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THE IMPORTANCE OF INNOVATION FOR THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMPANY

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Abstract

New technologies and innovation processes are key determinants of growth, development and competitiveness of modern companies in the conditions of a dynamic market environment. Innovativeness plays a significant role in improving the alignment of resources and business performance of companies, where innovations represent the basis for achieving a sustainable competitive advantage based on specific knowledge and competencies developed within the organization. Effective and profitable implementation of innovations requires the integration of technological, organizational and marketing expertise, as well as adequate support of the entire value chain of the company. The application of new technologies enables the development of new products, services and business processes, contributes to the increase of productivity and efficiency of business, as well as the opening of new market opportunities. Innovative companies are characterized by a higher level of investment in research and development, which has a positive impact on performance improvement, market position and long-term business sustainability. Of particular importance are innovations aimed at creating new values for consumers and adapting to changes in consumption patterns and market demands. The paper will analyze the importance of innovation for the growth and development of companies, as well as the interdependence between innovation activities and business performance. Special attention will be paid to the impact of innovations on the development of products and services, improving competitiveness and achieving sustainable development of the company. It will also be pointed out that successful management of innovations implies a comprehensive overview of business processes, redefinition of business activities, as well as transformation of the role and responsibility of employees in accordance with modern market requirements. A company's sustainability and development largely depend on its ability to strategically manage innovation and continuously adapt to changes in the global business environment.

Keywords: innovation, company performance, new markets, competitiveness, new products, new services.

Talking to AI, Feeling Understood: Emotional Support and Parasocial Relational Involvement among Romanian University Students

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Abstract

The rapid normalization of conversational AI ecosystems has opened interactional spaces in which technical assistance blends with emotional disclosure, reassurance, and perceived companionship. This paper presents an ongoing empirical study of parasocial relational involvement with AI, defined as the degree to which users experience a conversational AI system as emotionally close, supportive, and relationally familiar. Data were collected from 812 Romanian university students at SNSPA, Bucharest, through a cross-sectional self-report survey comprising validated and adapted psychometric instruments. The planned analysis examines a predictive model linking perceived emotional support from AI, AI anthropomorphism, emotional and social loneliness, attachment anxiety, social anxiety, and behavioral dimensions of AI use to parasocial relational involvement. The model further examines parasocial relational involvement as a predictor of non-clinical psychological well-being, with particular attention to a mediation pathway running from perceived emotional AI support through relational involvement to well-being. The study is expected to clarify whether the strength of this pathway varies with the purpose and frequency of AI use and with individual differences in attachment anxiety. An exploratory extension considers whether stronger parasocial involvement corresponds with reduced offline social contact, a question addressed with appropriate caution given the cross-sectional design. The contribution lies in extending parasocial relationship theory to human-AI interaction within a communication science framework, and in producing a psychometrically grounded, empirically supported account of how emotionally responsive AI systems become integrated into the relational and psychological lives of young adults.

Keywords: parasocial relational involvement, human-AI interaction, emotional AI support, loneliness, psychological well-being, attachment anxiety

Human Resource Management and Organizational Behavior in Higher Education Institutions of the Western Balkans

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Abstract

The dynamic changes in higher education institutions and labor market demands in the Western Balkans have increased the importance of effective human resource management and organizational behavior practices. This study aims to analyze the main factors influencing employee performance, organizational culture, leadership, and academic effectiveness in universities and public institutions, with a particular focus on Albania. The research adopts a literature review methodology, examining contemporary scientific studies, regional reports, and international publications related to human resource management, organizational behavior, employee motivation, and institutional development in the Western Balkans. The review identifies several challenges affecting the region, including limited professional development opportunities, organizational resistance to change, employee motivation issues, and the impact of leadership styles on institutional performance. Findings from the literature suggest that modern human resource practices, transparent communication, and supportive organizational cultures positively influence academic staff engagement, productivity, and institutional sustainability. Furthermore, the study highlights the growing need for universities in Albania and neighboring Western Balkan countries to adopt innovative management approaches aligned with European higher education standards. The article concludes that strengthening organizational behavior practices and strategic human resource management can significantly improve institutional effectiveness and employee satisfaction in higher education institutions across the region. The study also provides recommendations for future academic research and policy development in the field of management and organizational studies.

Keywords: Human Resource Management; Organizational Behavior; Higher Education; Albania; Western Balkans; Literature Review.

