NININS 2020

International Scientific Forum «National Interest, National Identity and National Security»

NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF EDUCATION

Stanislav L. Ivashevsky (a)*, Aleksey A. Strokov (b), Irina A. Savchenko (c),
Anton Yu. Kurmelev (d), Olga I. Dimitricheva (e)
*Corresponding author

(a) Linguistics University of Nizhny Novgorod, b. 31A., Minina street, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia, dr.isl@yandex.ru
(b) Nizhny Novgorod Academy of the Ministry of internal Affairs of Russia, 3, Ankudinovskoe shosse, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia, strokoff@list.ru
(c) Linguistics University of Nizhny Novgorod, b. 31A., Minina street, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia, teosmaco@rambler.ru
(d) Linguistics University of Nizhny Novgorod, b. 31A., Minina street, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia, a.kurmelev.lunn@mail.ru
(e) Linguistics University of Nizhny Novgorod, b. 31A., Minina street, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia, dimitr-olga@yandex.ru

Abstract

The paper analyses the impact that digital transformation of modern education has upon national identity of society. The significant role that national identity plays in providing social cohesion and stability emphasizes the topicality of the research. The quality of human potential as well as people's promptitude to face and resist natural and social challenges strongly depends on how effectively educational system functions. Implementation of modern computer technologies that have become an integral part of the educational process leads to modernization and development of education in general. That also results in an increase in quality of students' training and provides integration of education and scientific research. However, incorporation of such technologies in the educational process entails re-evaluation of the approaches to training and education as well as the analysis of their influence on society and its particular social groups. Thus, examination of education digital transformation and exploration of its social consequences is an up-to-date topic for scientific research. The purpose of the paper is to identify major threats digital transformation in education poses to the process of shaping national identity of society. To achieve the goal authors resorted to various methods: dialectics of social cognition, analysis of philosophical, sociological, pedagogical literature, synthesis and modelling of socio-cultural processes. In the conclusion major threats of education digital transformation and their impact on the national identity are summarized.

Keywords: Digital transformation, digital culture, education, modernization of education, national identity

1. Introduction

Social adjustment of young generations and the improvement of this process has always been a focus of humankind's concern. As a result, education system has evolved and become a significant contributor to the process of personality development and to the shaping its civil and professional qualities. Being responsible for such a noble mission, education has been a subject matter of constant experiments and innovations. It seems to be rather natural that the requirements education system is supposed to meet evolve along with society development. A constant change in requirements to educational institutions and consistent attempts to modify education are as inevitable as social evolution. It's worth mentioning that in most cases political reforms of educational system modernization are not based on any scientifically grounded research and do not take into consideration aftermath of such changes. Thus, it's high time those "digital" reforms in Russian education, that are from our perspective rather controversial and require deep scientific justification, were profoundly studied and discussed.

Molding of personality deeply rooted in the cultural context, well aware of and respectful of their country's history and their people's traditions should be priority number one when defining goals of socio-cultural environment in educational institutions. Shaping spiritual social integrity is closely connected with the process of educating citizens who feel responsible for their Motherland, who have moral consciousness, advance intelligence and creativity, who are driven by humanist ideals and patriotic spiritual tradition (Ivashevsky, 2008).

From this perspective national system of education should be granted self-dependence and self-sufficiency. It's relevant to emphasize that mass culture by means of educational innovations has an absolutely destructive impact upon the foundations of Russian spiritual dimension. It goes without saying that rapid expansion of digital culture has an escalating effect on social processes that take place in different spheres of human life. This effect is rather controversial. On the one hand, digital progress is considered to be another step to an open globalized world with common goals and values. On the other hand, digital transformation of society is heavily criticized (Kravchenko, 2019) for its manipulative influence upon human consciousness, for the loss of human "self", for the identity crisis.

2. Problem Statement

Nowadays, digital transformation in education is regarded as a brand-new trend in its development. It embraces all spheres of social activities altering working processes, communication, leisure time, as well as people's life style and world perception. That is why this process being a global one should be subjected to a thorough scientific research. Within the framework of philosophy much has been said about ambivalence of technological impact upon society and a human being. Despite Toffler's apprehension concerning the future replete with techno-social changes (Toffler, 2008), Kaplan's speculations about dark prospects of human intellectual labor (Kaplan, 2015), etc., socio-cultural experiments have kept growing. Educational system has been one of the most popular platform for testing and implementing innovative ideas (Lundie, 2015).

