



## The Evolution of Humanitarian Culture in the Context of English Language Education's Digital Transformation

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### Abstract

This article presents the findings of a scientific collaboration between Kazan Federal University and Udmurt State University to investigate the phenomenon of humanitarian culture in the context of English language education digitalization. The demand to humanize digital technologies in education in order to use their educational potential for the development of learners as individuals and professionals demonstrates the research's relevance. The study's main goal is to specify methodological, theoretical, and technological foundations for the strategy of developing students' humanitarian culture as a key component in the structure of a learner's professional competence. This article is concerned with the digital transformation of education in light of the humanitarian approach based on the study of culture, values, and history of humanity as a whole and of the people in particular, as supported by pedagogical, psychological, and philosophical concepts that center on the person, the individual. The paper demonstrates that humanization and digitalization can coexist in accordance with human values for the benefit of people's well-being and prosperity and that they should be viewed as interrelated, interdependent, and mutually reinforcing trends in English language education, with the main goal of encouraging students to think critically and prioritize common humanistic and humanitarian values. The authors specify and describe four criteria for assessing a student's level of humanitarian culture, which include information and cognitive, communicative, axiological, and reflexive aspects. Because of their collaborative, interactive, innovative, flexible, and affordable nature, the authors conclude that digital technologies can contribute to the development of students' humanitarian culture.

**Keywords:** English Language; Education; Digitalization; Humanization.

### 1. Introduction

Digitization is a global, all-encompassing trend that affects all aspects of human life and society, including education as an institution linked to the widespread dissemination and accessibility of information technology and networks. The development of digital information technologies creates a significant cultural divide between the modernist "calculus culture" (that is, the technogenic culture unique to technology developers) and the postmodern "simulation culture" that users are "immersed" in (Polikarpova et al., 2020). In an age when digital technologies are being used in pervasive ways to connect different divisions, stakeholders, goals, processes, and information resources, the human aspect becomes even more important in the context of students transitioning from passive receivers and consumers of information to active participants in their own discovery process. What students learn, how they learn it, and how their learning is assessed are all influenced by the needs, abilities, and perspectives of each student.

Despite persistent claims that education is stuck in a bygone era resistant to change, educational practitioners, scholars, and policymakers appear to be enthusiastic about incorporating technology into students' and teachers' curricular and extracurricular activities. However, technological progress without spiritual, cultural, and humanitarian advancement drives civilization to extinction (Shutaleva et al., 2019). As a result, the article's goal is to investigate humanization as a key direction of English language education in the digital age. Postmodern education primarily reveals the human phenomenon in terms of a humanistic personality, a humanistic ideology, a humanistic society, and a humanitarian

culture. Humanitarian culture establishes personal and social values and ideals, social orientations and behavioral standards, strengthens human communities, and ensures individual self-determination and social control. Humanitarian culture is a particular way of understanding the world, and man is the unique social mechanism that transmits heritage, spiritual values, and social experience from generation to generation (Oleksienko, 2018).

Some researchers associate the term "humanitarian culture" with a person's value system, including his ideological, spiritual, ethical, and moral claims and beliefs (Zapesotsky, 1996). Mole emphasizes the guiding nature of humanitarian culture and considers learners' ability to evaluate and compare events to be the primary goal of humanitarian education (Mole, 1973). Our study is based on Singatullin's approach, which defines a learner's humanitarian culture as an integrative phenomenon that includes cultural awareness, cultural maturity, a humanitarian mindset, and constructive activities (Singatullin, 1993). Thus, in our study, humanitarian culture will be viewed as a unique sociocultural quality of a learner with an integrative nature because it relies on a person's spiritual, cognitive, and intellectual traits. The humanistic principle as a motivating way of approaching reality is the distinguishing feature of humanitarian culture as a distinct form of reflection (Drobnitsky, 1978).