Sustainable tourism and destination management in Albania

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Abstract

This study explores the role of sustainable tourism and destination management in the development of Albania's tourism sector through a literature review methodology. The paper examines previous academic studies, policy documents, and international research related to sustainable tourism, cultural heritage management, hospitality services, and cruise tourism. Particular attention is given to the contribution of tourism strategies in improving destination competitiveness and preserving cultural identity. The review focuses on key themes including sustainable destination management, quality standards in hospitality, the impact of cruise tourism on urban heritage centers, and innovative tourism models such as Albergo Diffuso. Existing literature indicates that tourism development in Albania has significant economic potential; however, challenges remain regarding infrastructure, service quality, environmental protection, and strategic planning. The findings suggest that the integration of sustainability principles into tourism policies and destination management practices is essential for long-term growth. Furthermore, collaboration among local institutions, tourism stakeholders, and educational organizations plays a crucial role in enhancing tourism performance and protecting cultural and natural resources. The study concludes that Albania can strengthen its position as a competitive tourism destination by adopting sustainable development strategies, improving hospitality standards, and promoting cultural heritage as a core tourism asset.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, Destination Management, Cultural Heritage, Hospitality Management, Cruise Tourism, Albania Tourism Development.

Form-function mismatch: An instance of pragmalinguistic transfer in English conversational speech formulas of Albanian university students

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Abstract

The present study aims to examine the relationship between pragmatic competence and grammatical proficiency among Albanian English majors, focusing on instances of pragmalinguistic transfer regarding formulaic expressions. Among the different kinds of formulaic expressions, conversational speech formulas were selected based on the premise that they are frequently encountered and used in day-to-day communication and that they are stored and retrieved in chunks. Namely, the study aimed to examine whether high levels of grammatical proficiency actually corresponded to proportionally higher levels of pragmatic competence.

For this purpose, the data was primarily elicited from Discourse Completion Tasks (DCT) items and students' self-reported English Matura exam marks, the latter serving as an indicator of grammatical proficiency. The data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics and Spearman's rank-order correlation. Additionally, an item-level analysis of the pragmatic situations that posed more difficulties to participants provided qualitative insights to frame the quantitative findings.

The results indicated a positive correlation between grammatical proficiency and pragmatic competence. However, the strength of said association was moderate, indicating that although grammatical proficiency is an indispensable prerequisite for pragmatic competence, it is not a foolproof predictor of the latter's development. The study places emphasis on explicit pragmatic instruction, given that the pragmatic component in the Albanian English Language Teaching (ELT) context remains relatively overlooked.

Keywords: pragmalinguistic transfer, pragmatic competence, grammatical competence, English, Albanian

The Chinese Language: Its Antiquity and Globalization

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the antiquity and modernity of the Chinese language, which constitutes a major treasure of world culture. The foundations of communication among the ancient Chinese population, the age of early graphic signs and characters, the most important Chinese characters, the large number of dialects and other linguistic phenomena have naturally influenced the development, evolution and integration of the language of this state throughout its historical course.

A special aspect, as both a cultural and linguistic phenomenon in China, is represented by the process of linguistic unification of the Chinese population through Mandarin, or Putonghua, as the official standardized form of Chinese. Chinese is spoken not only in mainland China, but also in Taiwan, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia and in many other communities throughout the world.

This study examines several aspects of the Chinese language in relation to the globalization of human society and the interaction between language, culture and economic development. China is a state of considerable economic weight, and its commercial, industrial, productive and technological role in the world has enabled it to build broad relations with other languages and cultures of different peoples.

The integrative, multidimensional, multilateral and multilayered relations of China with the contemporary world, together with the growing international importance of Chinese, have influenced the spread of Chinese culture and literature. Chinese culture, coming from antiquity to the present day, stands as an important testimony in the encyclopedia of world knowledge and is often understood as one of the great cultural schools of humanity.

The study also addresses a special aspect: the Chinese language and Albania, the tendencies of its study, the publication of Albanian-Chinese and Chinese-Albanian dictionaries, and the growing need for intercultural communication. The discussion is further extended to contemporary globalization, China as an important international factor, and the relationship of Chinese with English and other international languages.

Keywords: linguistic relations, ancient language, contemporary globalization, Chinese characters, encyclopedia, Chinese language, Mandarin, Putonghua.
