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HUMANITIES EDUCATION IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: CHALLENGES AND TRANSFORMATIONS

The article explores the transformation of humanities education in the digital age. It examines the key functions of humanities learning and their significance in digitalization. The paper analyzes current trends in digital education, including the implementation of EdTech, massive open online courses (MOOCs), distance learning, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality. The study identifies significant challenges such as superficial perception of knowledge, devaluation of the humanities, risks of losing interpersonal communication, threats to academic integrity, and the changing role of educators. At the same time, new opportunities and innovative practices are presented, including digital humanities, virtual archives, online educational platforms, and hybrid learning formats. The article substantiates how to harmonize the humanitarian and digital dimensions of education, emphasizing the development of media literacy, digital ethics, and a new pedagogical paradigm – "the human being in the digital world." It concludes that humanities education remains a key instrument for understanding digital civilization and requires further interdisciplinary research.

Key words: academic integrity, humanities, humanities education, ethics, critical thinking, educational transformation, digital technologies, digitalization.

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ГУМАНІТАРНА ОСВІТА В ЕПОХУ ЦИФРОВИХ ТЕХНОЛОГІЙ: ВИКЛИКИ І ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЇ

Стаття присвячена трансформації гуманітарної освіти в умовах цифрової доби. Розглядаються ключові функції гуманітарного навчання та їхнє значення у контексті цифровізації. Аналізуються сучасні тенденції цифрової освіти, серед яких – впровадження EdTech, масових онлайн-курсів, дистанційного навчання, штучного інтелекту та віртуальної реальності. Виявлено виклики: поверховість сприйняття знань, знецінення гуманітарних дисциплін, ризики втрати міжособистісної комунікації, академічної доброчесності та зміни ролі викладача. Водночас представлені нові можливості та інноваційні практики, такі як: цифрова гуманітаристика, віртуальні архіви, онлайн-платформи, гібридні формати навчання. Обґрунтовано шляхи гармонізації гуманітарного та цифрового вимірів освіти, розвиток медіаграмотності, цифрової етики та нової парадигми викладання «людина в цифровому світі». Підкреслюється, що гуманітарна освіта залишається ключовим інструментом осмислення цифрової цивілізації та потребує подальших досліджень.

Ключові слова: академічна доброчесність, гуманітаристика, гуманітарна освіта, етика, критичне мислення, трансформація освіти, цифрові технології, цифровізація.

Relevance of the Topic. Modern higher education is undergoing one of the most profound transformations in its history. Digital technologies, which were initially seen merely as tools for improving the learning process, are gradually reshaping the logic of acquiring, disseminating, and interpreting knowledge. A new type of university space is emerging–digitally mediated, open, flexible, and oriented toward rapid communication and efficiency. Under these conditions, the humanities face the necessity of adaptation and rethinking their mission. For a long time, the humanities were perceived as a form of "slow knowledge," requiring reflection, dialogue, reading, and interpretation. However, in the digital environment, other qualities are valued–speed of response, algorithmic thinking, and information visualization. A paradox arises: precisely when society becomes more technologically advanced, it simultaneously loses its ability to comprehend meanings, contexts, and human motives deeply. Thus, the issue is how digital technologies influence education and whether the humanities can shape individuals who navigate the digital civilization critically and ethically. The authors believe that the humanities do not lose their relevance in the digital age; on the contrary, they acquire new strategic importance. The humanities make it possible to comprehend phenomena beyond technical logic–such as the moral responsibility of artificial intelligence, the social consequences of digital isolation, and the boundaries of privacy and freedom in the information society. The humanities give meaning to technological development, transforming it from a mechanical process into a conscious cultural experience. For Ukrainian institutions of higher education, the challenge of digitalization has a dual nature. On the one hand, universities must integrate new technologies, online learning formats, digital platforms, and artificial intelligence tools. On the other hand, they must preserve their humanistic identity, preventing education from being reduced to training sessions or "educational content." The success of reforms in this sphere will be determined not so much by the number of technological innovations as by universities' ability to preserve the humanistic dimension of education, where the individual remains not a consumer but a co-creator of knowledge.

