

**Dialogue Paper 1**

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**Synopsis of Article**

This was a challenging article to read and to sort according to the hats. The authors compare research paradigms including positivism, post positivism, critical theory, and constructivism (Guba & Lincoln, 2000). For me, the tables included in the article made more sense than the explanations in the article, and I initially looked over them to read the content of the article. I kept searching for the “why” in every statement and was unsuccessful in always finding that answer. I am still determining which paradigm aligns with my way of thinking as a counselor researcher. The qualities of methodology in positivism seem to resonate with me; the method makes sense by verifying the hypothesis. The critical theory epistemology makes sense to me in that it is subjective based on value-mediated findings. As a counselor, I work with patients who are trying to identify their values and make meaning of them, so this made sense to me. The ontology of critical theory made sense because it seemed logical in shaping values over

time, but participatory also makes sense because it is subjective/objective, which lends itself to the experience of the person. I am still exploring which of these paradigms makes the most sense to my way of thinking and being.

### **Thinking Hat Process**

#### **Blue Hat**

The blue hat organizes the thinking itself. I looked for areas in the article that discussed the thinking about the thinking. Looking through the lens of the blue hat allows me to identify a process and that makes sense to my logical brain. I thrive in structure and balance, and love making lists, so this way of thinking made sense to me.<sup>3</sup>

#### **White Hat**

The white hat identifies facts and figures with no emotion, and this hat was the easiest to identify for me. While I appreciate the experiential component of qualitative data, I like the concrete nature of objective data because there is no “gray” area. I also appreciate that it allows me to be objective in my thinking by examining the data and seeing if it qualifies or not for the study. The logical nature of this hat seemed to make sense to me.

#### **Yellow Hat**

I struggled a bit with the yellow hat because it focuses on the positive and optimistic nature of the information, but this hat seems very subjective to me. As I was highlighting yellow

in the article, I kept wondering if it was truly positive and focused on the benefit, or was it merely presenting the facts? The yellow hat seemed a bit murky to me.

### **Black Hat**

The explanation of the black hat made perfect sense to me; find critical and pessimistic language in the article. However, finding content that seemed to fit in this category was challenging. This could be due to the article not having a great deal of negative content, or it was not obvious if the writer had a pessimistic view. Again, this seemed subjective to me regarding the definition of critical and pessimistic.

### **Green Hat**

Although the green hat seemed subjective at first, finding content that highlighted new ideas, concepts, and perceptions seemed easier to find than the negative assessments. As I highlighted any green hat content, I found myself wondering where was this idea leading and was it a new idea?<sup>4</sup>

### **Red Hat**

As a counselor, I found the red hat an easy one to identify. I first looked for feeling words, but then looked deeper for the smaller nuances of impressions or hunches that were more subtle in their delivery.

### **Reflective Summary of Learning**

This article was taxing and exhausting to read; it stretched and challenged me in new ways that went beyond academia. Reading through this article made me question myself as a future educator because the content was so in-depth and foreign to me. While some of it connected with my way of thinking, much of it seemed like a level of writing that I have never experienced. I chose to read the article in bite-size snippets so that I could meditate on each section, and I still found it challenging! However, as I applied the hats to the article, I began to understand that this assignment was more about the process and not the article itself. How do I think critically? Which hat makes sense to my way of thinking? How could I use this method in future research and teaching? Once I stopped trying to analyze the material, and widened my lens of understanding, I began to appreciate the exercise of sorting information and recognizing how my brain processes information.<sup>5</sup>

**References**

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