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FEATURES OF TEACHING SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN DISCIPLINES IN THE CONTEXT OF DIGITALIZATION OF MODERN SOCIETY

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Abstract

In modern society, digitalization processes are rapidly intensifying in all spheres: state, economic, social. Education cannot remain aloof from this process. Digitalization processes have widely affected the entire sphere of higher education - organizational, financial, content, communication. In this regard, the issues of the effectiveness of higher education (and its humanitarian part) become especially acute: the requirements for the form of presentation of both lecture and discussion material are changing, visualization tools are gaining special importance. The article attempts to comprehend the processes of digitalization of modern society and their impact on the educational process in the context of humanitarian disciplines.

Keywords: Digitalization of society, informatization of education, , teaching problems, humanitarian disciplines, digital competence.

Introduction

The process of integrating digital (and this is almost always computer-based) technologies is observed in all spheres of modern society. The adoption of digital technologies is happening faster than any other innovative development in human history: in just two decades, digital technologies have reached approximately 50 percent of the population in developing countries. At the same time, an objective division of humanity is taking place between digital natives

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and those who began their activities without the influence of modern digital technologies – digital immigrants [1].

In examining issues related to various aspects of digitalization of the educational process, we will rely on the model of digital society development proposed by Doctor of Economics Yu. I. Gribanov, which envisions a gradual process of digital economy development: from the level of digital data (simple digitization, allowing for the optimization of arrays of heterogeneous information) through digital infrastructure (i.e., the network basis for the functioning of the socioeconomic system, built on a pool of digital technologies and their products) to digitalization (the interaction between users of digital technologies and the corresponding digital network models). The final and foreseeable stage of this process, according to the author, is digital transformation, i.e., "...the process of fundamentally transforming the concept and format of the functioning of socio-economic systems at all levels, through digitization—the transfer of all resources into digital format with the goal of revolutionary change (increasing volume and increasing diversity and quality) in the consumer value and accessibility of products and services" [2, pp. 12-13].

The use of information technology and internet resources in the modern educational process is "...fundamental in the teaching of social sciences and humanities, as they improve the quality of education and reduce the time required to study these disciplines" [3]. Digitalization is becoming "...a necessary need for the modern higher education system" [4, p. 66]. It is quite natural to believe that the digitalization process has several levels of existence and, consequently, problematization. We can distinguish three levels of digitalization in modern society:

- digital infrastructure,
- digital competence,
- digital communication.

The level of digital infrastructure is primarily the level of internet penetration and all related technologies. Recognizing that information is a crucial component at the macro level, the UN notes that "...(digital) technologies can also threaten privacy, undermine security, and fuel inequality" [5]. The UN lists

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24/7 internet access as one of humanity's most important goals, but also notes that in some countries, internet access is quite low, defining this low level as characteristic of LDCs (least developed countries), where it accounts for less than 20 percent of the population [6].

The level of digital communication is the sphere of digital implementation of everyday routine practices by the planet's inhabitants. Not only foreign but also Russian researchers have noted the existence of problems with digitalization at this crucial communications level. Indeed, the ever-increasing "...information confrontation between the poor majority and the rich minority on the planet and in individual countries creates critical levels of socio-political tension, which, in a crisis, can lead to the self-destruction of both the state and society" [7, p. 39]. The use of information and communication technologies always ...has a "...systemic impact on the functioning of socio-economic entities acting as open information systems" [8, p. 26].

The level of digital competencies is the level of retransmission of accumulated experience, taking into account the latest infrastructural innovations. Moreover, in our opinion, educational systems are in a particularly risky position, primarily due to the specifics of the knowledge retransmission system in the modern digital world. These specifics include: the high availability and openness of information on virtually any aspect of scientific and technical activity; the ability to replicate, directly inherent in the mode of existence of digital technologies; and the permanent lag between internal knowledge and the growing volume of external information.

Through the processes of "...the formation of a digital mentality, while preserving and adapting fundamental traditional educational forms and implementing the latest educational methods and tools," existing positive practices are being consolidated in everyday life [9, pp. 116-117]. It should be noted that not only in countries leading in science and education, but also in the post-Soviet space, educational programs exist aimed at training specialists in the field of digital learning [10].

Several specific aspects of the application of digital technologies at the university level can be noted: these include digital environmental technologies;

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digital administrative and methodological support technologies; and digital technologies for the direct educational process. These technologies are closely interconnected, but this logical separation, in our opinion, allows for a more effective identification of the process that is controlled to a greater extent by the teacher. Following the established tradition of identifying humanities education as part of such a crucial phenomenon as social capital, which in turn is "...determined by the degree of digitalization in new conditions" and acts as "...an objective cultural phenomenon of social reality, determining the possibilities for intensifying global cultural and communicative phenomena" [11], we understand that teaching humanities is a crucial part of these processes, leading to the structuring of existing cultural potential and the transformation of cultural potential into social capital not only of a specific educational institution, but also of a region, a nation, and of society as a whole.

In 2019, the UN adopted a conceptual document on the impact of digitalization on all spheres of human life—the report of the working group "The Age of Digital Interdependence," which noted that "...digital technologies contribute to the achievement of sustainable development goals and eliminate the risks of socially negative processes" [12, p. 5]. That same year, UNESCO adopted the "ICT Competency Framework for Teachers." It is expected that modern teachers should possess a wide range (more than thirty in the list) of competencies in the application of information and communication technologies (ICT). The following competencies are among the most important ICT competencies:

- the ability to develop, modify, and implement pedagogical practices in the educational process that are consistent with institutional and/or national policies, international documents (e.g., UN Conventions), and social priorities;
- integrate ICT into the curriculum of a specific subject, the teaching and learning process, and the assessment system, creating a favorable learning environment in which students can successfully master the curriculum material using ICT;
- combine various digital tools and resources to create an integrated digital learning environment for developing students' high-level thinking and problem-solving skills;

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- apply a flexible approach to the use of digital tools to facilitate collaborative learning, organize work with students, and interact with other participants in the educational process;
- utilize technologies for interaction with the professional community for the purposes of professional development [13, p. 36].

It is noted that it is crucial to develop ICT competence at the earliest stages of professional identity formation to prevent professional deformation. A key factor in this prevention is interdisciplinary integration, implemented through the creation of a regulatory framework for the digitalization of education; resource provision for the digitalization of education; and the training of human resources for digital education [14, p. 13].

Conclusions

Digitalization of teaching processes, as a crucial component of the positive process of reducing social costs, plays a significant role in the transfer and assimilation of relevant scientific information. We agree with the typology of production cost reduction through the use of digital technologies, which suggests five levels of optimization: "...reduced search costs, reduced copying costs, reduced transportation costs, reduced maintenance costs, and reduced verification costs" [15, p. 2]. It should be noted that such optimization is possible within the existing system of digital support for the educational process. Otherwise, the lack of trust in such courses could call into question the effectiveness of such methods [16, p. 51].

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