BIoLAE - Journal
Britain International of Linguistics, Arts and Education Sciences Journal
Publish : March - July - November
E-ISSN: 2685 - 4813
P-ISSN: 2685 - 4805
http://biarjournal.com/index.php/biolae

"Come and See" in the Age of Algorithms : Reconfiguring the Johannine Pedagogical Triangle in the Face of Artificial Intelligence

Nomenjanahary Jenny Patrick[1], Robijaona Rahelivololoniaina Baholy[1,2,3]
[1]Oniversity FJKM Ravelojaona, Reformed University of Madagascar, Interepistemological Doctoral School, Antananarivo, Madagascar
[2]Industrial, Agricultural and Food Process and Systems Engineering, Doctoral School, University of Antananarivo, Antananarivo, Madagascar
[3]Polytechnic School of Antananarivo, University of Antananarivo, Antananarivo, Madagascar
Email: baholy.robijaona@univ-antananarivo.mg

Abstract:
The rapid integration of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) into educational institutions introduces profound anthropological, sociological, and theological challenges to traditional formative practices. This study establishes a rigorous interdisciplinary critique of Large Language Models (LLMs) by contrasting modern computational operations with the ancient relational structures found in the first-century Mediterranean world. Utilizing a qualitative, socio-historical, and exegetical methodology anchored in the discipleship recruitment narrative of John 1 :35–51, this research systematically retrieves three foundational Johannine concepts: akoloutheō (existential rupture), menō (intimate, temporal dwelling), and horaō (progressive spiritual vision). These philological elements, contextualized through ancient honor/shame dynamics and social memory theory, are mapped onto Jean Houssaye's classical pedagogical triangle to diagnose the structural disruptions caused by digital acceleration. The findings reveal a fundamental ontological incompatibility between the relational requirements of authentic human formation and the transactional efficiency of predictive computing. While AI functions effectively as an "exegetical orthosis" (a supportive auxiliary tool for data aggregation and linguistic refinement), its total substitution as a pedagogical prosthesis destroys the educator's testimonial authority (martyria) and short-circuits the learner's necessary internal "struggle with the text." Consequently, this article proposes an innovative normative framework termed a "pedagogy of augmented dwelling." Articulated through six operational guiding principles – including the primacy of personal study, the closed-loop rule, and the absolute unavailability of the internal forum – this model successfully domesticates algorithmic tools. Ultimately, this research demonstrates that the Christological invitation to "come and see" cannot be reduced to automated prompt-response mechanics, but imperatively demands physical presence, temporal duration, and lived, incarnate encounter.

Keywords: *Johannine pedagogy; generative artificial intelligence; houssaye's triangle; pedagogy of augmented dwelling; socio-historical exegesis.*

I. Introduction

1.1 The Promise and Peril of Project-Based Learning

The contemporary educational landscape is currently traversing what can be sociological termed a "change of era" (Francis, 2020), a systemic mutation precipitated by the meteoric rise and ubiquitous integration of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI). The emergence of Large Language Models (LLMs)—such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude—does not merely introduce advanced instrumental tools designed to optimize administrative efficiency or cognitive outsourcing. Instead, it strikes directly at the ontological heart of the pedagogical relationship:

DOI: *https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20501170*

the complex, triadic mutual engagement between the educator, the learner, and knowledge (Houssaye, 1996). Traditional pedagogy, particularly within its formative, ethical, and religious dimensions, has historically been predicated upon the primacy of personal encounter, lived testimony, and the deliberate, slow labor of "dwelling" within a text or a linguistic tradition. Today, the uncritical deployment of AI threatens to reduce this delicate, relational ecology to a hyper-rationalized, transactional process of automated information retrieval and algorithmic content generation (Postman, 1993 ; Usman, 2024).

This technological intrusion into the formative sphere raises a fundamental problem regarding the nature of pedagogical discernment. The central research question may be formulated as follows: To what extent can generative AI be integrated as a legitimate functional auxiliary in formative and religious education without inducing an ontological mutation that collapses the pedagogical act into a mere information management system, thereby evacuating its irreplaceable relational and pneumatological dimensions ? To address this complex intersection of technology and faith formation, this study implements a multi-dimensional theological, sociological, and hermeneutical framework. It anchors its theoretical inquiry in a structural cross-examination: the Johannine narrative of the first disciples' recruitment (John 1:35–51) and Jean Houssaye's pedagogical triangle (Houssaye, 1996).