## 2. Literature Review

One of the primary goals of education, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is to prepare future generations for the digital future by preparing them to deal with the rapid development of technologies, cope with continuous access to vast amounts of new knowledge and information, and foster critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration skills to succeed in digital contexts (Taylor et al., 2021). Digital technologies aim to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all while also disseminating shared knowledge. The use of electronic devices and incorporating them into the learning environment is expected to increase students' interest and involvement levels, as well as allow students to take a more proactive role and be at the center of the process. The incorporation of technology into education provides students with an engaging learning experience, allowing them to stay more interested in the subject without being distracted. By establishing tasks in class that incorporate technology resources, oral presentations, and group participation, the use of digital technologies is expected to make studying more dynamic and engaging. Participation can go beyond verbal communication (Haleema Mohd et al., 2022).

Despite the positive image of digital technologies in English language education, the findings of our study show that in order to utilize their potential fully, they must be focused on students' needs, demands, and priorities, as well as respect universal human values. Thus, human-centered technologies should support the digital learning environment to help students understand the differences between values and skills, as well as the need, basic guidelines, content, and process of value education. Humanistic technologies in modern education act to introduce dialogue into the learning process, to bring creative synergy to teacher-student communication, and to enrich the tutorial toolset with techniques such as dispute, debate, problem-based and intertextual dialogue, and dialogic communication experience. Contemporary thinkers regard humanitarian culture as a traditional classical category deeply rooted in the Russian language. Meanwhile, the first theoretically sound concept of "humanitarian culture" can be found only in Charles Snow's 1959 work titled "Two Cultures" (Halverson & Shapiro, 2012). The research paper "Socio-dynamics of culture" (1973) by Moles is the next work that focuses on the issue of humanitarian culture (Kovács et al., 2015).

## 3. Methodology

Modern technologies bring new opportunities and a wide range of innovative teaching and learning strategies and activities. Previous results have been encouraging, but the long-term safety of English language education digitalization has yet to be proven, as has the balance of digital and student-centered technologies. The research methods and methodology were aligned with the goal of creating a positive integrated educational reality as a result of the convergence of real and virtual learning environments, as well as contextualizing students' learning experiences with instructional technologies or in online environments. The research is methodologically founded on the humanitarian paradigm, which elevates core human values, guaranteed recognized rights, and global justice in development thinking, practice, and policy. As a result, the principle of humanization is regarded as a guiding point of the given study, combining an individual's general cultural, social, moral, and professional development with forms and methods of digital humanistic pedagogy. The integrative, axiological, systematic, communicative, and activity-based approaches, information society theory, studies of domestic and foreign scholars on issues related to humanization and humanitarization of education, and

the development of digital technologies in education, as well as theoretical analysis, summarization of experience, and pedagogical observation, are used in the research methods.

#### **4. Results**

The data gathered allows us to emphasize four criteria in the structure of a person's humanitarian culture: information and cognitive, axiological, communicative, and reflexive. Information and cognitive components imply sociocultural awareness, respect for universal human values, intersocial world cognition, and comprehension of various world categorization methods. The axiological component is considered the most important and is closely related to the concept of an interconnected world. Ours is a world of people who have a reputation for moral integrity. Respect for moral and ethical norms and regulations, behavior management, the ability to accept and share intersocial values, and a values-based attitude toward culture and society are all axiological components. The communicative component reveals an awareness of different worldview attitudes through efficient, beneficial communication, the ability to seek compromise solutions and resolve internal and external conflicts. The reflexive component implies inner monitoring, self-awareness, a critical review of personal accomplishments, and the ability to deal with personal strengths and weaknesses. The advantages of digital technologies for developing students' humanitarian culture can be summarized as:

They have the potential to promote dialogic and emancipatory practice. Dialogic practice entails students being active, engaged, and empowered participants in a conversation that results in learning. Emancipatory practice refers to a student's ideas that go beyond the learning prescribed by the teacher/syllabus by drawing on knowledge gained outside of formal education. They can improve learning by augmenting and connecting learning activities; they provide immediate feedback to both the learner and the teacher; they promote active learning and collaboration; they provide personalized learning opportunities; they provide 24/7 access to educational resources; they assist students in developing and expanding essential 21st-century skills and competencies; they enable teachers to create lessons based on student's interests, inclinations, and strengths; and they provide immediate feedback to both the learner and the teacher. Furthermore, they allow students to learn at their own pace, teachers to spark learners' inquisitiveness and boost their curiosity, contributing to their academic success, and students to make assessments more engaging.

