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SADRŽAJ

THE IMPACT OF GESTALT PSYCHOTHERAPY APPROACH ON LEADERSHIP INTERVENTION PERSPECTIVES IN THE ORGANIZATIONS Aleksandra Shumar	1
UNDERSTANDING ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR: INSIGHTS INTO VALUES, CULTURE, AND COGNITION Enes Hamzagic, Aleksandra Golubovic Stojanovic, Srdjan Skorup	7
INTANGIBLE ASSETS IN THE FINANCIAL MARKET: FINANCING INTANGIBLE-INTENSIVE COMPANIES Amer Rastić , Slavoljub Šljivić	13
POSSIBILITIES OF PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF INDUSTRY 5.0, EXPECTED CHANGES AND RISKS IN MINING Slobodan Radosavljević	20
THE FUTURE OF COAL AS A NEW GENERATION OF ENERGY AND POTENTIAL RISKS Slobodan Radosavljević	30
ENERGIZING TRANSFORMATION: EXPLORING MANAGERIAL INNOVATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL AGILITY IN MOROCCO Chaymae Hamieddine, Malika Akioud	40
ANALYSIS OF THE VOLUNTARY PENSION FUNDS IN SERBIA IN 2023 Ivan D. Radojković , Kristina R. Stevanović	51
THE USE OF DIGITAL BANKING BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES Sladjana Neogradi	56
EBIT – EPS ANALYSIS Milos Ivanis	64
COST – BENEFIT ANALYSIS Milos Ivanis	75
REVIEW OF SECURITY ISSUES IN THE APPLICATION OF BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY IN E-GOVERNMENT Marko Štaka, Miroslav Stefanović, Darko Stefanović, Đorđe Pržulj, Vladimir Fabri.....	84
THE ROLE OF THE QUALITY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS FOR HIGHER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THE NEED FOR NEW MODEL FOR MEASURING THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS Marija Vasilevska , Ana Tomovska – Misoska.....	94
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES APPLIED TO AN EFL CLASSROOM Slavica Stevanović , Sandra Vasković	103
GALLERY BRAND IMPACT ON ARTIST NAME RECOGNITION: EVIDENCE FROM RUSSIA	

Marina Sheresheva, Ekaterina Kovalenko, Daniel Pavlov	108
ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS PROCESSES IN RAILWAYS AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES OF SERBIA	
Filip Marković, Snežana Urošević	118
REMOTE EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: THE NEAR / EARN MODEL PROPOSAL	
Vladimir Zlatić	127
ETHICAL ISSUES IN PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE	
Milovan Vuković, Danijela Voza, Aleksandra Vuković	145
ACCELERATED DEVELOPEMENT OF DIGITAL AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY USING CRYPTOCURRENCIES	
Bojan Kocić, Marija Marčetić, Nikola Vasić, Aleksandra Algheth	155
NEW CORPORATE GOVERNANCE TENDENCIES OF SUPERVISORY BOARDS IN EUROPE	
Milan Jeličić	163
THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY	
Gulshan Zeynalova	172
ANALYSIS OF INNOVATION IN EU COUNTRIES	
Ivica Nikolić, Anđelka Stojanović, Aleksandra Radić, Predrag Đorđević	180
THE USE OF RISK MAPPING FOR SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF HARMFUL EFFECTS IN BUSINESS: CASE STUDY	
Taleb Mounia, Chaib Rachid, Belhour Samira, Nettour Djamel	191



STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES APPLIED TO AN EFL CLASSROOM

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Abstract: This article explores how the principles of strategic management can be applied effectively in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching. By drawing parallels between organizational success and student achievement, it explores how teachers can use strategic planning, needs analysis, differentiation, and continuous improvement to create a stimulating and effective learning experience for their students. The article highlights the importance of aligning with educational goals, understanding student needs, and taking a student-centered approach to improve instructional effectiveness. It highlights the importance of conducting a needs assessment to develop instructional strategies, as well as the critical role of curriculum design and resource allocation in accommodating diverse learning styles and maximizing student engagement. In addition, the article discusses the importance of assessment and monitoring to track student progress and make instructional decisions. Finally, it explores the importance of utilizing innovation and new technologies to enhance language acquisition and create a dynamic learning environment. By applying these strategic management principles, EFL classrooms can transform from static environments into dynamic centers for language learning where both teachers and students are active participants in the learning process.