Unlike strictly empirical or quantitative assessments of technology in classrooms, this research proceeds through a qualitative, exegetical, and systematic theological methodology. It synthesizes four distinct analytical streams: the socio-historical analysis of the Fourth Gospel (Brown, 1985 ; Ashton, 2007 ; Schröter & Jacobi, 2022) ; the cultural anthropology of the first-century Mediterranean world, specifically its honor/shame dynamics (Neyrey, 1988 ; Fisher, 1992 ; Rohrbaugh, 2010); contemporary social memory theory (Kirk, 2018 ; Keith, 2020) ; and the didactic triangle modeled by Houssaye (1996). By juxtaposing these fields, the study aims to provide a robust framework for ethical and spiritual discernment, ensuring that the educational community successfully domesticates these advanced algorithmic systems rather than succumbing to a form of technological enslavement. Ultimately, this article proposes a new conceptual paradigm—the "pedagogy of augmented dwelling"—articulated around six fundamental guiding principles designed to safeguard the human and spiritual core of the formative enterprise.

The Johannine call narrative (John 1:35–51) offers an instructive socio-theological paradigm for this contemporary critique. Within the narrative fabric of the Fourth Gospel, the recruitment of the first disciples transcends a simple invitation to follow an itinerant rabbi; it represents a radical call to enter into an intimate, perichoretic relationship that historically mirrors the eternal, dialogical communion between the Father and the Son (Ashton, 2007). This formative process of social and spiritual reorientation is textually structured around a precise triad of Greek verbs: akoloutheō (to follow), menō (to dwell/abide), and horaō (to see) (Lamb, 2014).

In the highly competitive Mediterranean context where public honor functioned as the primary socio-cultural currency, the decision to follow a Galilean originating from Nazareth—a despised, marginal village—represented an acute risk of social degradation and loss of honor. However, the text strategically counterbalances this vulnerability by conferring an absolute, celestial honor upon the community through a progressive disclosure of high Christological titles (Neyrey, 1988 ; Fisher, 1992). This ancient socio-theological paradox directly mirrors the critical challenge confronting contemporary educators: the urgent necessity to engage with the

disruptive, decentralized power of generative AI without abdicating the testimonial, incarnate, and relational authority that constitutes the very essence of the teaching vocation.

II. Research methods

2.1 Materials

The systemic investigation into the epistemological intersection of pedagogical relationality and algorithmic intelligence necessitates a multifaceted corpus of technological, exegetical, and philosophical materials. Rather than focusing on transient software iterations, the selection of these materials targets the core structures of automated linguistic production and ancient relational texts.

a. Generative AI as an object of theological reflection

The primary technological objects evaluated in this study comprise prominent, state-of-the-art general-purpose Large Language Models (LLMs)—specifically ChatGPT (OpenAI), Claude (Anthropic), DeepSeek, and Gemini (Google)—alongside specialized adaptive learning platforms derived from these architectures. The analytical focus does not reside on their technical processing speeds, but rather on their underlying operational logic: namely, heavy statistical correlation, predictive tokenization, and probabilistic semantic generation (Floridi, 2014 ; Russell, 2019). This study treats these computational frameworks as active socio-cultural artifacts, analyzing their structural modes of output generation in direct contrast with classical and contemporary theological understandings of teaching (*docere*), learning (*discere*), and spiritual formation (*paideia*).

b. Biblical, hermeneutical, and philosophical corpus

The primary textual material serving as the exegetical anchor for this research is the Gospel of John, with specific analytical focus directed toward the call narrative of the first disciples in John 1:35–51. In order to perform a rigorous linguistic and structural analysis of this narrative framework, key Greek thematic verbs—specifically *akoloutheō* (to follow), *menō* (to dwell/abide), and *horaō* (to see) are critically examined through authoritative philological lexicons and historical-critical commentaries. Rather than treating this text in isolation, the study cross-examines the primary biblical material by integrating four distinct streams of secondary literature, thereby establishing a robust dialogue between historical textuality, cultural anthropology, and modern educational theory.

