

Language Education in Nigeria and the Discursive Representations of Artificial Intelligence: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

This study critically evaluates the representations of Artificial Intelligence (henceforth, AI) - ideologically and linguistically, in educational discourse, addressing an important lacuna in the literature. It interrogates how AI is framed by dominant global narratives as an unbiased and liberal Educational Technology (henceforth, EdTech) for pedagogical advancement. Though, extant studies have looked at AI as a transformative pedagogical EdTech, however, there is a dire need to critically evaluate the ideological framings of such narratives. Drawing on Critical Discourse Analysis and the principles of Critical Applied Linguistics, the study examines select corpus consisting of national education policy documents and promotional materials from AI-based EdTech firms operating within Nigeria. The study which adopted the purposive sampling technique was able to select texts that overtly position AI in relation to language teaching and education reform. Findings indicate among other things that such representations often neglect the contextual realities, particularly in Nigerian classrooms. The study also notes that AI is chiefly represented through depoliticised, techno-utopian rhetoric that highlights proficiency and irrevocability while ignoring infrastructural challenges, pedagogical consequences as well as linguistic multiplicity. Findings also indicate that such conversations ignore the interventions of local educators in favour of outsourced technical aids. The study recommends localisation of conversations and AI policies, ensuring the inclusion and engagement of stakeholders as well as the advancement of critical digital literacy in Nigerian teacher education.

Keywords: *AI, Critical Discourse Analysis, education, discursive representations, language*

Introduction

The deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education has been largely dominated by technocratic optimism and neoliberal imaginaries, portraying it as a progressive and indispensable solution to pedagogical and infrastructural challenges in the Global South. In contemporary education discourse, particularly within global North-centric knowledge systems, AI is often discursively framed as an ideologically neutral, universally applicable innovation, imbued with potential to revolutionize teaching and learning through efficiency, objectivity, and personalization (Luckin et al., 2016; Holmes et al., 2019).

These discourses, disseminated through policy texts, EdTech promotional materials, and global forums, are frequently void of context, masking the structural inequalities, linguistic pluralities, and pedagogical complexities that define education in postcolonial contexts like Nigeria (Selwyn, 2016; Tikly, 2020). Within the Nigerian linguistic and educational ecosystem, an intricately layered sociolinguistic landscape comprising over 500 indigenous languages, language education is a site of ongoing contestation between local linguistic realities and the hegemonic influence of global (especially Anglophone) educational standards (Bamgbose, 2000; Igboanusi, 2006). The very idea of AI "enhancing" language education presupposes a homogeneous learner population and a stable linguistic policy framework, neither of which is reflective of the Nigerian classroom. Furthermore, language instruction in Nigeria often relies not only on grammatical instruction or lexical accuracy but also on locally curated idioms, proverbs, and culturally encoded metaphors that demand high cognitive and contextual competence, rooted in shared communal histories and oral traditions (Adegbija, 2004; Ozo-Mekuri, 2008). These indigenous semiotic resources, while potent for meaning-making are rarely encoded into AI-driven language systems that are trained on Euro-American corpora, and thus struggle to accommodate or replicate the metaphorical density of local communication. It is therefore, concerning that AI-inflected educational policies and corporate EdTech discourses sidestep teacher agency and epistemic contextualisation. As Pennycook (2001) and Blommaert (2005) argue, language education is not merely a cognitive task but a deeply ideological and identity-affirming process. Yet, representations of AI in Nigerian education policy tend to reproduce a depoliticised, techno-utopian narrative, where the teacher is reduced to a passive adopter and AI is elevated as an infallible guide. This marginalises local pedagogical innovations and erases the critical role of teachers as culturally competent agents capable of mediating between language, power, and community knowledge (Canagarajah, 2005). Therefore, the need arises for a critical interrogation of how AI is discursively constructed in the Nigerian educational space, particularly in relation to language teaching. Who is speaking in these discourses, and whose knowledge is being silenced? What assumptions underlie the representation of AI as pedagogically neutral or inevitable? To what extent do these narratives reflect or obscure the pluralistic, often contested realities of Nigerian classrooms? These are the questions that this study, anchored in Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995) and Critical Applied Linguistics (Pennycook, 2001) seeks to explore.