Keywords: strategic management principles, EFL classroom, language acquisition.

1. INTRODUCTION

The world of education, much like the world of business, thrives on strategic planning and effective management. While traditional teaching methods rely heavily on sound content knowledge and clear delivery, designing a successful EFL (English as a Foreign Language) class goes beyond simply presenting grammar rules and vocabulary lists. Just like a business competing in a global market, an EFL teacher works in a dynamic environment with diverse learners, ever-changing learning styles and a constant need for innovation. Here, the principles of strategic management provide a valuable framework for not only managing this complexity, but also creating a thriving learning environment in which students achieve their goals. In this

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article, we explore how the key principles of strategic management can be applied effectively in the EFL classroom. By drawing parallels between organizational success and student achievement, we will look at how teachers can use needs assessment, resource allocation, differentiation, assessment and monitoring, and continuous improvement to create a stimulating and effective learning experience for their students.

2. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES IN EFL TEACHING

The landscape of EFL teaching is constantly evolving. Students come from an ever-widening range of backgrounds, learning styles and motivations. In addition, the advent of technology has created new opportunities and challenges for language learning. Traditional one-size-fits-all approaches are no longer sufficient. Today's teachers need to be adaptable, responsive and able to tailor their approach to the specific needs of each individual learner. Just as a company would not develop products without first knowing its target market and competition, an EFL teacher must have a clear understanding of their students' individual strengths, weaknesses and learning goals. The principles of strategic management provide a framework for gathering this information, analyzing it, and then developing a targeted, actionable plan to achieve the desired results in the classroom.

2.1. Needs assessment in the EFL classroom

Needs assessment is a crucial component of strategic management in EFL teaching. It serves as a comprehensive diagnostic tool that provides a detailed understanding of students' current language skills, learning styles and specific needs.

Formal assessments, such as standardized tests or placement tests, provide a quantitative perspective on students' abilities. These tools can reveal strengths, such as a student's ability to grasp grammatical structures, or weaknesses, such as difficulties with pronunciation.

However, a needs analysis goes beyond mere numbers. Informal assessments, such as interviews with students, self-questionnaires and observations during classroom activities, provide valuable qualitative data.

Using these informal assessments, teachers can uncover students' learning goals, their preferred learning styles and any anxieties or learning difficulties they may have.

For example, a needs assessment may reveal that a student works well in a collaborative environment and has a good visual memory (Alicia, 2018). This information may prompt the teacher to incorporate more pair or group activities into the curriculum and use visual aids such as flashcards or charts that match the student's learning style.

Similarly, a needs assessment may reveal that a student has difficulty with speaking and listening (Hayati et al., 2021). In this case, the teacher can devote more time and resources to promoting these areas, for example through role-play, listening comprehension exercises and opportunities for structured conversation.

By conducting a thorough needs assessment, EFL teachers can tailor their teaching strategies, curriculum design and allocation of resources to meet the different needs of their students (Espinosa Cevallos & Soto, 2020). This student-centered approach, based on the principles of strategic management, helps to create a stimulating and effective learning environment in which both teachers and students are actively engaged in the language learning process.

2.2. Curriculum design and resource allocation

Curriculum design and resource allocation are critical aspects of strategic management in EFL instruction, just as a company carefully allocates its resources to maximize profits.

The information gained from the needs assessment serves as a template for developing a customized curriculum that addresses the diverse needs and learning styles of students. It is no longer a one-size-fits-all approach, because that would be like a company ignoring consumer preferences and focusing only on production (Palah et al., 2022).

2.3. Differentiation

Differentiation, a cornerstone of strategic management, plays a critical role in curriculum design. For example, imagine a student who enjoys meticulously dissecting grammar rules, while another thrives in the chaos of a group discussion. Recognizing these different learning styles is crucial.

For the analytical learner, the curriculum can include online grammar exercises and interactive quizzes. For the kinesthetic type of learner, traditional grammar exercises can be limiting, so the curriculum may include role-playing games or activities that require physical movement to reinforce grammatical concepts.