This cross-disciplinary evaluation relies heavily on foundational Johannine scholarship, drawing from critical historical and literary analyses of the Fourth Gospel to establish the theological and narrative boundaries of the text (Brown, 1985 ; Dunn, 1992 ; Beck, 1997 ; Ashton, 2007 ; Hera, 2013). To contextualize these literary findings within the concrete social reality of the ancient world, the research incorporates socio-historical and anthropological frameworks that explore the complex honor/shame matrices of the first-century Mediterranean environment (Neyrey, 1988 ; Fisher, 1992), while simultaneously utilizing contemporary social memory theory to understand how these relational events were preserved and transmitted within the early Christian community (Kirk, 2018 ; Keith, 2020).

Furthermore, this historical-critical paradigm is enriched by an engagement with patristic and historical commentaries, most notably the theological reflections of Cyril of Alexandria (2013), which emphasize the mystical, incarnational, and relational dimensions of Johannine hermeneutics. Finally, these diverse biblical and historical insights are systematically mapped

onto contemporary educational models by contrasting them with the triadic pedagogical philosophy of Houssaye (1996). This conversation is further conceptualized through the structural tenets of Thomistic theological anthropology and Reformed pneumatology, providing the ultimate theoretical framework necessary to evaluate the spiritual implications of technological mediation in the formative act.

2.2 Methods

a. Systematic theological analysis

The methodological framework of this study is structurally anchored in the didactic model proposed by Houssaye (1996), whose pedagogical triangle conceptualizes any educational dynamic through the critical interplay of three constitutive poles: Knowledge, the Teacher, and the Learner. Within this triadic topology, three distinct, relational processes emerge, namely Teaching, which occupies the axis between the Teacher and Knowledge; Forming, which governs the existential space between the Teacher and the Learner; and Learning, which defines the direct intellectual engagement between the Learner and Knowledge.

When this sociological and pedagogical matrix is transposed onto the narrative fabric of the Johannine recruitment account in John 1:35–51, the dominant configurations can be clearly identified as the processes of Forming and Learning. In this specific theological setting, the dynamic of Forming is structurally embodied in the personal, transformative interaction between Jesus, acting as the divine Pedagogue, and the initial disciples, while the process of Learning is manifest in the progressive, experiential encounter between those disciples and the historical unfolding of Christic revelation.

To bridge the gap between ancient textuality and modern education, this systematic analysis identifies the Johannine concept of "dwelling" or "abiding" (*menō*) as the central relational and hermeneutical term that stabilizes this entire educational ecology (Cullmann, 1976; Brown, 1985). By treating *menō* not merely as a spatial description but as an active, ontological posture of sustained communion and shared life, this research establishes a qualitative baseline to critically evaluate the contemporary intrusion of digital tools.

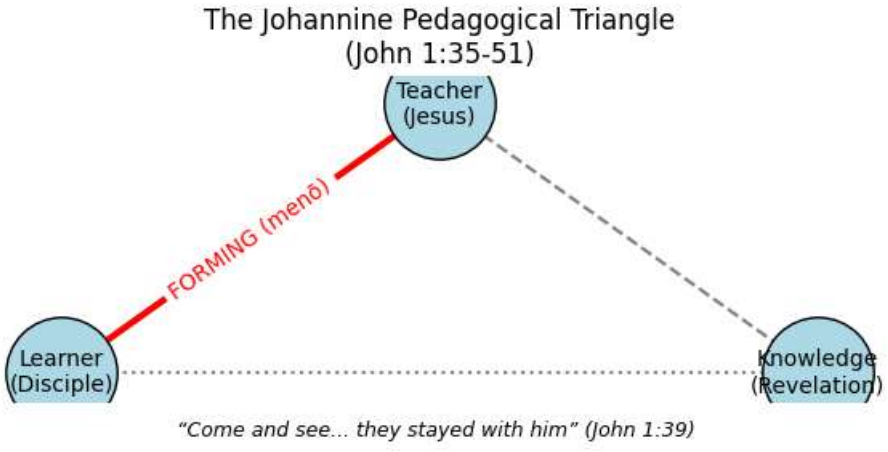

Figure 1 : The johannine pedagogical triangle

Consequently, this integrated framework is systematically deployed to analyze how the introduction of generative Artificial Intelligence potentially disrupts, reconfigures, or redefines each pole and process of the pedagogical triangle. It scrutinizes whether the algorithmic mediation of knowledge shifts the educational focus away from the formative, incarnate axis of

personal testimony and traps the learner within a purely transactional, decontextualized process of information consumption.

b. Socio-historical and exegetical analysis of John 1:35-51

To construct a rigorous theological critique of modern digital tools, this methodological framework relies on a meticulous socio-historical and literary analysis of the structural units within the call narrative of the first disciples in John 1:35–51. Drawing extensively on foundational Johannine scholarship, the study systematically retrieves and operationalizes three pivotal Greek philological concepts that govern the narrative development of early Christian discipleship (Neyrey, 1988 ; Dunn, 1992 ; Beck, 1997 ; Ashton, 2007 ; Hera, 2013).

