



INFORMALITY OF DIGITAL APPROACHES AND TIME TURBULENCE AS A SOCIAL DYSSYNCHRONY

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Abstract. The authors of the article propose a discussion around the topic of avoidable and irremediable defects in the digital breakthrough for Higher Education in the period of pandemic and global economic turbulence. We pose the following questions: is it true that the better Higher Education Institutions prepare the staff for the analogue economy, there is less chance to build an education system for the digital economy? What could be a different models and requirements for ‘digital’ mentors’ competencies? And what can we say today about the synchronous-dyssynchronous education?

Keywords: dyssynchrony, turbulence, threats of time, digital education, crisis of academic mobility, digital mentors.

Recently, many universities around the world have reported dissynchronous phenomena in education. When we talk about dyssynchrony, we always mean the phenomena of misalignment and unbalance. If this is “multiplied” by the situational economic and social picture of the 2020 pandemic, in which diseases and deaths, declining incomes of University employees, mass departure of foreign students from the territories of University countries, the loss of jobs of University administrators, and the crisis of academic mobility have acquired visible and tangible forms of real losses, then we can talk about the turbulence of today’s reality. A couple of years ago, managers of higher professional education discussed the trends of the technological revolution, which set additional difficulties in predicting the future of universities. Now the main question that many people ask themselves: “Is the digital breakthrough into the turbulence of time for stays for a long time or forever?”

There are many reasons for social dyssynchrony and economic turbulence. Factors of global and regional policies, a set of unsolved problems with national health systems, various types of prolonged economic and political sanctions irreconcilably move the world’s universities away from stability. Against this background, niches have emerged that interested economists and leading IT companies have declared as drivers of the world economy: artificial intelligence, smart cities, the Internet of things, and digital education. In fact, University employees have witnessed a global confrontation and a crisis of human capital. However,

dyssynchrony presupposes a “new vision” of familiar phenomena and sets new conditions for adaptation to external changes. The accelerated digitalisation of Higher Education, which can be called risky, due to its incredible speed and psychological unwillingness of subjects to use all its opportunities, has revealed both negative and positive aspects for the quality of University education [1]. We are talking, first of all, about the prospects of accumulated scientific capital in a large network University, where the ecosystem of engagement of people with existing new competencies for training personnel for the digital economy, which is limited by the existing framework and standards of the analog economy, is maximized.

It is equally important to understand that in the quality assurance system of Higher education, the issue of combining online learning as an educational format and information hygiene is important and timely. The almost instantaneous transition of the training format into digital has allowed many universities and its staff, following the thoughts of Rollo May, “to meet the alarm” [2], to detect the lack of digital mentors, both for students and for professors, to identify opportunities of various electronic platforms and personal competencies all University administrative staff. Following the words of another classic, Jaroslav Hašek in “Adventures of the good soldier Švejk”: “...it has never been so that nothing has happened” [3], we are talking about new mechanisms for “reloading” the tools of the quality of education in universities, without infringing on the old/former device, universal complexity and already implemented digital innovations. Following the situational impulses of “COVID-19 – time” in parallel analysis, it turned out to be a difficult way to adapt even the most efficient competencies of University employees to the inconsistent, unclear and dissynchronous picture of what is happening in the system of higher professional education during the pandemic, especially at its first stage.

Old / previous problems, without having time to find a solution, were transformed into “new equations” with a set of “unknown variables”. In this sense, we can talk about a new experience of the “strength” of the world’s University systems, academic mobility and quality assurance systems in international research, as well as the development of quality assurance strategies: to be ready for all kinds of threats, ideally, for any. Then the price of error increases almost in proportion to the threat, and to gain clarity and firmness of action, you need to accept and recognize the fear of the threat and optimize ways to overcome it. The digital break-

through was able to balance the threat and actions to optimize training for the digital economy. At least in the first round between “University players” and players of “digital” learning opportunities, those who were at the helm of digitalization implementation at least 5 years ago took the upper hand. But the rest had to fully “drink” new science and acquire new skills. There was no uncertainty at that moment, on the contrary, everything was very clear: if you don’t know how – learn, if you didn’t do it – do it, if you didn’t use it – use it. The digital mentoring vector abruptly changed the direction of the beam. The digital mentor in University system has now come to play a big role in creating interfaces that allow you to determine what is most effective for each learning student and for each teaching University Professor. Enriching learning content is also the responsibility of mentors, who are more flexible than anything or anyone, can regulate the vector of focus on the subject-new in digital learning: remote learning, quality control test programs, systems thinking, intellectual property, bioinformatics, introduction to blockchain, working with virtual reality technologies, neurotechnologies, computer psycholinguistics, graphic design, and so on [4].

A characteristic sign of the revealed inability of many universities to meet digital challenges is that the largest leaders of global transformations in the world, such as Google, Microsoft, Apple, as a rule, do not enter into a symbiosis with universities, solving the problems of reproduction of personnel within themselves, in fact, working as independent “funnel universities”, building their own process of personnel production for the digital economy. In fact, the digital breakthrough in the turbulence of the pandemic time revealed a tendency towards ‘Project’ universities that were able to set up a network of startups for digital education, a favorable environment for digital businesses, social initiatives and clubs, even in the most unfavorable conditions. In this case, scientific and technological Commerce can grow around and within universities. But if the University does not set the task of growing local and global businesses, and is positioned only as a cultural monopoly, then it can not avoid the dilemma between investing in passive assets of human capital and the risks of digital innovation.

Conclusion. The digital breakthrough in the conditions of economic turbulence stimulated the risks that universities inevitably “accepted”, although they had not yet transformed their ideologies and had not managed to overcome cognitive barriers. Network communication in the Internet will never replace live communication with a mentor, but it

will be able to “build” trajectories of uniting University teams for innovative scientific research, implementing technological projects and attracting digital mentors from all over the world [4]. Finding and working in such teams will definitely reduce the time needed to prepare digital projects, but there is a psychological risk of creating difficulties of trust and responsibility.

References

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