In addition to textbooks, the modern world offers a wealth of resources that can be used to create a dynamic and engaging learning environment. By incorporating authentic material such as news articles, movie clips or even popular music, students learn about language use in the real world. Online learning platforms can also be used. They offer interactive exercises, game-based learning elements and personalized feedback loops that cater to a variety of learning styles and actively engage students (Kazemi & Soleimani, 2016).

By strategically designing the curriculum and allocating resources based on insights gained from the needs analysis, EFL teachers can create a stimulating and effective learning environment in which students are actively engaged and empowered to achieve their language learning goals.

2.4. Assessment and monitoring in EFL teaching

Assessment and monitoring in EFL classrooms are integral parts of strategic management principles that are essential for effectively guiding students on their language learning journey.

Effective assessment methods not only measure student progress but also highlight areas where support is needed to ensure that all students are progressing effectively. A blend of traditional and innovative assessment tools provides teachers with comprehensive data on student performance. Formative assessments, such as in-class activities, quizzes and exit tickets, provide ongoing feedback on learning progress. Summative assessments, such as unit tests or final exams, measure overall performance. Analyzing this data allows teachers to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas that need additional support and tailor instructional decisions to meet student needs.

Continuous monitoring through observations, student conferencing and ongoing feedback allows teachers to adjust their approach in real time. This agile mindset, rooted in the principles of strategic management, fosters a dynamic learning environment where both teachers and students are actively engaged in the learning process (Hayati et al., 2021).

For example, imagine a scenario where ongoing formative assessments show that a group of students is struggling with a particular grammar concept. The teacher can then adapt

the lesson plan to include additional practice activities for that particular area. Similarly, if the summative assessments show that a student is excelling in reading comprehension but is struggling in speaking, the teacher can adjust the lesson plan to address this. Then the teacher can adapt the lesson to provide more practice opportunities for speaking while maintaining the student's interest and engagement.

In addition, the use of self-assessment tools, peer evaluations and student portfolios can empower learners to take responsibility for their progress and development. By involving students in the assessment process, teachers encourage self-reflection, goal setting and a deeper understanding of their own learning needs.

By integrating a variety of assessment methods and fostering a culture of continuous monitoring and feedback, EFL teachers can create a supportive and dynamic learning environment that maximizes student growth and achievement.

2.5. Innovation in language learning

Innovation in language learning is a key aspect of strategic management principles that emphasize a continuous cycle of reflection and adaptation to improve EFL teaching practice. Much like successful businesses that constantly evaluate their processes and seek new opportunities, effective language teaching thrives through a commitment to continuous improvement and innovation.

Creating a dynamic learning environment where both teachers and students actively participate in the learning process is crucial. Regular self-evaluation allows teachers to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching strategies, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. In addition, gathering student feedback provides valuable insight into areas that need improvement and allows teachers to better tailor their approaches to meet student needs.

Integrating new technologies and resources into EFL lessons can significantly improve language acquisition and create a more engaging learning environment. Online learning platforms, learning apps and multimedia resources provide opportunities for personalized feedback, gamified learning experiences and authentic language use. By embracing innovation, EFL teachers can adapt to the evolving needs of their students and cultivate a passion for language learning.

For example, language learning apps that offer interactive exercises tailored to individual learning styles can increase student engagement and motivation. Virtual reality simulations can provide immersive language practice and make learning more interactive and memorable. The use of social media platforms for language practice and cultural exchange can broaden students' exposure to real-world language use and promote communication skills in authentic contexts.

In addition, innovative teaching methods such as project-based learning, flipped classrooms or content-based instruction can provide students with diverse and engaging learning experiences. By keeping abreast of new trends in language teaching and experimenting with new approaches, EFL teachers can create a vibrant and effective learning environment that inspires students to excel in language learning.

3. CONCLUSION

By applying strategic management principles, EFL classrooms can transform from static environments into dynamic centers for language learning. Through comprehensive needs assessment, targeted curriculum design, strategic resource allocation, and a commitment to

continuous improvement and innovation, EFL teachers can create a learning experience that addresses the diverse needs of their students and pushes them to achieve their language goals. This article is aimed at serving as a guide for EFL teachers on their journey to creating successful learning environments that are based on strategic planning and focused on student achievement. By taking these principles to heart, EFL teachers can foster a love of language learning, provide students with the skills necessary to navigate an increasingly globalized world, and ultimately contribute to their students' academic and professional success.

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