Since the end of the 20th century digital transformation of education has been a focus of concern from the scientific perspective all over the world. For example, Nocholas Negroponte described digital

transformation in education as conversion of atoms into bits and pixels (Negroponte, 1996), underscoring the changes in the Dasein foundations.

However, the research that has already been carried out in this sphere lacks an integrative approach to the understanding of the global changes that digital transformation brings about.

3. Research Questions

The essence of digital transformation as a process is to convert information in a digital form to provide a chance to use it efficiently in different spheres of human activities as well as to create new communicative and cognitive opportunities. Extending those opportunities digital transformation gives rise to new environments for human existence such as digital or technological. They differ from the reality a human being is used to, but those alternatives claim to be a more advanced and efficient substitute.

Global digital transformation shapes a new culture of modern society. This new digital culture calls for modernization of the professional education system to provide a capability to adequately use the opportunities that digital innovations give us. In addition to that it aims at developing professionally significant personal skills by means of those innovations.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the paper is to define the major threats that digital transformation might have for the education system and the process of shaping national identity of society.

5. Research Methods

Methods that have been used to achieve the goal include dialectics of social cognition, analysis of philosophical, sociological, pedagogical literature, synthesis and modelling of socio-cultural processes.

6. Findings

Digital culture creates new socio-cultural values and implications. Virtual communication is an integral part of that culture. A typical feature of such communication is that information is presented in small bits, it is chunked or fragmented. It all leads to the elimination of traditional ways people identified themselves (Cross, 2004). Due to the fact that a person's life has become greatly affected by global technological progress, one finds himself, on the one hand, in the situation of external comfort that technologies provide. On the other hand, a person experiences an internal discomfort which is connected with the issue of identifying oneself in a turbulently changing cultural context.

In the epoch of digital culture its phenomena have become polysemantic. They are no longer characterized by their fundamental strengths, precision of definition and univocity (Turkle, 2011). Losing understanding of those cultural phenomena, people, figuratively speaking, lose themselves in the abundance of information the world produces. Thus, they resort to digital technologies that provide them with "ready-made" and easy to use information that has already been processed, analyzed and given a

certain interpretation to by someone else (Broadbent, 2012). In other words, cultural implications are substituted by interpretations, while cultural embeddedness is ousted by culture-free marginality.

In such circumstances the issue of national identity becomes much more topical. To a great extent this problem encourages a search for new socio-cultural ways of a person's social adjustment as well as measures to preserve traditional national values in the digitally globalized world (Sulima, 2017). When national identity is in crisis, it takes new approaches to socialization in order to maintain national cultural foundations (Ocheretyany, 2019). To safeguard the matrix of Russian national identity a detailed specification of modern Russian cultural values should be defined with respect to the global conditions we live in and challenges we face (Tulchinsky, 2019).

The essence of the problem which is connected with the research and further implementation of the national identity project is determined by various factors. Among them are: multinational as well as multiconfessional population of our vast and diverse country, historical and cultural ways of development that every people that inhabit the territory of Russia followed, a variety of approaches to understanding the notion of a tradition and interpretation of its content (Gryaznova et al., 2018).

From our perspective, education plays a crucial role in defining new ways of shaping national identity. Due to the fact that it is the most powerful and effective tool ever created to influence a person's opinion and priorities as well as the support and trust it has from the government and society, education system has proved to be able to find solutions to various axiological problems a community has ever encountered. By all means, it is not the one and only measure to resort to when dealing with the issue of national identity, but it is the one that fully reflect the governmental policy in terms of national identity and incorporates its principles in the educational process. The education system provides long-term prospects for social development, while those prospects in their turn will unite traditions, that education passes down from generation to generation, and innovations, that are implemented thanks to education and science integration (Ivashevsky, 2011).

Patriotism is the cornerstone of national identity. This value is a typical characteristic of Russian culture spirituality. It is the foundation of moral upbringing that has been applied to numerous generations of Russian citizens. Since time immemorial patriotism has proved its limitless potential to help the country solve problems of particular complexity, unite people in trying times, consolidate people's effort to achieve nationally relevant goals. Nowadays, when spiritual state of our country is in crisis, when relations with some actors in the global political arena have deteriorated, the issue of patriotism and patriotic education are getting more and more topical.

Needless to say, that patriotism like any other cultural value is a dynamic phenomenon as far as its meaning is concerned as well as the ways it is manifested. A particular understanding and manifestation of patriotism are typical of every period in history of a country. Thus, teaching patriotism should eventually undergo changes to adjust to the challenges of modern society and tendencies are popular among its people, especially its young representatives.

