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5. SYSTEMIC TENSIONS IN AMERICAN TEACHER UNIONS

An Activity Systems Analysis of Teacher Unions and Their Role in Society

INTRODUCTION

Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) offers a broad approach to analysing complex contexts. CHAT has been employed in analysis of activities specifically within learning contexts for many years (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). We find that the CHAT approach to the analysis of learning and learning environments is attractive because of its ability to recognise the intertwining of human thought and action (Engeström, 1987; Galperin, 1995; Leontiev, 1981). Essentially CHAT allows both educational researchers and participants to engage in the examination of institutional affordances for action; in other words, the ability to see action when members of the system are constrained by that very system (Dijk et al., 2011). The precise understanding needed to research and begin to unravel the complexities and changes within society, governmental systems, policies, and organisational entities are also well suited for use within an activity systems analysis methodology (Foot, 2014).

In this chapter we will report on how we relied on CHAT and activity systems analysis while examining the complexities involved in teacher unions in the United States. To us, labour unions in general are a very interesting and provoking subject matter to study, especially when the ideas surrounding collective bargaining have such a strong pull in a nation (United States) that values extreme individualism. The idea of coming together as a community of individuals to garner power for a group over those who seek to use their hegemony to overrun workers in society, to us, is a fascinating avenue for study. Our predilection for desiring to study unions, specifically teacher unions, has been reignited with the demonstrations and subsequent destruction of teacher unions all over the country, most notably in the state of Wisconsin where collective bargaining by public sector workers has been largely outlawed; the demonising effects in the city of Chicago where teachers, unions, and its members have been vilified as only interested in protecting and furthering their needs and desires and not those of their students; and most recently in the state of California where tenure and seniority rights have been removed.

What follows will be guided by our research question: What are the systemic tensions associated with teacher unions within the United States, and what entities have been perpetuating these tensions? We will rely on various popular news media

sources such as the Washington Post (Porter & Trotman, 2014), the New York Times (Brill, 2010), and POLITICO (Simon, 2014) as our data sources. We first engaged in a qualitative document analysis primarily relying on the constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Saldaña, 2013) then while writing the narrative results of our qualitative analysis we engaged in activity systems analysis. We believe that by using CHAT we will demonstrate and expose the gap between what is being stated about teacher unions, and the ramifications of their dismantling, as well as, why it should really matter to teachers, parents, politicians, and society in general.

We will conclude the chapter with a discussion about how activity systems analysis can help tease out the systemic tensions related to teacher unions to understand what really is occurring rather than what is sensationalised in popular media. We will discuss how CHAT allows us to understand how and why outsiders, as well as the insiders of education are demonising unions. Our analysis brings about the ability to see and understand that there is much more to tensions in teacher unions than meets the eye, and we will demonstrate with this chapter why analysis of these means needs to be done more, especially concerning the government and political entities. CHAT, in the end will give us the research tools to focus this study and examine the inner workings to a deeper level than we could understand before.

UNDERSTANDING COMPLEX SYSTEMS

Changes in educational policy and practice are demanding that researchers examine issues surrounding education, teacher unions included, from a new perspective, one that allows us to understand the complexities that education systems are facing as a social system in a globalised world. Activity Theory (AT) and especially Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) provides a methodological approach that takes a developmental view of the human mind in context (Cole, 1996; Wertsch, 1985). CHAT is particularly well suited to study schools and policies surrounding education. CHAT as a framework allows for changes to occur in the activity being observed and for consideration of how those changes are affecting the activity itself, participants, and society. This is an advantage when analysing politics and education because CHAT allows researchers to consider how changes in policy and popular educational practices have far reaching individual and societal impacts. CHAT provides a rich description of the “participants, their activities, and the activity setting” which allows for a very detailed understanding of the issues and tensions that are part of a situation which the researcher is studying (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). We are not the first researchers to rely on CHAT to study socio-political systems and implications on human daily activity. Other scholarly work relying on CHAT to study socio-political systems includes (a) Foot (2001) who traced activities related to non-violent conflict management after the Soviet Union was dismantled; (b) Lee and Roth (2008) who studied a state sponsored salmon enhancement program in British Columbia and its implications to food production, saving salmon as a species, and

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providing employment to workers; and (c) Igira and Aanestad (2009) who examined implications brought upon by contradictions found in healthcare practices in Zanzibar that was uncovered while designing a new healthcare information system. Our work fits within this area of research relying on CHAT analysis methods to uncover socio-political tensions in our case specifically related to public policy, or politics of teacher unions.

