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THE APPLICATION OF DR. DE BONO'S SIX THINKING HATS METHOD IN ENGLISH TEACHING PRACTICE

У статті висвітлюються окремі проблеми освітнього середовища в контексті викликів, спричинених глобалізацією; гострим питанням залишається неналежна організація навчального процесу з англійської мови. Стаття розглядає концепцію «плоского світу» Т. Фрідмана. Було здійснено спробу окреслити вагомість «латерального мислення», подано його визначення. Представлено та продемонстровано застосування техніки Е. де Боні «Шість капелюхів мислення» на заняттях з англійської мови. Проведено аудиторний експеримент зі студентами третього курсу англійського відділення.

Ключові слова: плоский світ, освіта, викладання англійської мови, латеральне мислення, капелюхи мислення.

В статье освещаются некоторые вопросы образования в условиях глобализации; один из них – недолжная организация учебного процесса на занятиях по английскому языку. Статья рассматривает концепцию «плоского мира» Т. Фриедмана. Подчеркивается важность «латерального мышления», дано его определение. Внимание было уделено ознакомлению студентов с техникой Эдварда де Бонно «Шесть шляп мышления» и продемонстрировано ее применение на занятиях по английскому языку. Проведено аудиторный эксперимент с участием студентов третьего курса английского отделения.

Ключевые слова: плоский мир, образование, преподавание английского языка, латеральное мышление, шляпы мышления.

The article represents a humble attempt to elucidate certain issues within the educational environment in the context of globalization challenges; one of which is the poor organization of teaching and learning of English. T. Friedman's concept of «the flat world» has been touched upon. The article aims at delineating the importance of «lateral thinking»; the very term has been defined. The introduction and application of Edward de Bono's Six Thinking Hats technique in English class have been described. An in-class experiment with the third-year students of the English Philology Department as participants has been conducted.

Key words: flat world, education, English teaching practice, lateral thinking, thinking hats.

Introduction. Traditions are essential to any culture and they not only should be passed on but also altered to the needs of society. Progress is impossible without change and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.

The world we live in today is, according to New York Times columnist and author T. Friedman, flat. He dwells upon drastic changes that have occurred in the last two decades. «...what the flattening of the world means is that we are now connecting all the knowledge centres on the planet together into a single global network, which ... could usher in an amazing era of prosperity and innovation. ... Globalization 3.0 not only differs from the previous eras in how it is shrinking and flattening the world and in how it is empowering individuals» [6, http://royallib.ru/read/Friedman_Thomas/The_World_is_Flat.html#0]. We should be learning to learn, for what we learn today will be outdated tomorrow, and therefore the most successful people will be those who adapt and learn quickly. Training professionals who are capable of self-improvement in the rapidly developing society ought to become the prerogative of modern education. Herein we call to mind a great A. Einstein's retort that education is not the learning of facts but the training of the mind to think. We concur with Ed. De Bono's that the human brain is a wonderful mechanism of memorization but for transforming it into a thinking mechanism appropriate programs are to be utilized.

Strengthening competitive skills in global markets requires that one speak English. Knowledge of English is a powerful tool for development and advancement throughout the world. Teaching English, which is an educational process taking place within a particular political cultural and intellectual context, involves teaching different ways of thinking and «introduction of young generation to European and global culture» [1]. Thinking is the foundation for listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Educational Environment and Teaching English. Traditional teaching seems no longer to be effective. «The process by which traditional teaching is imagined as working is sometimes characterized as 'jug and mug' – the knowledge being poured from one receptacle into an empty one» [12, p.17]. The fallacious assumption is that the teacher is the 'knower' who transmits knowledge to students and explanation is bound to lead to learning. In this way a student is a passive participant of an educational process. Unfortunately, nowadays 'an asymmetric subject-object relationship', described in pedagogy, is still observed in educational surroundings. They are attached to their CV (CVS – a current view of a situation) to such an extent that they can't escape from it. The eminent cognitive scientist, Australian M. Hewitt-Gleeson asserts that the deliberate search for alternatives, which is also referred to as 'lateral thinking', is more difficult than it seems because the patterning features of the mind tend to reinforce existing patterns rather than to search for new ones. «We are more likely to defend our current view than to escape from it and switch from it to a better view (BVS – a better view of a situation)» [7, p. 6].