Theoretical Frameworks: Critical Discourse Analysis and Critical Applied Linguistics

This study adopted Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth, CDA) as a foundational framework to explore how discourses surrounding Artificial Intelligence in education reinforce ideological power relations. CDA enabled the investigation of how AI technologies are presented as neutral or progressive, while in reality, they may advance exclusionary narratives that marginalise local pedagogies, emotional intelligence and cultural identities. Through this framework, the study examined how the teacher's traditional role as moral guide and emotional anchor is subtly displaced by a mechanised, efficiency-driven model of education that prioritises standardisation over human-centered learning. In addition, insights from Critical Applied Linguistics (henceforth, CAL) are drawn to strengthen the analysis. It helped in exposing the technocentric and neoliberal ideologies embedded in these innovations; ideologies that often fail to account for the lived experiences of learners and the cultural specificities of classrooms. This framework guided the critique of AI's presumed universality, questioning whose values are being promoted and whose realities are being ignored in the reshaping of education through automation.

Review of Related Literature

Within the African context, and Nigeria in particular, the conversation around AI and EdTech has been less about technological efficiency and more about infrastructural, pedagogical, and cultural tensions. Scholars such as Olayemi and Akinyemi (2021) argue that EdTech in Nigeria often mimics Western models without adequate localization, leading to a disconnect between imported digital tools and local pedagogical practices. Similarly, Eze and Olatunji (2022) observe that while Nigeria's educational institutions are increasingly adopting AI-driven tools for instruction and assessment, there is insufficient discourse on how these tools represent (or fail to represent) indigenous languages, idioms, and epistemologies.

Several Nigerian researchers have drawn attention to the underrepresentation of local content in digital educational technologies. For example, Nwachukwu and Adegoke (2022) critique Nigeria's digital education policies for being driven more by development donor priorities than by the actual needs of teachers and learners. They argue that AI discourse in Nigeria is often couched in abstract promises of "smart classrooms" and "digital transformation," without adequately engaging with the lived experiences of educators, especially those in linguistically diverse and under-resourced regions. Critical scholarship is beginning to emerge that engages with the ideological framings of AI in education. Selwyn (2022), for instance, posits that AI technologies are not neutral tools but discursive artefacts shaped by broader political and economic agendas, often privileging efficiency, standardization, and surveillance over pedagogical distinction and human relationality. Knox (2020) extends this critique by showing how global EdTech narratives frame AI as an inevitable and beneficial force, thereby sidelining alternative educational visions rooted in communal knowledge and critical pedagogy. Within Nigeria, however, such critiques are still sparse.

Recent contributions from Nigerian scholars like Olumide and Ayoola (2023) and Yusuf and Oginni (2023) have begun to fill this gap. Olumide and Ayoola use discourse analysis to critique the language of Nigeria's national education policies, highlighting how technocratic and depersonalized framings obscure the complexities of teaching and learning. However, their work stops short of engaging with AI discourse specifically. Likewise, Yusuf and Oginni (2023) examine the political economy of digital education in Nigeria but do not extend their analysis to the linguistic and ideological representations embedded in AI.

Furthermore, there is scant attention paid to teacher agency in most AI discourses. As Canagarajah (2005) and Pennycook (2021) argue, teachers, especially in postcolonial contexts, are not mere implementers of policy but active agents who interpret, resist, or reframe dominant pedagogical narratives. Yet, within dominant EdTech rhetoric in Nigeria, teachers are often represented as technologically deficient subjects in need of training rather than as knowledgeable professionals with culturally rich pedagogical repertoires. This erasure has profound implications for language education, where teacher intuition, improvisation, and cultural embeddedness are essential to effective instruction. The representational inadequacies of AI systems are also epistemologically significant. AI models trained predominantly on English-language datasets originating from the Global North are often incapable of processing culturally distinct expressions, such as Nigerian proverbs, historical allusions, or code-switched discourse. As Madianou (2023) and Ndlovu (2021) argue, this results in a form of hermeneutic injustice, whereby certain communities' modes of expression and knowledge are rendered illegible or inferior within digital infrastructures.

This study, therefore, seeks to intervene in this growing yet uneven field of scholarship by offering a critical discourse analysis of AI representations in language education in Nigeria. Unlike prior studies that focus on policy implementation or technological infrastructure, this paper foregrounds

the language through which AI is imagined, justified, and legitimized. It interrogates the ideological positions embedded in promotional texts, policy documents, and institutional discourses surrounding AI in education, with particular attention to how these discourses frame knowledge, agency, language, and culture.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design, with data sourced from publicly accessible online platforms. Two secondary data sets were examined: (i) national education policy documents, retrieved from official government websites, and (ii) promotional materials published by AI-driven EdTech companies operating in Nigeria. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select texts that explicitly engage with Artificial Intelligence in the context of language education and pedagogical reform. Selection criteria included the presence of discursive markers around AI, education technology, and language instruction. The chosen texts were analysed using critical discourse analytical tools, focusing on their representational strategies, ideological framings, and implications for local educational practices in Nigeria.