This article aims to provide an analytical reflection on the impact of digital technologies on humanities education, identify key chal-

lenges and contradictions, and substantiate possible strategies for harmonizing technological and humanistic approaches within the modern university. The authors proceed from the conviction that humanities education can serve as the foundation for forming a new ethics of the digital society–one in which technology serves humanity, not the other way around.

Presentation of the Main Material. Humanities education has traditionally been regarded as the component of the educational system that shapes the meaningful, reflective, and value-oriented dimensions of knowledge rather than merely technical competencies. It cultivates critical thinking, cultural imagination, ethical responsibility, and the ability to understand complex social contexts. In an age of technological acceleration, the role of the humanities becomes even more significant–they are uniquely capable of helping structure the digital world's symbolic order. At the same time, humanities education is undergoing internal transformation under the pressure of technology. In contemporary academic discourse, the concept of Digital Humanities is frequently mentioned. This field lies at the intersection of the humanities and informational or computational methods. The approach does not imply replacing classical humanistic methods with algorithmic ones but rather fostering a dialogue between them and new digital tools. For example, scholars note that Digital Humanities challenge the long-standing dichotomy between the sciences and the humanities, questioning the notion of technology as a neutral tool (and critiquing it as something capable of reproducing or constructing inequalities). Moreover, contemporary theory discusses the emergence of post-digital humanities–an approach in which digitality is already integrated into everyday life, and the boundary between the "digital" and the "non-digital" is gradually disappearing [2, p. 14]. This perspective emphasizes that humanities education can no longer choose to remain "outside technology"; instead, it must learn to function in a world where technology has already become an inseparable part of the cultural environment.

In the modern world, which is rapidly transforming under digital technologies, humanities education is acquiring new meaning and significance. Its role is no longer limited to transmitting cultural knowledge or fostering general erudition. It is becoming a means of comprehending the civilizational changes brought about by digitalization, artificial intelligence, and the algorithmization of everyday life. As Martha Nussbaum notes, humanities education helps to "cultivate the capacity for critical thinking, imagination, and empathy–qualities without which democracy and humanity become vulnerable" [12, p. 26]. In this regard, humanities education today performs several key functions. First is the meaning-making function: it is meant not only to transmit knowledge but also to shape frameworks for interpreting the technological world by posing questions about values, meanings, and the boundaries of the human in the digital context. Second, the critical function is that humanities education provides the capacity to analyze and question automated systems and uncover the logic of power and algorithmic structures in society [1, p. 104]. Third is the cultural-mediating function: the humanities act as a "bridge" between technological innovations and society, translating technically complex phenomena into an understandable cultural language [2, p. 62]. And finally, the protective or anti-crisis function: in the conditions of informational overload, humanities education helps resist the fragmentation of thought, superficiality of knowledge, and hasty judgments, thereby preserving the integrity of human experience [6, p. 19]. Thus, in the 21st century, humanities education does not occupy a marginal position as a mere "addition" to technological education; instead, it becomes its complementary component–without which the digital society loses its capacity for reflection. In this context, the university should not simply "add" digital tools to humanities programs. Still, it should form a new integrative paradigm in which technologies and humanistic orientations co-create each other.

Over the past decade, digital transformation has become one of the most powerful forces reshaping the architecture of global

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education. It modernizes learning tools and transforms the educational process's logic–from a centralized model of knowledge transmission to an open, flexible, and networked ecosystem. As UNESCO emphasizes, today's digitalization of higher education is not merely a technological innovation but a strategic factor of sustainable development and social inclusion [15, p. 7]. One of the key trends is the active implementation of EdTech technologies–specialized digital platforms, services, and applications that support learning, communication, and assessment processes. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), which have been developing since the early 2010s, have become an essential tool for the democratization of knowledge and for professional development beyond the boundaries of traditional universities [7, p. 30]. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this process, making distance learning the norm rather than the exception.