Teaching English presupposes developing such skills as reading, writing, speaking and listening. The most challenging is evidently the development of speaking and listening skills. Australian Nin Bižys shares the teaching experience in Lithuania claiming: «This was to be good training for the English I would be 'dragging out' of the traumatized (post-Soviet) Lithuanians» [1]. Ukrainians supposedly experience the same. The problem seems to be lying in the fact that educational representatives as well as learners suffer from 'the post-Soviet syndrome'. Charles Handy, an Irish author / philosopher, specializing in organizational behaviour considers it as a myth that the Soviet educational system is of over-all academic superiority; he thinks, it is far from being that kind. There still exists 'uncomfortable English' because of the lack of contact with the living language or natural speakers. Students / pupils have a subconscious fear to speak, thinking of possible errors. They are reluctant to express their individual opinions as the right answers are demanded, which is also a vestige of the past. From our perspective, to do away with vestiges of the past, new knowledge, styles of teaching are to be introduced within the curriculum. The implementation of Edward de Bono thinking methods into English teachers' practice contribute to making learners metacognitively aware; it aids them in becoming autonomous and more confident learners of the English language.

Dr. de Bono and His Six Thinking Hats. Dr. de Bono, a Maltese physician, author, inventor and consultant, who is credited with coining the term 'Lateral Thinking' (it has an official entry in the Oxford English Dictionary) and is a proponent of teaching thinking as a subject in schools. He describes 'lateral thinking' as a way of thinking that seeks a solution to an intractable problem through unorthodox methods or elements that would normally be ignored by logical or vertical thinking. All the techniques

elaborated by de Bono lead to enhancing thinking skills. **Psychology Today** claims they everyone owes de Bono a debt for constantly reminding them that thinking is a skill and can be improved. His techniques may be employed for boosting all four language skills but special attention should be paid to speaking and listening.

Our experience shows that when a particular topic is being considered, students frequently are at a loss and don't know what to say. Sometimes even if they do start expressing their opinions, they seem to be obsessed with either only emotions or only negative sides. They feel helpless as they do not know how to think about this problem. People have a tendency not to think, but rely on instant gut feeling (wrong perception). It hardly ever happens that all aspects of it are touched upon. This occurs because their thinking is disordered and they lack concentration. Dr. de Bono's **Six Thinking Hats** methodology is a powerful tool that facilitates productive: critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity. Human thinking becomes more thorough, ordered. He combines the hat metaphor with six colours to create a valuable thinking strategy. Each coloured hat represents a different mode of thinking. Hats are easy to put on and to take off. In a group setting each member thinks using the same thinking hat, at the same time, on the same thinking challenge – it is called 'focused parallel thinking'. His concept provides a framework to help people think clearly by directing their thinking attention in one direction at a time, which is deprived of arguing. The colourful strategy exposes learners to six different styles of thinking and assists them in looking at a problem from six various perspectives. The Blue Hat is different from the other thinking hats. It focuses on managing the thinking process, keeping participants on track and stating what has been accomplished. Every Six Thinking Hats (STH) sequence begins and ends with Blue Hat Thinking. The Blue Hat is used to define the focus, to set out the agenda. It is usually laid out which hats will be used, in what order, and for what amount of time. During the session the Blue Hat takes requests and maintains discipline. At the end of a STH session, Blue Hat Thinking is used to note conclusions and determine next steps. The White Hat represents objective thinking (information and facts). The Red Hat explores emotions, intuition (feelings). The Black Hat criticizes, encompasses negative aspects (cautions). The Yellow Hat outlines the advantages, usefulness of an issue (benefits). The Green Hat aims at brainstorming, searching and predicting new possibilities, ideas, solutions to the problem (creativity).