Data Presentation and Discussion

Data 1

Corpus Excerpt (*National policy on ICT in education*, p. 6):

ICT offers great potentials in improving access to and quality of teaching and learning. It can serve as a pedagogical tool to support teachers and also offer alternative modes of instruction such as virtual learning, artificial intelligence applications, and adaptive learning systems which are aligned with global best practices."

Lexical Layer

This excerpt, while seemingly neutral, reveals a carefully curated lexical field of technocratic optimism: "great potentials," "improving access," "aligned with global best practices." These words are value-laden predicates that function as lexical legitimisers, offering no space for alternative epistemes or cultural pedagogies. AI, embedded as "application," is presented not as a sociolinguistic agent but as a benign tool.

However, such lexical abstractions obscure the cultural and linguistic landscapes in which language education is enacted in Nigeria. No mention is made of the multimodal and performative dimensions of Nigerian languages: the gestures, tonalities, contextual idioms, and oral storytelling traditions that infuse meaning beyond textual symbols (Bangbose, 2011). In this erasure, the document falls into what Obi Wali (1963) critiques as the "dead end" of language policy: the wholesale importation of alien epistemologies that neither reflect nor respect indigenous linguistic ecosystems. Like Achebe (1975) admonished, for the retooling and localising of English to "carry the weight" of African experience, until this policy is strongly recommends Ai built on local algorithm or lexicon this policy remains in the orbit of universalist, Anglophone techno-discourse, uninterrogated.

Discursive Practice

The AI rhetoric in the policy is built on imported discourses, drawing intertextually from global EdTech manifestos that favour efficiency and data-driven learning. This interdiscursivity is not harmless; it silences alternative language epistemologies that define Nigerian education. There is

no space for what we could aptly described as: Metaphorically implicated idioms and allusion that may be culturally embellished with doses of local connotations requiring some cognitive resources that would depend on shared local knowledge and historical context to decipher.

Indeed, these culturally laden forms - like the proverb “a child who washes his hands eats with kings” are not auxiliary to communication; they are core linguistic events in Nigerian education. Yet, the AI narrative offered here presumes an English-only, context-deaf, metaphor-blind architecture of learning; an epistemic bias that undercuts the semantic agility of local expressions (Igwe, 2020). Furthermore, the policy offers no recognition of teacher agency. AI is offered “to support teachers,” but the support is unidirectional and uncritical. There is no mention of teachers' interpretive labour, their cultural mediation of content, or their role in translating technological interfaces into meaningful classroom experience. It is what Canagarajah (2005) describes as the symbolic violence of pedagogical outsourcing.

Social Practice

This discursive framing draws unmistakable parallels to the language of African literature debate. Obi Wali (1963) had warned of the “dead end” that awaits African writers who fail to write in indigenous languages; his fear being not just linguistic alienation but epistemic death. This same fear animates this study. The AI being deployed into our classrooms carries a foreign lexicon, a cognitive schema built elsewhere, and pedagogical values that ignore our sociolinguistic ecologies. Achebe (1975), while defending English as a necessary bridge, insisted on “Nigerianising the language” - breaking it, reshaping it, enriching it with proverbs, cadence, rhythm, and idiom until it could carry the burden of African experience. This is precisely the kind of naturalisation and domestication that is demanded of AI. To do otherwise is to turn AI into a linguistic alien; a machine that cannot “hear” us, interpret our metaphors, or understand that “you dey craze?” may be camaraderie, not confrontation. It is to deploy educational technology that fails the test of local sense-making, leading not to transformation but distortion.

This is why AI's lexicon must be critically reimagined: unless that lexicon is rooted in Nigerian sociocultural semantics, and unless its inferencing models are tuned to our high-context communication style, it will always operate outside of meaning

Data 2

Corpus Excerpt (Punch, 26 February 2025):

“The world is undergoing a technological revolution, and Artificial Intelligence is at its core... As educators, we must embrace this evolution... The integration of AI into pedagogy offers an unprecedented opportunity to enhance learning experiences, personalise education, and develop critical thinking skills among our students... AI literacy will be as fundamental as reading and writing.”

