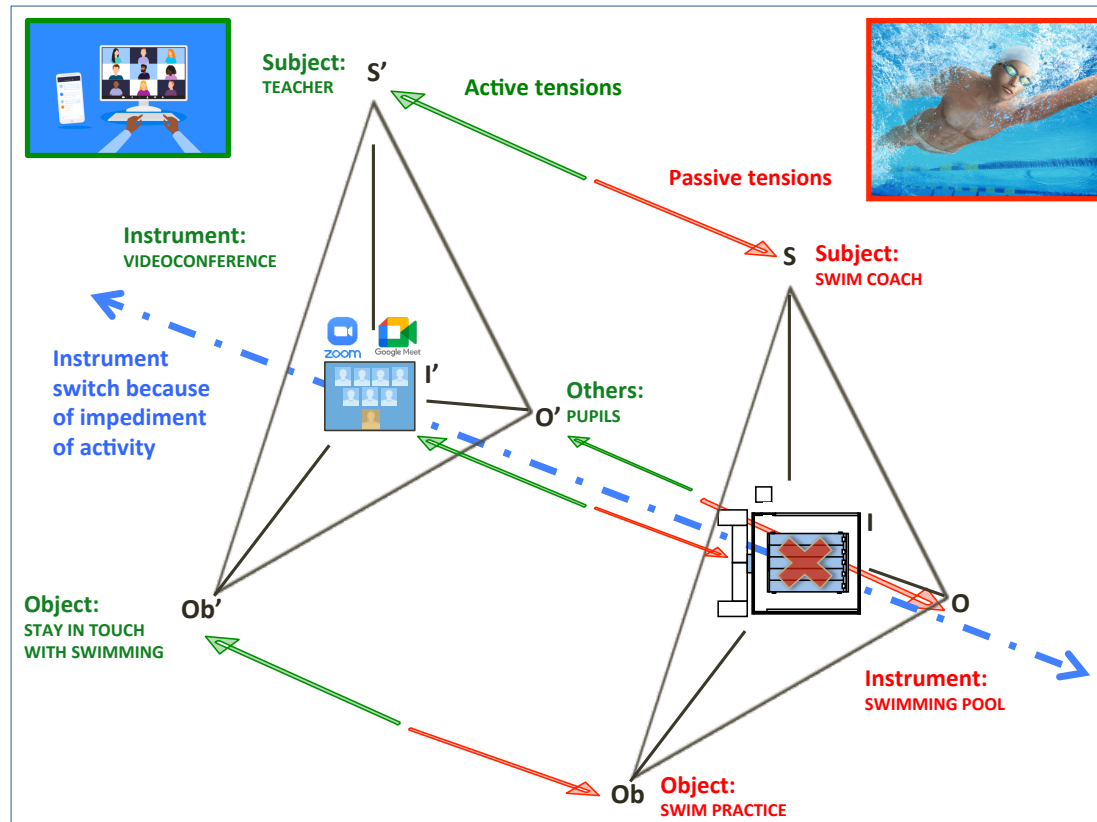
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Passive form ultimately wins, as swimming practice becomes available again. Support from organizations and colleagues may be necessary in order to stabilize a new activity. There was a lack of this kind of support, as the coach was isolated and alone in this new activity.

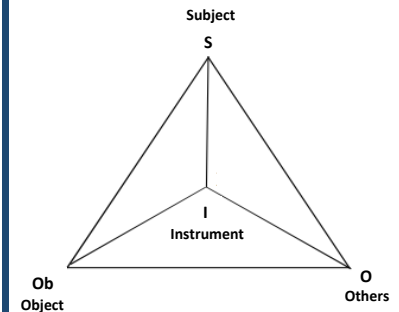
PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE

This psychological systemic approach could help understand how instruments allow professionals to find out unexpected ways to pursue their work.

New instruments lead to new activity



A CLINICAL APPROACH TO ACTIVITY



Activity is made by

- A subject;
- An object;
- Other whom activities share the same object.

Activity is always

- Directed towards someone/something;
- Mediated by instruments;
- Source of conflicts.

KEY WORDS

Swimming – Videoconference - Instrument

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