TEACHER UNIONS PROJECT PARTICULARITIES

Understanding the Need to Study Teacher Unions

The CHAT research that will be introduced here has led us to better understand the discontent with teacher unions within the U.S. that rests heavy on the minds of many individuals within American society. Within this discontent for many lies an unsurmountable feeling of loss and a genuine disheartening over what simply can be coined ‘the loss of America’s competitive edge’ (Peterson, 1999). Several different players within and outside the realm of education explain this loss in many ways. However it is explained, there seems to be an unpretentious and sometimes misguided desire to make education better by all involved (Lieberman, 2004).

This desire to see education as it is perceived as once being at a pinnacle for all to admire in the world, comes at a price. The price for this nostalgic view of education, and its accompanying unprecedented return, has begun in the last decade to forsake long standing teachers’ unions. Although the attack against labour unions has been ongoing since the 1970s, beginning in the early part of the twenty-first century we can begin to see the hard push in the political parties, and in other both governmental and non-governmental entities throughout the U.S. against teacher unions. For instance, in 2010 Newsweek ran a story titled The Key to Saving American Education, in which they call for the end of tenure rights for classroom teachers (Thomas & Wingert, 2010). The attacks on teacher unions have continued in popular media outlets as well with movies such as *Waiting on Superman* (2013), where students are portrayed as needing to be saved from poor, failing schools. These understandings have continued on to the present day, and thus teacher unions, the entities that once stood as formidable professional support and a negotiator for teachers throughout the U.S., have now been caught off guard with negative imagery and extremist propaganda that has been created by critics of the teacher unions and cynics of labour unions including, the mass media, government officials, those in law, and most surprisingly, teachers themselves (Bidwell, 2015).

Anger both for and against teacher unions within the U.S. has been building over the last several years. Many groups that are calling themselves ‘reformers’ have come from many avenues, governmental systems, private industry, and from parents. These ‘reformers’ have created a narrative that lets them claim moral high ground in public debates, and paints teacher unions as having their own interests in mind, and that in fact, teacher unions do not have students’ best interest at heart at

all (Burke, 2010). They claim that ineffective teachers, supported by corrupt and unprogressive unions are unduly and particularly harming minorities and students in poverty, already some of the most disenfranchised students. Likewise, the reformers are claiming that if teacher unions really cared about students and helping to improve education, they would rescind on long standing pressured issues like tenure and seniority rights (Bascia & Osmond, 2012; Simon, 2014).

Accordingly, teacher unions are outraged at the attacks they say are unwarranted and uncalled for. They claim that they have both the students' and teachers' best intentions at heart, and their interests are backed by a century or more of research and experience in the field of education (National Education Association, 2014). However, reformer groups have put so much money into their efforts at creating a negative picture of teacher unions, as well as, backing high profile individuals all the way up to the U.S. President, that the reformers rhetoric has largely prevailed, and teacher unions are losing ground even with seasoned unionised teachers (Bidwell, 2015). By no means did all teachers throughout the history of the unions support everything they did; however, there has always been a feeling of comradeship between professionals in the education field, and in many ways there is a clear lack of feeling of any disheartenment by the prospective that teacher unions may not be around in the near future in many places within the U.S. There has been a 'brand identity' that has been created by the reformers that demonstrates that they are the ones who are most interested in improving education; and that 'branding' is winning out.

The new 'branding' of education that has occurred is being mimicked and regurgitated throughout society as the way we are going to solve the issues in education in the U.S. Politicians from all over the country have jumped on the band wagon that education has to be 'fixed,' teachers must be held accountable, inefficiency must be phased out, students need improved test scores, and teachers' unions must be disbanded. Even long term supporters of teacher unions, namely the Democratic Party, have seemed to turn their back on them and the issues that they are trying to fight for. In many instances where law suits have been filed by 'reformers,' long time unions supporting Democrats have in turn become part of the party that fights against the teacher unions, thus adding an unforeseeable element to the criticisms the unions face.