Another vector of change has been the introduction of artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and augmented reality into the learning process. Artificial intelligence (AI) is already being used to adapt educational programs to students' needs, create personalized learning paths, and support educators through intelligent data analysis systems [8, p. 15]. Virtual reality (VR), in turn, offers the possibility of immersive learning simulations–from virtual laboratories to reconstructions of historical events [9, p. 22]. As a result, the educational space is undergoing a profound transformation–from the traditional "classroom" to an interactive digital ecosystem in which learners are not merely consumers but also creators of content. Such a model fosters the development of digital literacy, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Digitalization, at the same time, offers significant advantages. It ensures accessibility of education for broad segments of the population, regardless of geographical or social barriers; flexibility through the ability to learn at a convenient time and at an individual pace; and individualization thanks to adaptive learning technologies and big data analytics [13, p. 41]. However, behind these advantages lies the need for new pedagogical approaches that combine technological innovation with the humanistic values of education. This concerns technological adaptation and, above all, the preservation of intellectual depth, ethical dimension, and capacity for reflection, without which humanistic knowledge loses its very meaning.

One of the most noticeable consequences of the digital age is the superficial perception of knowledge. Researcher Maryanne Wolf emphasizes that prolonged immersion in the environment of "screen reading" alters cognitive processes, replacing analytical thinking with fragmented–or so-called "clip"–thinking [16, p. 74]. As a result, learners increasingly demonstrate reduced concentration, a diminished ability to analyze complex texts, and a loss of capacity for deep comprehension of cultural meanings. A second challenge is the devaluation of the humanities within university education. Global strategies for higher education development are increasingly oriented toward STEM fields, which are perceived as more "practical" and economically advantageous. This risks marginalizing humanistic knowledge and reducing programs that foster critical thinking, cultural memory, and civic competencies [4, p. 33]. An equally significant challenge is the loss of interpersonal communication and empathy. When transferred into the online space, education often deprives students of live dialogue–the very interaction in which understanding of the Other is born. Sherry Turkle notes that "digital communication creates the illusion of closeness but undermines the capacity for deep conversation" [14, p. 26]. For humanities education, which is grounded in dialogue, this tendency is particularly dangerous. Another challenge is the problem of academic integrity. Artificial intelligence and text-generating systems make it easier to prepare written work, but also create the temptation to automate thinking. As Phillip Dawson points out, ChatGPT and similar tools "undermine traditional notions of authorship, assessment, and learning achievement" [3, p. 11]. The academic community must therefore develop new approaches to academic ethics that combine digital literacy with the preservation of intellectual honesty. Finally, digitalization transforms the identity

of the humanities educator. Their role is no longer limited to transmitting knowledge–they become moderators, facilitators, and critical analysts of digital culture. This requires rethinking the professional training of educators, expanding their digital competencies, and preserving the humanistic core of pedagogical interaction [10, p. 57]. Thus, the digital era poses a paradoxical task for humanities education: combining technological modernization with safeguarding the profound meanings of human existence.

Digital transformation opens up unique prospects for humanities education beyond traditional teaching and research formats. It not only changes the tools of instruction but also stimulates a rethinking of the very nature of humanistic knowledge, providing new ways of generating, organizing, and disseminating it. Technology becomes a catalyst for new methodological approaches that make it possible to combine classical humanistic practices with digital resources, thereby enhancing the quality of the educational process and expanding the horizons of scholarly inquiry.

One of the most significant manifestations of this process is the development of Digital Humanities. This interdisciplinary field combines humanistic methods, data processing technologies, algorithmic analysis, and visualization. Digital Humanities enables large-scale studies of textual, historical, and cultural data that were previously inaccessible due to the limitations of traditional methods. As Kathleen Fitzpatrick notes, Digital Humanities "does not merely add technology to the humanities; it changes how we think about knowledge, opening up new horizons for interpretation and content creation" [5, p. 48]. Students and researchers can work with vast datasets, create digital models of cultural processes, and test hypotheses using innovative methods.

An essential component of the digital transformation of the humanities is the development of virtual archives, interactive maps, and digital museums. These resources preserve cultural heritage and provide opportunities for active research and interactive interpretation. For example, initiatives such as Europeana and the Digital Public Library of America offer access to millions of digital objects, enabling the study of history, art, and culture through interactive platforms, 3D models, and multimedia reconstructions. Digital collections make the learning process more visual and interactive, enhancing student engagement.

