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The Ideological Background of the 2024-2025 Romanian Presidential Elections. You can find below a brief version of the abstract:

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Abstract

„The latest Romanian presidential elections can be labeled as historical for reasons that few political scientists could have anticipated. The ballot scheduled for November-December 2024 was canceled by the Constitutional Court (CCR) after the first round, while the voting process for the second round had already started in the diaspora. Such a decision is unprecedented in a country that is a member of the European Union (EU). Although the Austrian presidential election of 2016 was also canceled by the judiciary, in that case the decision came after the polls were closed. Moreover, in the Romanian case, the peculiarity of the situation was increased by accusations regarding the interference of a foreign political entity and by the supposed illegal utilization of technological tools by certain candidates or parties. In such a unique environment, the ideological aspects were quite often ignored or oversimplified under the specter of geopolitical divisions or under Manicheistic naiveties. The goal of our paper is to fill this gap by moving beyond these shallow approaches and providing a thorough analysis of the ideological profile of the main candidates. The circumstances obligate us to separate, after exposing a theoretical background, our study into two sections. Both the canceled presidential election of 2024 and the successfully concluded presidential election of May 2025 will be analyzed. Our conclusions will be based on political speeches, programs, and actions. Where possible, we will focus on policies implemented by the candidates. Moreover, we will review external relations and foreign policy approaches as well. Our endeavor has the potential of highlighting that the ideological similarities between the candidates of the mainstream parties can boost the support for radical or extremist politicians.

Key-words: Romania; presidential elections; ideology; fascism; populism; neoliberalism; social democracy.

Innovative ESP vocabulary teaching strategies and their impact on language learning

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Abstract

The acquisition of English vocabulary is essential for allowing individuals to communicate effectively, understand a variety of texts, and articulate their thoughts accurately. Conventional approaches to vocabulary teaching, including rote memorization and separate vocabulary exercises, have frequently proved to be inadequate in developing profound understanding, encouraging contextualization, and accommodating different learning preferences. In light of these shortcomings, many creative techniques have arisen, utilizing technology, contextualized learning, and personalized learning strategies to transform vocabulary instruction. This paper shows that new methods are better than traditional ones for helping students remember information long-term and understand it deeply. Technology tools like interactive vocabulary apps and virtual reality games make learning more engaging and fit different learning styles. Contextual learning, which uses real texts, examples, and storytelling, helps students grasp vocabulary by placing new words in meaningful situations. Personalized learning, tailored to individual needs, improves results for all learners, ensuring vocabulary lessons are relevant, engaging, and effective. By encouraging the use of innovative techniques such as VR, MALL, or MOOC, this study seeks to enable educators to transform vocabulary instruction, improve language skills, and support lifelong learning practices for civil and mechanical engineering students in ESP (English for Specific Purposes).

Keywords: ESP (English for Specific Purposes), ICT (information and communication technology), MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses), MALL (Mobile-assisted Language Learning), Virtual Reality (VR).

Challenges in Valuation of Small Businesses

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Abstract

This paper aims to thoroughly examine the specific challenges accompanying the process of small businesses' valuation, with a special focus on their differences compared to large corporations and public joint-stock companies. The analysis covers key factors that hinder objective valuation, including the limited availability of reliable financial data, strong dependence of business performance on key individuals in management roles, low market liquidity, and the presence of subjective assessments in financial reports. The paper aims to provide deeper insight into the challenges faced by businesses' valuation professionals, investors, and business decision-makers, and to offer concrete recommendations for enhancing the methodological reliability and relevance of small business valuation.

Keywords: small businesses, valuation, specificities, challenges.

The Use of Humanities in Teaching Criminology: One Undergraduate Program's Experience: Preliminary Results

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Abstract

As hybrid disciplines, Criminal Justice and Criminology, consist of Sociology, Psychology, Political Science, and History (Schmallegger, 2003; Southerland, 2002). Since the September 11, 2001 terror attacks against the United States, the discipline has expanded to include Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Within the disciplines, theory and public policy are important elements of what is taught in the classroom and curriculum. Castillo (n.d.) posits that public policy is primarily taught in the public affairs disciplines, but can be difficult when addressing students outside of these majors, or those which can be more applied such as criminal justice. According to Rothe and Collins (2013),

Pop culture as a means of teaching and enhancing students' understanding of complex or abstract ideas in the classroom can trace its origins of the use of film to a post World War II era and began to emerge again in the early 2000s. For today's youth, Hip Hop, as both culture and music, is in fact a key aspect of their popular culture (Biełkowska, 2022).