Throughout all the rhetoric that surrounds the politicians and the government becoming so heavily involved in the debates about teacher unions, runs a vein of neoliberalism that cannot be ignored (Simon, 2012; Torres, 2010). As politicians try to campaign for the disbandment of labour unions within the education field, they support the notions surrounding charter schools, and other types of corporatism into public education (Burke, 2010). They feel that these entities infused into our current systems will vastly improve overall academic success for all students. However, teacher unions and others both in and outside the field of education find that the flux of neoliberal principles in the field of education is a hindrance to social justice and equity. Further, the repercussions of having private industry infiltrate public spaces are vastly under researched, especially in education.

Finally, the teacher unions take the stance that they are scapegoats for the perceived problems in the U.S. educational systems. It can be viewed that this may be a critical moment in time, where the unions' positionality and influence will become so hotly debated, and in some ways their very existence come into question, that it seems imperative that more significant research and time be used to determine the effects of unions upon education. As politicians and government try to 'fix' laws that have been long established concerning teachers, the unions are going to fight back against a media storm of negative imagery and bad societal perception as we have seen in the CHAT research that will follow.

Data Sets

In this project, we engaged in CHAT analysis of teacher unions based on three articles that come from reputable news organisations. We first began by simply typing in a scholarly search engine, *Teachers Unions*. After reading briefly through several articles that appeared and not finding the articles to be overtly pertaining to what might be going on in the U.S. concerning the degradation of teacher unions, we refined the search to include *Issues* surrounding teacher unions. The following three articles are the results of the second, more refined search. We chose to look at these three articles because we believed them to have a good source of information about our subject matter and they came from reputable news sources. In addition we limited our choice to three articles in order to focus intently on the content of the material.

The first article we chose to use in the analysis comes from the *Wall Street Journal*, and is entitled *Teachers Unions Under Fire* (Porter & Trotman, 2014). Further, the second article that we chose comes from *The New York Times*. The title of the article from the Times is named, *The Teachers' Unions' Last Stand*. We chose the *Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times* articles as sources for analysis because the *Journal* and *Times* are read all over the U.S. and both are considered to be reliable and reputable sources to garner information. Both also write about many current social issues that are politically and legally pervasive in the media.

The third article that we chose to use comes from *POLITICO*. *POLITICO* is an American political journalism organisation that was founded in 2007, that distributes its news content via newspaper, radio, television, and internet (Anonymous, 2014). Although *POLITICO* has not been around as long as the *Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*, its reputation for reporting accurate, reliable political, legal, and social content material has been acquired through the various awards that it can now claim. The article that we found titled *The Fall of Teacher Unions* is an article that demonstrates the ability of the journalists working within *POLITICO* (Simon, 2014).

The data that we found within these three articles garnered a wealth of information about what has been happening within the U.S. concerning teacher unions. These data sources serve as an excellent example for this CHAT analysis about the current

state of teacher unions in the US. In the following section we will lay the foundation for the types of questions that we chose to examine when researching this topic.

Research Questions

When thinking about teacher unions and the attacks that have taken place on them in U.S. society in recent years, we directed our research question toward understanding what might be some of the causes and issues surrounding teacher unions:

What are the systemic tensions associated with teacher unions within the United States, and what entities have been perpetuating these tensions?

We found while reflecting on the literature and examining the data that the following questions emerged and should also be addressed, as they pertain to the above questions in inquiry:

- What tensions are occurring between the different entities concerning teacher unions (parents, teachers, administrators, politicians, the law, and the union representatives)?
- What roles do government and politicians play concerning teacher unions?
- What might be possible outcomes if teacher unions are effectively absolved throughout the U.S.?

Through this study our goal was to examine what role the activities of teacher unions play within the larger context of society, thereby bridging the gap between teachers, parents, individual politicians, and society at large. Thus, these questions help to delve deeper into the understanding of the culture and history of teacher unions, and to be able to examine more closely why it seems they are under attack.

Qualitative Activity Systems Analysis

Qualitative activity systems analysis is a process that helps researchers to gain a detailed understanding of the subject that they are studying (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). The steps to the process of providing a qualitative activity systems analysis may vary depending on the researcher and their needs based on the topics being addressed. In this study we relied on Saldaña's (2013) methods introduced in *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Research*, as well as, Glaser and Strauss's (1967) book *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* and Corbin and Strauss's (2015) work in *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. As Yamagata-Lynch (2010) introduces constant comparative method, as a way for investigators to engage in "an intense, systematic process of examining and re-examining the data while comparing one source with another to find similarities and differences," (p. 73) we too used this method as a way to begin the initial analysis of activities. As in the constant comparative model discussed in Charmaz (2014) and Corbin and Strauss (2015) Saldaña (2013), it

