SCHEMING

Document made by Luga

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Youtube

In essence, scheming is the capability for a character to create plans and strategies (aka schemes) to achieve a goal. If one were to avoid using the words “plan” or “strategy”, it’d be defined as the concrete conceptualization & application of decisions/moves/actions arranged to solve a specific problem.

For something to be a scheme, it must contain at least two or more moves/tactics. Tactic here simply referring to an action taken to achieve a specific goal.

Scheming measures the character's ability to deploy appropriate tactics, choose correct decisions and engineer situations so as to be desired.

--WHY THE CHANGE FROM STRATEGY & PLANNING TO SCHEMING?--

This section is not important to the scale of scheming per se, but rather its justification for being used over the traditional strategy & planning categories which have been around in SCD for an incredibly long amount of time, so if you’re simply looking for the categories, you may scroll down.

One thing I'd like to clarify right off the get-go to avoid any type of issue regarding this; Scheming and its justification does not look to prove that the distinction between strategy and planning is useless from a standpoint of definitions. Rather, it works by proving that they measure the same faculty of intelligence, therefore it’s a useless distinction in PRACTICAL and *not* SEMANTICAL terms.

Complications within the definitions of Strategy & Planning:

The most common definition used nowadays for these terms is the distinction posited by Lloyaro, in which he states, and i quote;

“*Strategy in simple terms is the sum of steps taken to achieve a goal, it requires active critical thinking and decision making. For strategy to be strategy, it needs tactical implementations. Tactics are defined as the individual steps that make up a strategy.”*

“Planning is a set of predetermined events, threaded together to achieve a particular outcome…. Unlike Strategy, it does not require tactical implementation or on the spot critical thinking.”

There's a few blatant problems here with this definition right off the get go, which i'll explain briefly:

First issue:

A set of predetermined events (such as that in planning) had to be "determined" at some point, meaning there necessarily has to be active implementation (therefore tactics) at some point in the "timeline" of a plan. By this logic, each plan would have its strategic counterpart, which would scale to the… exact same level, since it is literally the same event/set of actions. If it's not obvious what this means, it means it's inherently overlapping and redundant; what you are doing is scaling the same thing to the same level twice.

And yes of course, most of the time we don't see this strategic implementation in plans, but that doesn't mean it doesn't exist; just by the very nature of how engineering a situation works, it necessarily had to exist at some point. So it doesn't actually matter if we "saw" it or not.

Second Issue:

If we look at the practical side of things, both Strategy and Planning refer to the same fundamental concept: to apply a step by step solution to a problem, designed in a way that each part works to achieve it in tandem. The only actual difference between these two words as per the established definition, is that one is "active" and the other one is "passive".

In basic terms this boils down to one requiring consistent thought and the other one not, but this doesn't actually change the core concept, this just changes whether the step by step solution you made requires active handling and modifications or not. By this logic, all that really changes between these two definitions is that one requires adaptability and the other one doesn't, which can clearly be illustrated in something like "scheming adaptability"; it doesn't require us to differentiate these two terms fully when they overlap in EVERY other singular aspect.

Third Issue:

Since we now know they are in general terms the same thing, we know by entailment that they are not different in practice; meaning someone who is shown to be able to strategize can also plan. When categories overlap to this level, it signifies we are measuring the same thing twice without any major difference, meaning it is an unnecessary complication in actually measuring characters' intelligence (and in fact may overinflate the characters capabilities, since you're essentially duplicating the points they take). Simply put, Scheming is much more precise and convenient in practice.

These three main issues (besides some other, smaller ones), lead to the conclusion that Scheming is just the better category; it avoids abuse of semantics (long debates about whether X or Y is a strategy or a plan, and just fully focuses on the actual skill demonstrated within the situation), simplifies scaling and makes it even more precise. There is quite literally no reason not to use this category over Strategy and Planning.

And remember that my critiques really apply to pretty much any of the major notions of strategy or planning, as when we look at what the concept means from an abstract standpoint, it always revolves around two major facets which are conceptualization and application, both of which are covered within the justifications for scheming.

--CATEGORIES--

Effectiveness: The ratio between a result and adversity faced, whether it be internal (resources) or external (advantage of opponents). It measures how successful the congregation of tactics/moves was at achieving the overarching goal while considering the overall situation in which it was done.

Examples are Baku Madarame, being able to win in incredibly disadvantageous situations with a mínimum amount of resources, or Junko, being able to influence regional or global situations to an extremely ridiculous degree with the smallest of moves.

Of course, since the result is in correlation with the adversity, a character getting outsmarted or beaten does not necessarily mean their scheming was ineffective or just outright bad, one example is Lalo on AP.

For ease of understanding, think of it as combining Efficacy (degree of success) and Efficiency (relation between result and resources) in one category. Of course, since it also includes external adversity, this simplification is not all encompassing, but it gives you a basic idea of what you're looking for.

Structure: The overall structural integrity of a scheme. It measures how difficult it is to actually intercept, see through, and/or dismantle the scheme itself.

Examples are characters like Junko & Hal, who work through concealing their schemes behind the notion that the person targeted has everything under control, or Fang Yuan, who manages to set up appropriate countermeasures to any situation, alongside his perfect execution of each tactic removing the possibility of counteraction from the opponent or eliminating/reducing metaphysical adversity (such as the inverse concept of luck).

For clarification, things like adding layers to the scheme (such as what would be defined as "complexity/intricacies" in strategy or planning) generally fall into this category, as they essentially work to make it overall harder to overcome (well, in the cases it doesn't compromise the structural integrity of the scheme itself, or doesn't imply any difference in integrity obviously).

Adaptability: The ability to improvise and respond to any situations that may arise. Whether it be actions from the opponent, failures in the execution of the scheme, and such.

Integration: The ability to properly implement and deploy tactics in a congruent manner, as well as the methods of each tactic. This category takes into account both the individual tactic and the way it relates to other tactics/parts of the scheme, for the best tactic is both good by itself AND properly integrated with the rest of the scheme. Things like difficulty of

implementation, positioning, timing, order, synergy, etc. are thus crucial to scale this category.

Examples are Baku with his well timed provocations, bluffs or acting, or Fang Yuan, with his pretty much perfect tactical implementation being able to remove ridiculously difficult to control variables out of the equation through sheer precision and timing.

Versatility: The ability to scheme through different situations and with different methodology, whether it be a difference of scale (national, regional, global, etc.), a difference of conditions (fixed, non-fixed), a difference of adversity (economic, political, social, etc.), a difference of timeframe (short-term, long-term, etc) or a difference of resources (more, less, types of resources, etc.), and just generally any type of distinct difference.

When compared to Adaptability, Versatility is proactive (since there is a difference in the fundamental approach of the scheme from the very beginning, ergo one would deploy different tactics altogether), while Adaptability is reactive (the approach or the tactics deployed is changed based on things that happen once the scheme has started).

A concrete example to explain the contrast could be how different the situations of STL and Protoporos are for Baku; one is a 1v1 confrontation, while the other focuses a lot on other concepts like social aspects, such as handling of social structures and influence building for example, which gives Baku self evidently a high level of versatility, as he is shown to be able to have a different approach and methods based on two largely different situations. Comparatively, Lalo's Air Poker does not necessarily make him insanely versatile by itself, but it does show an incredible level of Adaptability, as he is actively changing his approach while learning about the game and also reacting to Baku's strategy.