Historically, research of effective pedagogy examining effective strategies to teach theory reveals that the use of non-traditional media, such as film, has shown promise in making theory more relevant and interesting to students (Hinds-Aldrich, 2012). This proposal examines the preliminary data examining the use of humanities, specifically documentaries and music, to teach theory and public policy.

Keywords: pedagogy, Criminology, Criminal Justice, music, documentaries.

From Language Teaching to Learning through Language: Teaching Italian as a Vehicle of Knowledge

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Abstract

In today’s university context—marked increasingly by internationalization, student mobility, and the growing presence of learners with diverse language competencies—Italian is called upon to play not only a communicative role but also an epistemic one. The shift from teaching the language to learning through language represents a crucial challenge for rethinking the teaching of Italian as a vehicle of knowledge, and not merely as an object of study. In the academic sphere, language is not just a support for comprehension but an active tool for constructing knowledge, mediating between disciplines, and accessing scientific culture. This contribution aims to reflect on the role of Italian as a vehicular language in university programs, drawing on the multi-year experience of the degree courses taught in Italian at the Catholic University “Our Lady of Good Counsel” in Tirana. Special attention is paid to the quality of language teaching within specific disciplinary instruction and in educational materials. Promoting an integrated approach—one that considers the linguistic and cognitive dimensions of learning—means making higher education more accessible, equitable, and inclusive. In this regard, teacher training plays a key role, focusing on the mindful use of academic language and the enhancement of students’ plurilingual repertoires.

Rethinking Italian as a vehicular language in academia also means recognizing its inclusive and transformative potential: a capacity to support complex educational paths, foster participation, and promote genuine equity in learning and knowledge production processes.

Keywords: didactics, Italian, vehicular language, learning, university

From discourse to action: the ideas shaping Russian foreign policy in the Putin era

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Abstract

This paper identifies the core ideas shaping Russia's foreign policy identity and their manifestation in its foreign policy between 2012 and 2022. The research is particularly relevant given recent events, including the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which have intensified the need to understand the motives behind increased aggression of Russia's foreign policy decisions. This study contributes to the academic debate on state behaviour by exploring the role of ideas in shaping foreign policy. Drawing upon a theoretical framework that synthesizes poststructuralism and constructivism, the study examines Russia's foreign policy identity from a dynamic perspective. This approach promotes the analysis of how ideas evolve over time and on their causal relationship with state actions in the international system. A key element is the construction of Russia's "Self" in opposition to a Western "Other," a process central to its identity formation process and strategy. The methodology is a three-level discourse analysis applied to a corpus of official speeches made by President Vladimir Putin from 2012 to 2022. The research concludes that ideas of moral superiority, economic growth, multipolarity, civilizational uniqueness, multiculturalism, and sovereignty are functionally employed to construct Russia's great power, exceptionalist, and survivalist identities. Historically, these ideas have been transformed by adaptations to the international system and, significantly, by the internal consolidation of discursive and political power within Putin's autocratic regime. The causal link between these ideas and policy is most visible in Russia's aggressive initiatives to reform the international system and its persistent resistance to perceived US hegemony.

Keywords: Russia, foreign policy, foreign policy identity, ideas, discourse.

Investigating The Effect of Attending a Financial Course and having Work Experience on Financial Literacy in University Students: A Case Study in Istanbul Aydin University

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Abstract

This research investigates the effect of taking a formal financial education course and having work experience on financial literacy levels (FL), using a random sample of university students at Istanbul Aydin university as a case study. Exploring whether prior financial education through coursework contributes to students' FL, motivated by previous studies suggesting that students who have taken such courses, particularly those from faculties like business, finance, or economics, tend to demonstrate higher levels of financial literacy than their peers (Özdemir et al., 2015; Pavković et al., 2018). As well as Prior research shows that structured financial education significantly improves financial knowledge and influences long-term behaviors (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014; Xiao et al., 2011), early work experience can improve practical financial understanding and foster financial responsibility (Shim et al., 2010). This research is based on a quantitative method, with a cross-sectional survey design, FL scale used has two factor model, Sample size is 161, total item number is 10 items with 7 demographic questions. The scale is reliable for exploratory research and validated. Findings show that the students who have attended a formal financial course or had work experience have slightly higher scores in FL than the ones who didn't, but they are considered statistically insignificant, possibly due to small sample size or to the model excluding FA. Although, the effect size remains modest, indicating that while education and experience are beneficial, they may not be sufficient on their own.

Keywords: financial literacy, undergraduates, formal financial courses, work experience.