begins with open coding (looking for words or phrases that stand out), followed by re-reading of the material and finding any other units of data that might be helpful to the researcher, this is done until saturation of the data occurs (no other information can be coded or ‘pulled’ from the data). The next steps are to re-read the data, and where the codes are placed, begin to look for patterns within the codes; these patterns are then assigned a word or a short phrase that might denote how the particular code is related. Through this process, filters are then attached to the patterns that are then categorised and placed into themes, “a process that permits data to be segregated, grouped, regrouped and relinked in order to consolidate meaning and explanation” (Saldana, 2013, p. 8). After this process is completed, sometimes many times over, the codes and their subsequent categories are then generated into a workable theory. This rectification process allows data to become more trustworthy as a source of valid representation of a phenomenon.

Being trustworthy during coding is of utmost importance, as this can be one of the major criticisms when researchers look at using CHAT as a viable methodology within research. Careful processes for reiteration and member checking help to satisfy some of the critique that may be brought about concerning the methodology. According to Yamagata-Lynch (2010), the following questions are helpful to address during coding when performing an activity theoretical qualitative research:

What are the key activities related to this study that are in the data set? What is the activity setting in which these activities are situated? Who are the subjects of these activities? What is the shared object of these activities? Do different subjects participating in the same activity view the activity and the object differently? If yes, why? What tools, rules, community, and division of labour are involved in these activities? What systemic contradictions are bringing tensions into these activities? What are the outcomes of these activities? What historical relationship does one activity have with another? How does one activity interact with another? (p. 75)

Having these questions in the back of the mind, in conjunction with the research questions that are being pursued, helps during the coding process as can be witnessed in the steps that were taken in this study, which are found in [Figure 5.1](#).

By step 5 we gained an understanding of a workable theory that addressed our research questions; essentially, the theory allowed us to see connections among various components of the data collected, which help us explain the activities that are occurring throughout the U.S. concerning teacher unions (Creswell, 2013). The categorisation and themes further helped to filter through some of the questions that we had pertaining to the issues that we wanted to examine in this CHAT analysis.

Findings

As previously stated in the beginning of the chapter, and as we came to find during our research, teacher unions have had many issues that are explicitly public

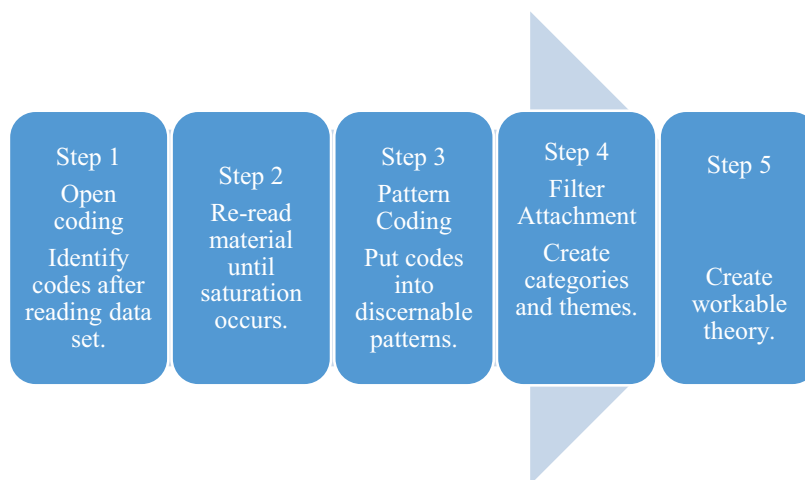


Figure 5.1. Steps involved in qualitative activity systems analysis

concerns throughout their histories that have continued and even worsened into the 21st century; such as, tenure, and seniority rights, of which both were negatively discussed throughout the articles that we examined. Examples of new laws in both California and Wisconsin were given that illustrated both the governments' and societies' desire to 'fix' the issues concerning tenure and seniority rights.

Further, it became evident that teacher unions have other issues both internally and externally within both the major teacher unions (NEA and AFT). According to the data, most teacher unions have seen a small drop in the number of enrollees into the unions, approximately 7% across the board (Brill, 2010). Their revenues have dropped, but more significantly over the last decade, which has hurt their ability to mobilise externally, as well as, provide campaign funding for individuals that have the best intentions for education. Teacher unions seem to be squashed in some states as to what they can do to represent teachers and their needs; in many places discussed in the data, collective bargaining and striking are strictly prohibited by law.