In summary, it is crucial to emphasize that education fundamentally revolves around interpersonal connections and associations. Although nothing can ever fully substitute the value of face-to-face interaction between instructors and learners in authentic educational settings, we should prioritize the social dimensions of technology in order to strengthen remote connections. Considerable emphasis should be placed on the ways in which technology can augment the educational process within a blended learning setting, encompassing both on-campus and remote students.

#### **5. Discussion**

It is critical in the context of the electronic informational and educational environment not to lose sight of the human dimension and the student's identity in the flow of information and modern technologies (Osadchyi et al., 2021). According to the findings of the study, a limited professional approach is unpopular with students because they prefer developmental teaching and technologies that contribute to the development of their critical and independent thinking. As a result, they regard humanities expertise as a vital component of their educational background. Humanitarian culture is a broad phenomenon that encompasses reasons, directions, actions, and their outcomes. It is a motivator realized through goal-oriented activities that people from all walks of life value. To reap the full benefits of the digitalized learning environment, a human, empathic approach is required. Interactivity and experience bring eLearning to life by connecting learners with instructors, subject-matter experts (SMEs), and one another.

Digital technology can enable innovative pedagogical models, such as those based on gaming, online laboratories, and real-time assessment, which have been shown to improve higher-order thinking skills and conceptual understanding while also increasing students' creativity in many cases (Penprase, 2018). Thus, it is possible to conclude that digital technologies in education can actually augment knowledge by providing new opportunities. As humanism defines democratization as the ability of each unique human personality to act as a subject of one's own life and activities (rather than an object of any plans, programs, and curricula), computers can free humans from inhumane machine labor and allow them to engage in creative work (Kryukov & Gorin, 2017). That optimistic outlook is now merely a possibility rather than a certainty.

## 6. Conclusion

With access to social media and students' increased awareness, there has been a tremendous increase in the yearning for knowledge. We believe that a variety of resources can help modern universities balance student-centered and digital technologies in the learning process. As a result, humanitarian culture can be derived from a man's humanitarian activity in its broad context. It is an anthropocentric term that refers to the field of spiritual culture. This culture evolved in opposition to technical and rational culture (Lopez-Fernandez, 2021). Humanitarian culture is a multi-level phenomenon with two structural levels: socio-humanitarian and individual-humanitarian. Humanitarian culture is distinguished by the following characteristics: knowledge of the humanities and psychological peculiarities of people involved in humanitarian activities. So, in modern science, humanitarian culture has been recognized as a distinct cultural phenomenon, distinct from other cultural phenomena, and as a distinct strategy of world cognition. The systematization of accumulated humanitarian culture knowledge allows for further research in this field in various dimensions. It allows for the definition of humanitarian culture's place and role in the larger cultural context (Snow, 1993).

The current technological landscape is witnessing the rise of newer technological solutions to a growing number of fields. Recently, a brisk demand for technologies has emerged in the education sector. What role will technological solutions play in the future of education? Ed-tech, or education technology, introduces technological tools into education, an approach that has been around for over 25 years and is constantly evolving (Tolstova & Levasheva, 2019). Thus, humanitarian culture should be assessed as a multifaceted phenomenon involving the integration of humanities, natural science, and engineering achievements, as well as spirituality, morality, humanism, and the dialogic nature of human life and thought. The authors believe that one way to contribute to the development of university students' humanitarian culture is to avoid viewing humanization and digitalization as competing and incompatible trends and instead consolidate their parameters in order to promote student-centered learning strategies and techniques.

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