

# Ethos, Pathos, Logos: Moving the GenAI Conversation From Heuristics to Hermeneutics

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The rapid integration of generative artificial intelligence (genAI) in education has spurred significant conversations about its potential to transform traditional teaching and learning. However, the excitement around genAI's potential often overshadows necessary deliberations on its impact on traditional human-to-human learning environments. This article explores the ethical and pedagogical implications of the rapid integration of generative artificial intelligence (genAI) into traditional educational settings. Specifically, the author examines the immediate and long-term pedagogic implications of incorporating genAI in classrooms, urging an ethically grounded, reflective approach. Drawing parallels with the hasty adoption of smartphones and other educational technologies as sound instructional modalities, the author provides a framework for a cautious, deliberate approach to genAI adoption that emphasizes hermeneutic reflection over heuristic urgency, advocating for stakeholders' collaboration to maintain human-centered learning values.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The rapid integration of generative artificial intelligence (genAI) in education has spurred significant conversations about its potential to transform teaching and learning. However, the excitement around genAI often overshadows necessary deliberations on its impact on human-to-human learning environments. Extant research evinces that interpersonal interactions have long supported a learner's cognitive, emotional, and social growth. This chapter explores the ethical and pedagogical implications of the rapid integration of genAI into traditional educational settings. Specifically, the author examines the immediate and long-term implications of incorporating genAI in classrooms, urging an ethically grounded, reflective approach. Drawing parallels with the hasty adoption of smartphones and other educational technologies as sound instructional modalities, the author provides a framework for a cautious, deliberate approach

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to genAI adoption that emphasizes hermeneutic (deliberate) reflection over heuristic (hasty) urgency, advocating for stakeholders' collaboration to maintain human-centered learning practices.

The rise of genAI has fueled widespread interest in potential applications showing early promise in improving teaching and supporting long-term student learning gains. However, this excitement may cloud a clearer understanding of what it means to introduce AI technologies in classrooms where learners may benefit more meaningfully from interpersonal communication and teacher presence. Enthusiasm often hinges on technological capabilities rather than addressing how these tools enhance a learner's potential cognitive, emotional, and social needs. Priporas et al. (2024) noted in the cautionary tale that the rapid adoption of recent technologies like the smartphone risks creating environments where students are overstimulated to distraction rather than meaningfully engaged. Proponents tout genAI's potential to streamline instruction while providing real-time insights into learner progress that can help personalize learning experiences. Yet, considering the excitement around its latent capabilities, it is crucial to question the ethical ramifications prompted by AI-powered pedagogy. By examining the heuristic-driven urgency often seen in educational technology adoption, the author argues for a more iterative hermeneutic approach, emphasizing deliberate and thoughtful reflection in favor of efficiency and expediency.

Questions emerge about the seeming immediacy of introducing genAI into classrooms. There is already such an infusion to the point of excess saturation of technology in education (Priporas et al., 2024). Educators and researchers are in the infancy of understanding the long-term impacts that using technology to supplement or replace human-to-human teaching has on durable learning outcomes. One need only look at how quickly cell phones have become a ubiquitous learning tool, rivaling and, in some cases, replacing the traditional textbook. While not much has changed about the traditional textbook, it can be confidently stated that the advance of the analog cell phone to the smartphone has impacted teaching and learning in ways educators and researchers are still at the precipice of fully understanding. Unique to adopting smartphones in classrooms is how quickly they were accepted as a technology norm without the vetting one typically expects when adopting new, untested technologies. Many unanswered questions have followed, ranging from equal access to teaching effectiveness through negative impacts on cognitive and emotional development (Alhumaid, 2019). It is a cautionary tale being played out in school districts nationwide. What was once revered as a breakthrough technology and learning tool that could propel teaching into a new era is now being reexamined as a negative catalyst impeding student growth. This comes in response to increasing concerns among stakeholders that allowing cell phones in schools under the guise of an educational supplement has become a tool of distraction and "lazy" learning (Huey & Giguere, 2023). Accordingly, the author suggests using a hermeneutic perspective rather than a heuristic perspective to analyze existing research on genAI's integration to interpret broader implications if it is to be fully integrated.

## **SHIFTING THE GENAI NARRATIVE FROM HEURISTICS TO HERMENEUTICS**

### **Ethical Considerations in genAI Adoption**

As the integration of genAI becomes more prevalent, the ethics of replacing or supplementing human-to-human interactions requires more directed deliberations. As educators increasingly leverage genAI technologies, it becomes imperative to consider the ethical implications embedded in these rapid transitions. Accordingly, the dialogue must shift from the heuristic impulse to fast-track adoption based

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