It's important to remember that patriotism is an element of a bigger though integrated system of national culture. Thus, it is influenced by other constituents, reacting and adjusting to the changes they undergo, as well as it has an impact on them in return. The meaning and manifestation of cultural values and the role they play in society is altered by digital transformation that has become an integral part of our

life. Digital culture moves human existence to the online, virtual worlds. To some extend it gives a person greater freedom, but on the other hand it also substitutes or erases traditionally significant values to a particular community of people (Kutyrev, 2012). On becoming an Internet citizen and being swept away by the torrents of information, a person might completely lose understanding of such notions as Motherland, relatives, and even self.

7. Conclusion

Taking all the aforesaid into consideration, one can make a conclusion that major threats of digital transformation of education system might include a wide range of phenomena. The first and the most crucial one is the dehumanization of educational and other social relations among people. Then comes a possibility of a severer crisis that intellectual culture of our society and people's creativity may plunge into. One more detrimental consequence that digital transformation of education can entail is the soaring of pragmatism and individualism boosted by a strive for personal contentment and well-being as well as by a person's egocentric consumption.

Meantime, qualitative changes in modern Russian higher education system are absolutely inevitable. They are absolutely necessary to meet global requirements and respond to modern challenges. Nevertheless, one should keep in mind the aftermath of hasty and reckless implementation of new technologies and shouldn't dismiss traditional tried-and-true educational approaches, methods and techniques.

Nowadays, digital culture is creating new socio-cultural paradigm and values. Virtual communication which is an inalienable constituent of modern digital transformation of society causes destruction of traditional ways to identify oneself. It happens due to the fact that information that online technologies provide us with is rather chaotic, segmentary and in dizzying abundance. On the one hand, f person definitely benefits from the information accessibility and its immediacy. On the other hand, being unable to manage the volume of information that the Internet offers us leads one to internal frustration and results in an inability to identify yourself in a constantly changing culture and reality.

In conclusion, it's important to mention that digital transformation concerns and basic principles do not in most cases coincide with the values and ideals of Russian educational system. This discrepancy might interfere with an ability to preserve the efficiency of the Russian education system as well as the fundamental spiritual and cultural traditions of the country in general. In order to reinforce national and spiritual security of Russian society, all the digital innovations that are to be introduced to the Russian education system should be subjected to thorough research and scientific expert evaluation. That will help to determine their appropriateness and practicability and to secure their friendly implementation. Moreover, a special mechanism should be devised to monitor new reforms from the perspective of their correlation with national interests of Russia and meeting the requirements of national state security.

References

Broadbent, S. (2012). Approaches to Personal Communication. In: *Digital Anthropology* (pp. 127–146). Berg.

Cross, J. (2004). *An informal history of e-Learning.* https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240601967 _An_informal_history_of_eLearning.

Gryaznova, E., Kozlova, T., & Sulima, I. (2018). Forming and Realizing a Pedagogue's Philosophical Culture. *The Turkish Online J. of Design, Art and Communicat.-TOJDAC, Special Ed.* 2136–2142.

Ivashevsky, S. L. (2008). Higher Education: Cultural Ideals and Legal Norms. *Higher Ed. in Russia., 6,* 169–171.

Ivashevsky, S. L. (2011). Education and Ideology. *Russ. Ed. and Society, 53*(6), 42–48.

Kaplan, J. (2015). *Humans Need not Apply: A Guide to Wealth and Work in the Age of Artificial Intelligence*. Yale Univer. Press.

Kravchenko, S. A. (2019). Digital Risks, Metamorphoses and Centrifugal Tendencies in the Youth Environment. *Sociolog. Res. 10*, 48–57.

Kutyrev, V. A. (2012). Philosophy (for) People. *Quest. of philos., 9*, 86–96.

Lundie, D. (2015). The Givenness of the Human Learning Experience and its Incompatibility with Information Analytics. *Ed. Philos. and Theory*, 1–14.

Negroponte, N. (1996). *Being Digital, First Vintage Books.* http://governance40.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Nicholas-Negroponte-Being-Digital-Vintage-1996.pdf.

Ocheretyany, K. A. (2019). Computer Games: Forms of Digital Experience. *Quest. of Philos., 11*, 66–77.

Sulima, I. I. (2017). Social Philosophy of Science in Search of Tools. *Epistemology & Philos. of Sci., 4*, 30–33.

Toffler, A. (2008). *Future Shock*. AST.

Tulchinsky, G. L. (2019). Philosophy as the Design of New Meanings. *Quest. of Philos., 7*, 64–68.

Turkle, S. (2011). *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other.* Basic Books.