Furthermore, teacher unions have had to become more flexible in their dealing with school systems and state legislatures. This has led to other internal strife that has been reflected in the splintering of groups within the organisations themselves. One such group that was exemplified within the data was BATS (Bad-Ass Teachers Society) (Members of BATS, 2015). These internally splintered groups have been voicing their discontent with issues of testing to accountability, and welfare to public spending. The data shows their anger and discontent over being disenfranchised by society concerning issues of education. This is reflected in the manner in which many of the group's members personally attack those that they feel are not supporting their claims in a more aggressive manner, including the unions they are a part of themselves.

It seems that although some of the criticisms that were levelled against teacher unions within the data, is rightly deserved, opponents of teacher unions have simply had the loudest voices. Teacher unions responses both from the NEA and AFT have been slow, and have come from an often times un-united front.

This data shows a telling picture of the tensions that surround teacher unions. In [Figure 5.2](#) we have compiled the thick description narrative of the data into an activity systems visual representation. This visual representation gave us the ability to discern and pick apart the intricacies of the research work, specifically the tensions uncovered.

Looking at the activity system that emerged from our analysis in this project, we can see that the overall object for teacher unions is to give support to teachers in their professional needs within the educational realm. To achieve this object, the teacher unions have various tools, including lawsuits, political campaigning, active factions within their unions, and ingenuity of individual minds. On the other hand, teacher unions also have to deal with tools that are not as helpful to them, such as, falling membership rates and declining funding, which in the long run could hurt some of the more positive aspects of the unions. Also, as was evident in the research, the various factions within the unions can also have a negative impact on their overall goal and outcome, especially if the factions go against the best interest of all other union members. Therefore, although many of the tools that are available to the teacher unions to achieve their goals are positive and helpful, some are also detrimental to the long term outcome for teacher unions and members.

Further, the community for this activity system includes a good majority of society, including teachers, teacher unions (NEA/AFT), government and politicians, parents and advocacy groups, and lawyers and judges. Not all of these individuals seemed to be willing participants, especially those who were opposed to teacher unions from the beginning, such as parents and parental advocacy groups. Even some of the government officials and politicians seemed not to want to be involved with things that surrounded the teacher unions (both good and bad), but that seemed to be pulled in one way or another by various entities. We believe that this non-participatory desire by many involved caused various roles that are evidenced within the activity system. Hence, the roles that were created for teacher unions in particular are varied and many. They, along with all other members of the community involved here had to have at least a rudimentary understanding of the judicial system and the laws surrounding education, as well as, an appreciation of social justice and educational issues for students, parents, and especially teachers, all the while taking into account the unaligned principles surrounding the ideas of neoliberalism.

Hence, the tensions in this project are many (see Appendix, [Table 5.2](#) for full list). In numerous respects it seems that the teacher unions are up against very rigid ideas surrounding what everyone perceives as beneficial to the field of education. Teacher unions seem to be in tension with everyone from parents, politicians, government officials, political factions, teachers not associated with unions, and even those

