

‘Without strategy, execution is aimless.
Without execution, strategy is useless.’
Morris Chang

THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING STRATEGIC THINKING THROUGH TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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New Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Companion Volume with new descriptors. Council of Europe (CEFR) (2018) underlines the importance of strategies and “represents a departure from the traditional distinction made in applied linguistics between the Chomskyan concepts of (hidden) ‘competence’ and (visible) ‘performance’ – with ‘proficiency’ normally defined as the glimpse of someone’s underlying competence derived from a specific performance. In CEFR, ‘proficiency’ is a term encompassing the ability to perform communicative language activities (can do...), whilst drawing upon both general and communicative language competences (linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic), and activating appropriate communicative strategies” [2, p. 32]. Also the authors of CEFR suggest that tasks in the language classroom should involve communicative language activities and strategies that also occur in the real world [2, p. 30], so it is undoubtful that our students must have a good command of strategical competence with strategical thinking as a key element.

Strategic thinking is a multi-step process and differs from just thinking. The definition of strategic thinking has a lot of variations. There are a significant number of strategic thinking definitions in the literature (Acor and Englyst (2006), Bonn (2005), Graetz (2002), Liedtka (1998), Wilson (1994), Napier and Albert (1990), Stacey (1992), Mintzberg (1994) ect.), which are highly varied. The construct of strategic thinking is also debated. There is no generally accepted definition for strategic thinking and no standardised list of key competencies of strategic thinkers.

Here are some definitions of strategic thinking by leading researchers. First, **Henry Mintzberg’s** [4] classic definition: strategic thinking is a mental synthesis process which can create a solid appearance for the business through creativity and observation. H.Mintzberg (1994) separated strategic thinking from strategic planning. He stated that strategic planning is an analytical process that programmes and formalizes already existing strategies, whereas strategic thinking involves intuition and creativity. H.Mintzberg first wrote about the 5 Ps of Strategy in 1987. Each of the 5 Ps is a different approach to strategy. These are 1. Plan; 2. Ploy; 3. Pattern; 4. Position; 5. Perspective.

Following the Mintzberg model, **Jeanne M. Liedtka** (1998) [3] defined strategic thinking as a particular way of thinking, with specific attributes and developed a model with very specific and clearly identifiable characteristics. There are five elements of strategic thinking according to J.Liedtka’s opinion: 1. Systems perspective; 2. Intent-focused; 3. Intelligent opportunism; 4. Thinking in time; 5. Hypothesis-driven.



Next, **Ingrid Bonn** [1] defined the strategic thinking as a process through which managers view the crises and daily management process holistically and acquires different approach toward the organization and its variable atmosphere (Bonn, 2001). I.Bonn (2001) listed three elements of strategic thinking on an individual level: 1. Holistic understanding about the organization and its environment; 2. Creativity; 3. Vision for the future of the organization.

Finally, **F. Kamangar, R. Rohani, A. Salavati, M. S. Karimi** (2013) [5] represented the model of their survey in the developed form of Boon's model that included these four elements: 1. System thinking; 2. Creativity; 3 View; 4. Action learning.

So, strategic thinking can be defined as an active, intellectual process where the individual will observe, analyse and reflect on new knowledge and integrate it into their current understanding. Strategic thinking is a vital skill for our graduate and plays a central role in key graduate skills or graduate learning outcomes.

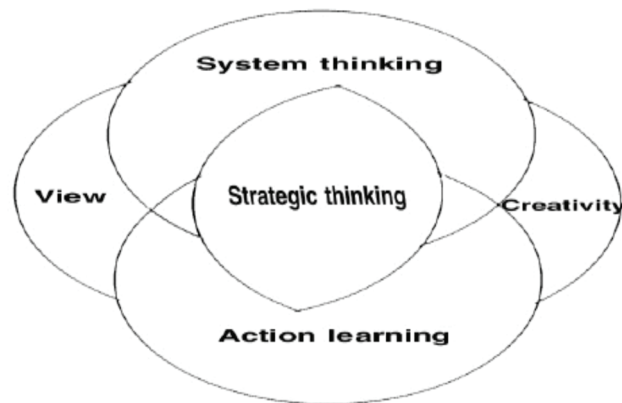


Figure 1: The model of strategic thinking
(F. Kamangar, R. Rohani, A. Salavati,
M. S. Karimi (2013))

References:

1. Bonn, I. (2001). Developing strategic thinking as a core competency. *Management Decision*, 39, P. 63–71.
2. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Companion Volume with new descriptors. Council of Europe (2018)
3. Liedtka, J. (1998). Strategic thinking; can it be taught?, *Long Range Planning*, 31, (1), P. 120-129.
4. Mintzberg, Henry (1994). *The rise and fall of strategic planning*. New York: The Free Press.
5. F. Kamangar, R. Rohani, A. Salavati, M. S. Karimi (2013) *Developing Strategic Thinking*. *Basic. Appl. Sci. Res.*, 3(6) P. 546 552, 2013 P. 546-552.

EDUTAINMENT AS AN EFFECTIVE EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY

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Development and optimization of new technologies and training techniques aimed at training of the competent specialist, capable of effectively solving the practice-focused problems that require the abilities of foreign-language oral speech communication, is the main objective of higher education within the competence-based approach.