Dr. Maruf Olatunji Alausa, Minister of Education

Textual Layer

The Minister's declaration that “the world is undergoing a technological revolution, and AI is at its core” is not a neutral observation. Lexically, it naturalises AI as a historical inevitability rather than a human-made choice, closing discursive space for debate or dissent. The modal verb “must” in “we must embrace this evolution” performs what linguists call a deontic obligation: it frames

technological adoption as a moral imperative rather than a pedagogical option. The rhetoric leaves no room for a question: Must we? Or should we first ask what “embrace” actually costs?

Crucially, terms like “unprecedented opportunity” and “fundamental as reading and writing” function as ideological boosters (Van Dijk, 1998). They are not mere descriptions but value-laden prescriptions that privilege technological solutions as the new orthodoxy. Yet, ironically, by equating AI literacy with reading and writing, the text implies parity between learning language, a deeply cultural and social act, and learning a tool, which is contextually blind.

The text, thus standardizes education: it makes no distinction between a child learning in Lagos and one in Nembe; between a classroom where a proverb unlocks comprehension, and a screen that recognises only text.

Discursive Practice

Drawing from CAL, the text is clearly interdiscursively stitched together from the global EdTech imaginary, replete with buzzwords: “personalise,” “enhance,” “critical thinking.” These terms are genre-anchored clichés in corporate AI marketing (Pennycook, 2001). But what is missing is telling: no mention of mother tongue instruction, no reference to multilingualism, no nod to oral traditions or to the high-context pragmatics of Nigerian classrooms (Hall, 1976).

The omission is ideological. By importing foreign discourses wholesale, the text erases teacher agency (Canagarajah, 2005): educators become implementers of algorithms rather than interpreters of culture. Where is the teacher who deciphers irony in a student’s “No wahala, sir” a phrase that could signal consent, resistance, or quiet dissent depending on context? Where is the classroom laughter after a teasing proverb, which AI cannot parse because it does not “hear” irony, only words?

Social Practice

As earlier discussed, the ideological framing here directly mirrors the Achebe–Wali language controversy. Obi Wali (1963) warned that African creative expression, conducted in foreign languages, risks epistemic alienation. Similarly, AI built on imported corpora risks turning classrooms into linguistic deserts, where local metaphors and shared histories are irrelevant to algorithmic logic. Achebe (1975) countered that English could work if broken, localised, Nigerianised. But the Minister’s speech shows no gesture toward this domestication of AI. The text assumes that AI systems, designed and trained on Anglo-American data, can “personalise” learning without teaching us; our code-switching, our humour, our silences.

Can AI interpret when a teacher pauses after “A toad does not run in the daytime for nothing,” waiting for the students to infer the unspoken moral? Can AI hear the pragmatic force of a student saying “You sefi!” sometimes rebuke, sometimes playful solidarity? The answer is no. AI, trained for low-context, literal processing, is pragmatically deaf to the multimodal, relational, high-context nature of Nigerian classrooms.

Pragmatic Implications

Meaning in Nigerian classrooms is not literal; it is relational and contextual. Silence, gesture, tone, eye movement, these are part of the pragmatic embroidery (Levinson, 1983). AI, in its current textual architecture, cannot process these. The claim that AI will “develop critical thinking skills” becomes deeply ironic: AI fosters quick answers, autocomplete thinking, dependency on the

machine; it truncates the long, discursive wrestling with meaning that critical thinking requires (Selwyn, 2011). Indeed, as we see in practice, students now “think” on Google, not in dialogue.

Data 3

Corpus Excerpt (Promotional Text from an AI EdTech firm, 2024):

Revolutionise your language classroom with cutting-edge AI tools! Personalise learning, boost student engagement, and prepare your learners for a globalised future. AI-driven analytics track progress in real-time, helping educators focus on what truly matters. Join thousands of innovative schools already transforming education with us.

Textual Layer

The text deploys highly evaluative, promotional lexis: “revolutionise,” “cutting-edge,” “boost,” “transforming.” Such lexical choices do more than describe technology; they position it as a messianic solution (Fairclough, 1992). This is what Fairclough (1995) would call the naturalisation of ideology: technological change is presented not as a choice but as inevitable progress. Notice how “prepare your learners for a globalised future” subtly frames globalisation as inherently desirable, sidestepping the debate about whose global norms are privileged, and whose linguistic resources are marginalised (Pennycook, 2001).