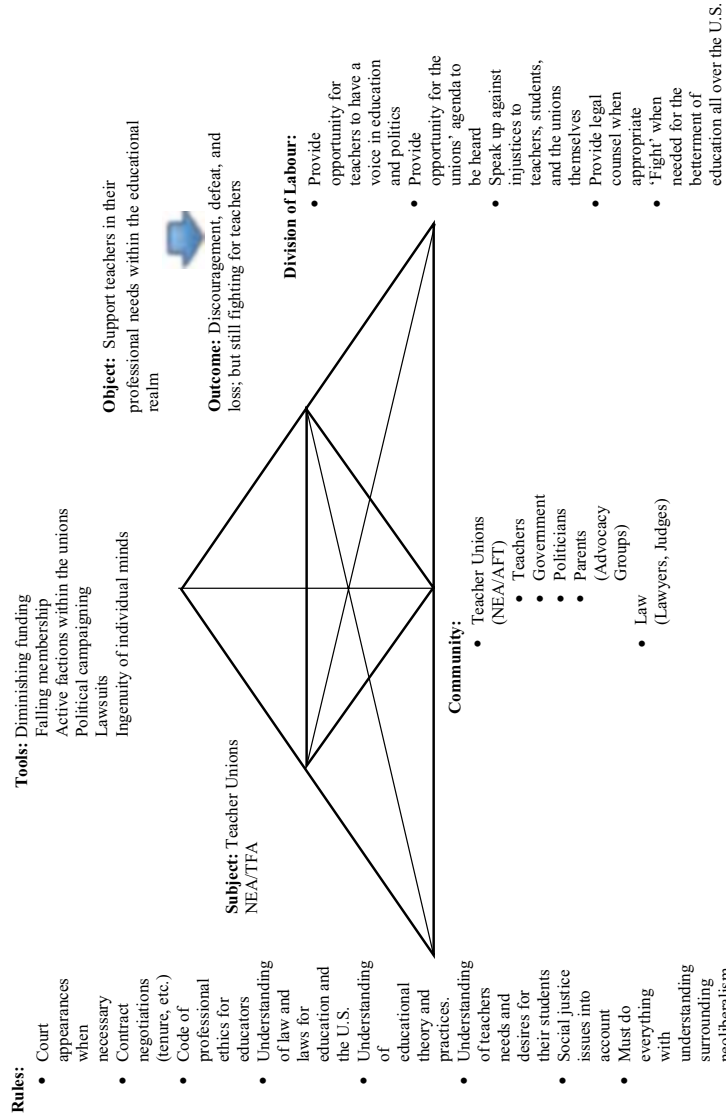


Figure 5.2. Teacher unions' activity system

within their own ranks, neoliberalism, and the very ideas held within the most basic democratic principles. These tensions within and outside the teacher unions contribute to a hostile environment for all involved.

The outcome from this activity seems to be one of discouragement, defeat, and loss for teacher unions and those who stand with them. Although teacher unions seem to be a ‘scourge’ of the education system in the U.S. for many; for others, like teachers and administrators, dependent on their knowledge about various entities, including legal and political; teacher unions keep fighting for teachers and better educational systems throughout the U.S.

Further Discussion

We were surprised initially at the findings that we came upon concerning the data about teacher unions. We went into this project with some pretty big questions, and some vague ideas about what might be happening regarding the unions and the larger society, and what we might be able to discover by using a CHAT analysis as a methodology within our research. We had an awareness about what teacher unions do, who was involved with them and why, and how contentious they have become over the last decade within the U.S. However, we had no idea how much the government itself, the politicians, the parents, and even in many instances, the teachers themselves were rallying against the unions to create a perfect storm of controversy and anti-union bullying. Tensions abounded out of this project; many more than we could have ever anticipated.

According to this analysis, teacher unions really do want to help education improve; and in general, they have the best interests at heart for teachers, students, and society. However, they are increasingly becoming frustrated at the lack of support and recognition that they are receiving from even long term supporters. Using a metaphor to explain the plight of unions, they are seemingly playing a game that has all new rules for them, and that has many more unsympathetic players than ever before. And unlike in previous generations of teacher unions, the divisions of labour for them have become numerous and go far outside the scope of simply understanding teachers and educational issues, but continue on into politics, law, and government.

This frustration and loss can be felt when viewing the various tensions that were discovered while doing this research. The tension between the unions and government are somewhat understandable, as government and organisations that deal with social justice and questioning power relationships within society can be problematic with any entity, even those outside the realm of education. Again, in many ways society, parents, and teachers can understandingly be in conflict with one another in one way or another, although the amount of tension that was witnessed in the data between everyone was somewhat surprising. But what was most surprising was that many of these tensions that are involved in this activity system have very little connection with the actual teacher unions themselves, but are in fact issues that have become persistent problems outside of education that seemingly have spilled over into the

field. For instance, the tension concerning the hard stance against labour unions in the twenty first century would seem to be a tension that would have been dispelled over a century ago when labour unions had to fight for existence within the U.S., a fight they eventually won. It is the compounding of these tensions taken together that is seemingly making the teacher unions the scapegoat for a perceivably ‘failing’ U.S. education system. But are the teacher unions in fact even an issue at all? This is a question for another analysis.

Further, the data brought to light for us the need to be aware that no one, including many researchers who closely examine the mass media’s attempts at shaping public perception, particularly those that are politically fuelled, seems to understand the impact that it has on the institutions and people within our society. At the surface level, the information presented seems harmless and just a presentation of facts: informative and important. We became very surprised to see in the data collection for this particular project a wealth of simple propaganda. The sources we chose are considered to be reliable, seemingly non-partisan sources for gathering information about a host of broad topics; but what we examined when looking at the data very closely, coding it, and eventually analysing it using the CHAT methodology, is how very political, and at times very one-sided the information appears to be.