English Language Learners' Acquaintance with The STH Technique and Practice. Before starting to apply de Bono's STH technique the students had a chance to watch a three-minute «Colour Changing Card Trick» video which they were supposed to reflect upon. It was a preliminary stage of introducing the technique to the group. Nothing special except for the manipulation with the cards was noticed. In fact, the trick was a distracting factor. No changes in the surrounding were revealed by the students. That is how we think: we pay attention to separate elements, we see partially, the whole picture is often beyond our scope of understanding. The STH technique was applied by me within the group of the third-year students of the English Department while watching the film «The King and I» (1956). I brought six hats cut out from the poster board. On the back of these a succinct description of the types of questions each hat focuses on is suggested. The hats were introduced in an intriguing manner. The students were asked to choose a hat by their favourite colour and substantiate the choice. Then the explanation was provided what type of thinking each colour represented according to de Bono. Learners may find it convenient to have a designed table with separate columns for all thinking hats at their fingertips. It basically guides them through the labyrinth of their thinking and helps to fix steps they intentionally take. As soon as some students have uttered their thoughts, the rest of them may be asked to detect what thinking type has been utilized.

The STH technique is applicable either while doing the pre-viewing, viewing or post-viewing activities. For instance, when I asked them to put a White Hat on, they answered the question: «What do we know about Anna Leonowens?» (She is an English teacher who came to Siam to teach the Siamese King's children. She is widowed and has a son). The Kralahome, an honourable royal representative who was meeting them, hid the fact that he spoke English and put too many personal questions, he also stated that the King did not remember all promises he made and he was likely to break his promise as to the house of her own. The students were asked to put their White Hat off and put on a Red Hat. Some of them admitted their bewilderment. They become indignant and suspicious about the Kralahome's behaviour. They confessed that Anna and her son's fate worried them. The situation was to their disliking. At my request the students switched then to a Yellow Hat, trying to identify pluses of Anna and her son's staying in Siam. Both of them had a splendid opportunity to see a new country, to get acquainted with a new culture, people. It was their privilege to reside in the royal palace and to have servants at their disposal. The good point was also about decent earnings she was able to have doing her job. Having laid aside the Yellow Hat, the students put on a Black Hat. They dwelt on dangers awaiting a young woman in the country like Siam where the position of a woman in society is low. She risked being punished for speaking her mind. It was somewhat confining to live within the walls of the palace: no complete solitude as the guard and servants were everywhere. Having had enough the Black Hat thinking they focused on Green Hat thinking. It was underlined by them that being scientific, the teacher had a chance to influence those who surrounded her, even the King. After Captain Orton's warnings and the meeting with the Kralahome she could make up her mind to leave. The prediction was that the King would propose to her after the ball, and she would probably reject it as she was a person of principle. How would King behave on finding out the news about his being a barbarian, if there were no Anna? The students were convinced that he would probably start a war. While delivering a Geography lesson Anna's pupils demonstrated their disbelief in snow and the fact that Siam was that small in comparison with other countries. Some stated that they would not object to their protests for those were the royal members. On watching the film the students were asked to point out what thinking hats were employed by the personages, in what scenes, what mode of thinking was typical of each of them. Under the guidance of a blue thinking hat with the involvement of other hats such issues as the image of a ruler, teacher, student, teaching and learning process, culture clash, slavery were scrutinized.

The hats can be used singly at any point of thinking. Simple sequences of two or three hats may be used together for a particular purpose. The Blue Hat is actually used whenever the usage of the next hat is suggested. The STH method allows us to think more richly and comprehensively. When exploring the subject with the help of the framework of the hats, our perceptual powers are expanded.

Conclusion. Unfortunately, the modern day education focuses on teaching young people how to make a living but not teaching how to make a life. The new millennium demands that one not only should speak English but also possess high order thinking skills. The outdated methods of teaching as well as pattern thinking prevent from improving the situation. New feasible programs for training are to be devised.

The outcomes of the above-mentioned experiment prove that the application of Dr. de Bono's STH technique is effective. Using the STH technique allows students to enhance their foreign language learning and simultaneously thinking skills. It has been consistently highlighted by the participants of the experiment that it contributes to concentrating, organizing their thoughts, taking into account different perspectives, generating ideas.

Six Thinking Hats has become one of few basic 21st century tool kits for proactive education thought leaders around the world; it should obviously become an indispensable one for Ukraine.

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