Which “global future”? And at what cultural cost? Moreover, the call to “join thousands of innovative schools” creates synthetic inclusion: an imagined community of progressives vs. an implied group of laggards who resist AI.

Discursive Practice

The promotional text is an interdiscursive blend of corporate marketing language and educational reform discourse. This fusion is ideologically significant. By borrowing the voice of global best practices, it performs what Pennycook (2001) terms a colonisation of discourse space: global AI narratives replace local pedagogical conversations. Where in this text do we see the local teacher who code-switches mid-lesson to explain a difficult concept? Where is the oral narrative tradition that uses proverbs and humour to anchor abstract grammar in cultural memory? This silence is not neutral; it reveals a Western technocentric bias: teaching is imagined as data delivery, stripped of cultural mediation and embodied performance.

This is precisely what Critical Applied Linguistics (Pennycook, 2001) warns against: the uncritical importation of tools that ignore sociolinguistic heterogeneity and power asymmetries. What happens when AI meets a classroom where meaning is built through call-and-response, gesture, and shared cultural metaphors? If AI cannot process a student’s switch to Pidgin for emphasis, can it truly “personalise” learning?

Subtle Ideological Moves

The text names AI-driven tools; it does not name local languages, cultural pedagogies, or teacher agency. It foregrounds analytics and data, ignoring communal learning practices that prioritise relational knowledge. It uses the metaphor of “boost” and “revolutionise” but never “nurture,” “mediate,” or “translate” terms central to human teaching in Nigerian contexts.

This reveals an ideological preference for quantifiable knowledge over culturally embedded, qualitative forms of meaning-making. If AI personalises only what it can quantify, what happens to what we communicate in silence? If an algorithm cannot “hear” irony or decode a proverb, does

that knowledge become irrelevant? When technology “revolutionises” teaching, whose revolution is it and at what cultural price? These concerns are obviously not addressed.

The argument of this present study resonates even stronger; AI in education must be domesticated, Nigerianised with our local lexicon in order to bear the burden of our experiences. Otherwise, it will become the launching-pad for the erasure of our realities. Already, the status of the English language is high in Nigeria, and for Nigerians, it has become a perpetual scar on the forehead. For our indigenous languages, a deadly cancer eating deep into their hearts.

Data 4

Promotional Corpus: SmartLingua AI, 2025

“SmartLingua AI transforms language learning through adaptive algorithms. With 99.9% accuracy in grammar correction and native-speaker pronunciation models, it bridges linguistic gaps instantly. Say farewell to mother-tongue interference and elevate your classroom to the global stage. Empower students with real-time feedback, progress badges, and interactive voice recognition - no teachers required.”

Textual Layer

At first glance, this promotional text appears to offer a neutral technological solution for language classrooms. Yet, a closer interrogation through Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1992, 1995) and Critical Applied Linguistics (Pennycook, 2001) reveals a carefully coded ideological narrative with profound implications for linguistic identity and pedagogy. The opening verb “transforms” is loaded with promise and presupposition; it frames AI as an agent of radical change, naturalising the belief that existing teaching practices are inadequate. This is consistent with what Selwyn (2011) terms the techno-utopian narrative: the vision of technology as an inherently progressive force, presented without empirical difference or critical engagement with local pedagogical contexts. Further, lexical choices like “99.9% accuracy” and “native-speaker pronunciation models” perform what Fairclough (1995) describes as scientific legitimization. Presenting value-laden claims as neutral facts. But whose “native speaker” is being positioned as the gold standard? And what becomes of local variations, accents, and speech rhythms rooted in cultural experience? Perhaps the most ideologically charged phrase is: “Say farewell to mother-tongue interference.” From a CAL perspective (Pennycook, 2001), this statement is deeply problematic. It constructs mother tongues not as cognitive resources or identity markers, but as impediments to be surgically removed by technology. Yet, accent, cadence, and pragmatic transfer from mother tongues are not random “errors” but carry cultural identity, history, and meaning (Bamgbose, 2011). They are part of the socio-semiotic repertoire through which Nigerian learners position themselves in discourse. To dismiss these as “interference” is to erase learners’ linguistic biography and communal belonging. It echoes colonial-era discourses where local speech was delegitimised, and standardised British English was enshrined as the mark of civilisation (Igwe, 2020). If your accent holds the laughter of your grandmother, the rhythm of your community, and the idioms of your childhood; can a correction algorithm truly call it wrong?

