

# Chapter 3

## The Co-CreAltive Turn: Rethinking Teaching through AI Persona Frameworks

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter reimagines the role of AI-powered instructional tools in K–12 education through the lens of co-creAltivity—a pedagogical stance in which learners and artificial agents jointly engage in the production of knowledge, meaning, and creativity. Going beyond the utilitarian logic of virtual tutors and content delivery systems, the chapter offers a philosophical and design-based critique of current AI integration practices. It proposes a new typology of AI personas—Catalyst, Companion, Critic, and Curator—each embodying a distinct mode of human–AI co-agency in K–12 contexts. . Drawing on current debates in AI ethics and educational philosophy, the chapter argues that the future of AI in K–12 education hinges not on how smart these tools become, but on how wisely we design them to amplify human flourishing. Co-creAltivity, in this light, is not a method but a mandate—to ensure that AI remains a partner in learning, not its master.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

*“The mind is its own place, and in itself /  
Can make a heav’n of hell, a hell of heav’n.”  
Paradise Lost, (1692) Book One, lines 254-255  
John Milton*

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-2637-5.ch003

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Since November 2022, a new kind of educational “hell” has broken loose: Generative AI has breached most classroom walls, with the full consequences still uncharted (Hill 2025). This breach has touched most of the treasured, almost un-touchable, aspects of education, even, yes, creativity. Creativity, once the treasured hallmark of human ingenuity, now has been flipped on its head by machine learning, with recent evidence clearly showing that, in several convergent and divergent creativity tasks, machines can now perform better (Hubert et al. 2024; Garcia, 2024). All of us humans are often quite shocked to see that technical analyses of GPT-4 document outputs that even their developers did not anticipate (OpenAI et al., 2023), and comparative studies reveal that human–AI partnerships often yield artefacts judged higher in originality and contextual fit than either partner achieves alone (Rafner et al., 2023; Bown et al., 2025). Theoretically, these results align with novel accounts of distributed creativity, which describe novelty as a property emerging from the reciprocal adjustment of human intention, cultural norms and algorithmic affordances (Grilli & Pedota, 2024; Moruzzi & Margarido, 2024; Vinchon et al., 2023), as well as with dialogic pedagogy’s claim that understanding grows in the interplay of distinct voices (Wegerif, 2011). Yet classrooms have been slow to embrace this dialogic potential. Governments now mandate AI competencies in more than forty K-12 curricula (UNESCO, 2022), and analysts project global spending on AI-enhanced education to exceed USD 110 billion by 2034 (Shivarkar, 2025). However, still most deployments position AI as an efficient tutor or grader, optimising speed and accuracy while giving scant attention to socio-emotional growth or exploratory thinking (Létourneau et al., 2025).

This implementation gap matters. Meta-reviews find that such instrumental uses can foster over-reliance, weaken metacognitive monitoring and amplify hidden biases (Zafari et al., 2022; Zhai et al., 2021; Ahmad et al., 2023). Critical analyses further caution that opaque recommendation engines and the energy demands of large models may entrench inequity and threaten sustainability goals of education (Al-Zahrani, 2024). Interventions like DeBiasMe show that metacognitive prompts can temper algorithmic blind spots, yet they also underscore a broader design challenge: without mechanisms that invite learners to critique and steer machine behaviour, the promise of AI remains captive to the limitations it inherits (Lim 2025

Against this backdrop, the present paper advances a **co-creAIitive turn**—a deliberate shift from automating instruction to cultivating human–AI dialogues that enlarge the space of possible thought. Building on distributed-creativity theory and dialogic learning, I articulate four adaptable personas—Catalyst, Companion, Critic and Curator—that map AI contributions onto the interaction dimensions of control, feedback, pace and transparency. The Catalyst injects surprising associations that widen conceptual search spaces, a function arguably conducive to spur divergent thinking. The Companion monitors affect and motivation, presenting the idea that

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