Another important direction is the democratization of knowledge through online educational platforms. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and digital university platforms such as Coursera, edX, and FutureLearn provide access to high-quality education for people worldwide, reducing social and geographical barriers [13, p. 15]. This changes the paradigm of learning: students cease to be passive consumers of knowledge and become active participants in learning communities, where knowledge is collectively produced and openly shared.

Hybrid learning formats, combining online tools with traditional in-person instruction, prove particularly promising. This approach allows for the preservation of interpersonal contact, critically crucial for humanities education, while simultaneously leveraging all the advantages of digital resources–analytics, interactivity, individualized learning, and enhanced communication capabilities. Hybrid formats allow adapting curricula to different learning styles, providing scheduling flexibility, and integrating modern technologies into everyday educational practice.

Thus, digital transformation opens up new instrumental possibilities and fresh perspectives for developing methodology, strengthening cultural memory, fostering global interaction, and democratizing knowledge. At the same time, the effectiveness of these innovations depends on the ability of educational institutions to integrate technology with humanistic values, creating learning environments in which digital tools enhance rather than replace live communication and critical thinking. The fundamental principle on which modern humanities education should be built is that it is not technology that determines the content of education, but the humanistic approach that shapes a critical and reflective attitude toward technology. Maryanne Wolf emphasizes that "technologies can transform our cognitive processes, but meaning and values depend on the cultural and educational frameworks we transmit" [16, p. 94]. This

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means that digital tools serve as a means rather than an end, and their integration must occur through the lens of humanistic understanding.

One way to harmonize is by systematically integrating digital tools into the humanistic context. This involves applying analytical, critical, and ethical approaches when working with data, texts, digital archives, and virtual platforms. For example, analyzing large text corpora using digital tools should be accompanied by critically evaluating sources, understanding historical and sociocultural contexts, and ethical principles for handling information [5, p. 62]. Such a combination of technology and humanistic thinking allows students to develop technical competencies and a deep understanding of the content and meaning of the phenomena under study. A second important aspect is the development of media literacy and digital ethics among students. The modern information environment is characterized by excessive flow of data, fake news, and algorithmic manipulation. Humanities education in the digital age must cultivate the ability to evaluate sources critically, recognize biases and ethical risks, and use digital technologies responsibly [11, p. 291]. Educational programs that include media literacy, digital ethics, and critical work with data become crucial in protecting students from superficial or manipulative information consumption. Finally, the formation of a new humanistic teaching paradigm–"the human in the digital world" is a strategic goal of contemporary humanities education. This paradigm envisions learning as acquiring digital skills and developing the capacity to understand technological processes in light of humanistic values, social responsibility, and ethical norms. As Donoghue notes, "the real task of the university is to prepare people capable of thinking deeply and critically in constant technological change" [4, p. 42]. Such an approach promotes a harmonious integration of the digital and humanistic dimensions of education, shaping a generation capable of using technologies and understanding their impact on culture, society, and individual life.

Conclusions. Today, digital technologies influence all areas of education, and the humanities are transformed no less than technical disciplines. However, an analysis of current trends shows that digitalization does not destroy humanities education; instead, it challenges it to rethink its methods, values, and goals. Humanities education does not lose its significance; on the contrary, it becomes a key tool for critically understanding technological changes, analyzing cultural and social processes in the digital environment, and developing the capacity for reflection and ethical judgment in conditions of information overload. Contemporary humanities education assumes the role of a strategic bridge between technological innovation and society. It helps students and researchers use digital tools and critically assess their possibilities and limitations, understand algorithmic structures that influence social interactions, and develop ethical standards for interacting with technology. In this sense, humanities education becomes indispensable in preparing a new generation of educators, scholars, and analysts capable of acting effectively within a digital civilization. Prospects for further research lie in developing pedagogical models that integrate digital tools with humanistic teaching methods, formulating strategies for developing digital media literacy, and establishing ethics for human interaction with artificial intelligence. Such research can enable universities to create flexible, multidimensional learning environments in which technologies do not replace humans but serve as instruments for more profound knowledge, critical analysis, and cultural reflection. Thus, the digitalization of education is not a threat to humanities learning; it opens new opportunities for its development, emphasizes the relevance of humanistic thinking in the digital age, and calls for a generation capable of harmoniously combining technological competence with humanistic values.

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