Pragmatic Implications

At the pragmatic level (Levinson, 1983; Hall, 1976), the promotional text presupposes that language is merely a formal system of grammar and pronunciation. It ignores the high-context nature of Nigerian classrooms, where meaning is embedded in tone, silence, proverbs, gestures, and shared cultural memory. AI’s promise of “real-time feedback, progress badges, and voice

recognition” may correct surface errors but cannot interpret the pragmatic subtleties of, say, a Yoruba proverb, the teasing tone in Pidgin, or the metaphorical weight of an Igbo idiom. It is blind to irony, communal humour, and contextual politeness strategies essential for genuine communicative competence. If AI corrects “no wahala” to “no problem,” it flattens not just language but cultural differences.

Discursive Practice

The final assertion “no teachers required” enacts what Canagarajah (2005) terms the symbolic displacement of local pedagogical agency. It reconfigures language learning as data-driven self-service, where meaning-making is outsourced to algorithms trained on external norms. This reflects neoliberal discourses of efficiency and individualisation (Fairclough, 1995), which downplay the relational, improvisational, and locally situated expertise teachers bring, particularly critical in multilingual, high-context societies. Can an algorithm smile, pause, or retell a local proverb to scaffold comprehension?

Social Practice

As argued earlier, this ideological framing mirrors the historic Achebe-Obi Wali debate. Wali (1963) warned of the epistemic dead end in adopting an external linguistic medium disconnected from African experience. Achebe (1975), while defending English, insisted it must be “Nigerianised” broken, bent, and refashioned to carry the burden of local realities.

Yet, the promotional text does not propose a Nigerianised AI, trained on local corpora or attuned to indigenous registers. Instead, it offers an abstract, decontextualised standard. It thus risks leading Nigerian classrooms toward what Wali called “the dead end” a space where language teaching becomes an instrument of alienation, not empowerment.

If the tool cannot “hear” our proverbs, does it really teach our children—or merely reprogram them?

Discussion of Findings

The study discovered among other things that promotional AI discourses, especially those promoting “native-speaker accuracy,” subtly reinforce the erasure of mother-tongue identities. Findings show that what is framed as “eliminating interference” is, in fact, an ideological rejection of local linguistic realities. This affirms fears that such technologies may repackage colonial linguistic hierarchies under the guise of neutrality. The study also revealed that while AI excels at grammar and form, it fails to decode the rich pragmatics of Nigerian languages; our idioms, proverbs, tones, and gestures. Findings show that AI flattens culturally embedded meaning, turning deeply symbolic expressions into bland literalism. When systems cannot grasp the humour in “You sef!” or the wisdom in a Izon proverb, what kind of linguistic competence are we really cultivating? Most crucially, the study found that the teacher in a Nigerian classroom is more than an instructor; they guide, sense, affirm, and correct beyond the curriculum. Findings show that AI lacks this emotional and moral presence. It cannot perceive a student’s silent struggle, nor inspire courage in failure. The research strongly argues: without the human teacher, education loses its soul.

Conclusion

The modern classroom is a social space where teaching transcends the mere delivery of content; it is a relational and affective arena where the teacher's role as a moral guide, character moulder, and emotional presence is indispensable. In our educational system, upon graduation, students are

awarded degrees not only for learning but also in character, which attests to the multidimensional influence teachers exert. This dual focus reveals that education is not a neutral or purely cognitive enterprise; rather, it is a humanizing and ethical process.

AI, regardless of its sophistication, lacks the emotional intelligence to engage a disenchanted student, to perceive silent cues of distress, or to tailor its responses based on the distinctive socio-emotional realities of learners. This incapacity has deep pragmatic implications, since meaning in communication is not just in words but in contexts, intonations, and unspoken expectations; all of which human teachers interpret and respond to fluidly.

Moreover, the teacher's emotive presence is not ancillary but central to learning. The laughter that breaks the ice, the sigh that signals disapproval, the empathetic gaze that reassures; all these are communicative acts embedded with meaning and influence, which AI cannot genuinely reproduce. The deployment of AI in pedagogy, without caution, risks a sterile classroom environment, devoid of warmth and character formation. Thus, as CAL argues, educational decisions are never apolitical or neutral. We must be wary of discourses that render teacher's passive or redundant, and that frame students as mere data points to be optimized by algorithms.

In sum, to teach is to influence not only the intellect but also the soul and conduct. The AI-in-classroom discourse must be critically challenged for what it risks erasing: the human heart of education.

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