Implications for Future Research

The activity systems analysis helped answer the research questions by helping to organise the material into a visual representation of what is happening concerning teacher unions within the U.S. It helps to begin examining and understanding how and why the unions have become demonised. This analysis of teacher unions using CHAT helps researchers to grasp that there is much more to this problem than meets the eye, and most important to observe, is the fact that we are leaving this project with many more questions and much more analysis that needs to be done, especially concerning the government, public policy, and political entities, as well as, the mass media.

The goal of this project for us was to gain an understanding of some of the issues surrounding teacher unions, particularly the tensions, all the while methodically using a research methodology that is not prototypical of those found in public policy and the like. Further, we also find it noteworthy that by using this method, it seems that even very novice researchers can employ the techniques, getting viable and helpful information from the issues they are undertaking.

CHAT also seems to be able to provide a way, even for those who would not consider themselves classically trained researchers, such as those in the media, politicians, government officials, and those that study these entities, to have the ability to more thoroughly examine presented material, and begin to critically analyse it in ways that make it easier to understand, both representationally and visually. The visual component to this research makes it worthwhile in and of itself; it allows for easy access and breakdown of messy and complicated information.

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As far as qualitative research is concerned, the lack of visual representation within the data can be problematic for many who want to understand it; CHAT adds that component and much more. We would call for individuals to start beginning to see how this methodology might begin to help people understand complex activity systems throughout our society, not just those within the realm of education.

CONCLUSION

CHAT and activity systems analysis have not been used within the domain of issues surrounding public policy, or politics in which teacher unions often find themselves situated. Although these issues within public policy domains deal directly with matters surrounding human activity, activity systems analysis is not a common methodology for those doing research in the public policy, political, or mass media arenas. One of the charges that CHAT researchers must contend with is how to raise the profile of associated methods in various principles outside of the field of education, which it is heavily used within. In this way, by introducing activity systems analysis, as we have done above, as a viable and worthwhile avenue to research policy, political issues, and the mass media, we hope to open an opportunity for others to explore CHAT's profound usefulness.

Furthermore, activity systems analysis allows the researcher to capture a picture of what is happening around us, and to better understand the complexities within that picture, than what other methodologies are able to do. It also allows the researcher to describe the tensions and conflicts that may be occurring surrounding the issues that are being researched; however, one of CHAT's main objectives is to bring these issues to light, so that they may be further analysed, and changes can be made based on the findings. This is a very important implication that CHAT contributes, and again, something that needs to be addressed in the fields of public policy, politics and the mass media.

Overall, by employing the use of activity systems through CHAT in this particular research endeavour concerning teacher unions, we believe that we have been able to better understand how the conceptual tools of the methodology can help the dialogue and multiple perspectives that CHAT brings to light in our analysis. These perspectives need to be examined, challenged, and developed further. With every new research endeavour using CHAT, the chance to add to the base of knowledge and enhance the tools of the trade, is one step closer to better understanding the world around us.

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SYSTEMIC TENSIONS IN AMERICAN TEACHER UNIONS

APPENDIX

Table 5.1. Data collections procedure summary

<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Sources</i>	<i>Procedure</i>
Document Analysis	Washington Post Article The New York Times POLITICO Article	Read materials for all three articles and decided if they contained enough information for the questions that we wanted to address within the research. We looked for meaningful and relevant pages of text or other data that would make them a good representation of other materials that we had seen the last several years concerning teacher unions. Meaning upon first reading the material, we could identify some key elements and initial themes that we had noticed in our research surrounding teacher unions.

Table 5.2. Tensions of activity system

Tensions:

- What teachers want vs. What teachers need
- What teachers unions desire vs. What teachers desire
- What teachers unions desire vs. What government and politicians desire
- What teachers unions are involved in vs. What parents believe is best for students
- What teachers unions want vs. What helps students the most
- What the government desires vs. What education needs
- What society perceives is the best for education vs. What all other entities believe is best
- Political factions and their stance on education issues vs. Teachers unions
- Political factions and their stance on labour unions vs. Teachers unions
- A democratic society vs. neoliberalism
- Education vs. neoliberalism
- Social justice issues vs. government
- Social justice issues vs. neoliberalism