


# Chapter 2

## AI in Action: Practical Insights and Strategies for Educators

**Christina Salazar**

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-0596-5338>

*University of North Texas, Dallas, USA*

### **ABSTRACT**

*As AI tools enter educational spaces, educators face questions about how to integrate them responsibly, ethically, and with pedagogical integrity. This chapter offers a practice-based exploration of AI use in teacher education, grounded in Critical Digital Pedagogy (CDP). Drawing on the author's experiences as an early-career lecturer at an urban university, the chapter presents illustrative cases that showcase AI in lesson planning, assignment design, student engagement, and ethical dilemmas. It includes critical reflection on how outputs were adapted or reimaged to support humanizing teaching. Broader implications for K–12 and post-secondary educators are addressed, including strategies for designing assignments that resist mechanization, fostering critical AI literacy among students, and navigating emerging concerns around authorship. Rather than offering prescriptive solutions, the chapter invites educators to engage with AI critically and creatively.*

### **INTRODUCTION: THE PROMISE AND PROBLEM OF AI IN EDUCATION**

The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in education has created a wave of excitement, apprehension, and experimentation. Across K–12 and post-secondary contexts, educators are increasingly encountering AI-generated content in student submissions, exploring AI tools for lesson planning, and grappling with

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-1122-7.ch002

new ethical questions around authorship, learning, and assessment. The promise of AI is compelling: automation of repetitive tasks, rapid access to instructional materials, and new ways to differentiate instruction. Yet this same promise raises profound pedagogical and ethical challenges. If not approached critically, AI can flatten the complex, relational, and equity-oriented nature of education into something mechanical, generic, and depersonalized.

As an early-career teacher educator navigating this landscape in real time, I have found myself both drawn to and wary of AI's growing presence in my instructional planning and classroom practices. I have witnessed firsthand how AI can serve as a catalyst for innovation—generating ideas, modeling language, or saving time on routine tasks. But I have also seen how quickly it can obscure the nuance of student thinking, reinforce deficit perspectives, or erode the meaningful struggle and reflection that are essential to deep learning. The tension is not merely about whether to use AI or not, but how we use it, and more importantly, how we position ourselves in relation to it as educators committed to equity and humanization.

This chapter is written in response to that tension. Its purpose is to offer grounded, practice-based insights into the integration of AI tools in the early stages of a teaching career—insights that are both practical and critically reflective. Rather than providing a checklist of dos and don'ts, I aim to open up the complexities of working with AI in educational spaces. Through a series of illustrative cases drawn from my own teaching in a teacher preparation program, I demonstrate how AI tools can be engaged, resisted, repurposed, and transformed through a critical pedagogical lens. I write not from a position of mastery, but from one of inquiry, experimentation, and reflection.

At the heart of this chapter is the framework of Critical Digital Pedagogy (CDP), which asserts that digital tools are never neutral and that teaching with technology must be rooted in care, context, and justice. CDP encourages us to ask: *Whose knowledge is privileged by AI? Whose labor is made invisible? What forms of thinking are promoted, and which are sidelined?* These questions have guided my exploration and shaped my responses when AI outputs failed to meet the needs of my students or challenged the pedagogical commitments I hold. Throughout the chapter, I examine not just how I used AI, but why I revised it, resisted it, or reimagined it—anchoring my practice in theory and reflection.

This chapter is particularly relevant for educators who are navigating similar crossroads. While my context is post-secondary teacher education, the questions I raise and the strategies I share resonate with the realities of K–12 classrooms as well. Teachers at all levels are facing new pressures to adapt to technologies that are evolving faster than our pedagogical frameworks can catch up. Many educators are encountering a paradox: on the one hand, school systems are pushing for “innovation,” often in the form of new technologies; on the other hand, the same systems

28 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: [www.igi-global.com/chapter/ai-in-action/385743](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/ai-in-action/385743)

## Related Content

---

### AI-Driven Innovations: Transforming Healthcare, Agriculture, and Environmental Science

Muhammad Usman Tariq (2025). *The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing Applied Life Sciences* (pp. 87-118).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/ai-driven-innovations/377728](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/ai-driven-innovations/377728)

### Making Use of Multi-Modal Synchrony: A Model of Acoustic Packaging to Tie Words to Actions

Britta Wrede, Lars Schillingmann and Katharina J. Rohlfing (2013). *Theoretical and Computational Models of Word Learning: Trends in Psychology and Artificial Intelligence* (pp. 224-240).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/making-use-multi-modal-synchrony/74896](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/making-use-multi-modal-synchrony/74896)

### Automatic Folder Allocation System for Electronic Text Document Repositories Using Enhanced Bayesian Classification Approach

Wou Onn Choo, Lam Hong Lee, Yen Pei Tay, Khang Wen Goh, Dino Isa and Suliman Mohamed Fati (2019). *International Journal of Intelligent Information Technologies* (pp. 1-19).

[www.irma-international.org/article/automatic-folder-allocation-system-for-electronic-text-document-repositories-using-enhanced-bayesian-classification-approach/225066](http://www.irma-international.org/article/automatic-folder-allocation-system-for-electronic-text-document-repositories-using-enhanced-bayesian-classification-approach/225066)

### Fuzzy Logic Inference-Based Automated Water Irrigation System

Usha Patel, Parita Rajiv Oza, Riya Revdiwala, Utsav Mukeshchandra Haveliwala, Smita Agrawal and Preeti Kathiria (2022). *International Journal of Ambient Computing and Intelligence* (pp. 1-15).

[www.irma-international.org/article/fuzzy-logic-inference-based-automated-water-irrigation-system/304726](http://www.irma-international.org/article/fuzzy-logic-inference-based-automated-water-irrigation-system/304726)

### Diabetic Retinopathy Severity Prediction Using Deep Learning Techniques

Victor Paul, Bivek Benoy Paul and R. Raju (2023). *International Journal of Intelligent Information Technologies* (pp. 1-19).

[www.irma-international.org/article/diabetic-retinopathy-severity-prediction-using-deep-learning-techniques/329929](http://www.irma-international.org/article/diabetic-retinopathy-severity-prediction-using-deep-learning-techniques/329929)