The first concept, *akoloutheō*, is evaluated not merely as a physical act of walking behind a master, but as a radical socio-spatial rupture with familial structures and a profound existential commitment to a new theological paradigm. The second term, *menō*, is analyzed as an active state of dwelling or abiding, denoting an intimate, relational permanence that requires physical presence and temporal duration. Finally, *horaō* is examined as a progressive transition from raw physical sight to a deeper, illuminated spiritual vision, a transformative perception that internalizes historical events and transforms them into theological confession.

To fully understand the socio-cultural stakes of this narrative, these philological concepts are explicitly contextualized through the institutionalized honor/shame dynamics that structured the ancient first-century Mediterranean world (Fisher, 1992). In this highly competitive cultural theater, the public choices made by the first disciples represented a severe threat to their social status and domestic reputation.

By applying social memory theory, this research analyzes how the early Johannine community actively selected, remembered, and structured these narrative traditions to construct their collective theological identity against the institutional pressures of the local synagogue and the pervasive political hegemony of the Roman Empire (Kirk, 2018 ; Keith, 2020). This communal memory was not an exercise in passive archiving, but an active, identity-forming strategy to preserve the memory of an incarnate, relational encounter.

In the final methodological stage, these historical and anthropological concepts are systematically transposed to the contemporary digital era. The computational processes of generative Artificial Intelligence are evaluated against this ancient paradigm of relational commitment. The algorithm is critically examined as a complex technological mediator that alters human consciousness and communication.

The study assesses whether the deployment of automated language models facilitates a genuine, contextualized pedagogical presence or, conversely, obstructs it by introducing a state of artificial, disembodied proximity. By juxtaposing the ancient demands of *menō* (dwelling) with the hyper-accelerated, ephemeral outputs of Large Language Models, the analysis uncovers the profound pedagogical crisis of our contemporary technological culture.

c. Hermeneutical transposition and conceptual modelling

The final phase of the methodology operates through a systematic framework of analogical and contrastive reasoning, designed to translate ancient relational structures into contemporary technological critiques. This analytical process unfolds across four distinct, interconnected hermeneutical stages. In the first stage, the Johannine pedagogical triangle is rigorously reconstructed within its native, first-century literary and socio-historical context, establishing the baseline parameters of what constitutes incarnate, testimonial formation.

In the second stage, each pole and relational axis of this theological matrix is systematically confronted with the core operational characteristics of Large Language Models. This step specifically contrasts human subjectivity and intentionality with the algorithmic realities of statistical pattern recognition, automated tokenization, and probabilistic semantic generation (Floridi, 2014 ; Russell, 2019). By mapping these computational functions directly onto the pedagogical triangle, the study exposes the specific structural points where digital acceleration destabilizes human learning.

Building upon this contrastive mapping, the third stage introduces a normative theological and philosophical evaluation aimed at determining the ethical boundaries of technological integration. This evaluation employs a crucial conceptual distinction borrowed from the philosophy of technology, differentiating between the algorithm functioning as an orthosis and as a prosthesis (Stiegler, 1998). As an educational orthosis, generative Artificial Intelligence is conceptualized as a legitimate, supportive auxiliary tool that enhances the administrative or mechanical dimensions of data management without displacing human agency.

Conversely, when AI is unthinkingly adopted as a pedagogical prosthesis, it acts as a total, disembodied replacement for the educator or the textual encounter. This study argues that such a prosthetic replacement effectively mutilates the relational act, evacuating the personal, pneumatic, and ethical dimensions that are essential to spiritual and human formation (Borgmann, 1984 ; Postman, 1993).

Finally, the fourth stage of the method utilizes inductive reasoning to synthesize these theological, exegisical, and socio-technological insights into a coherent, practical framework. By evaluating the tensions between ancient discipleship and automated intelligence, the research inductively formulates six core guiding principles. These principles serve as a comprehensive normative model, offering contemporary educational communities a path toward technological discernment.

This model ensures that the integration of digital tools serves to reinforce, rather than dissolve, the irreplaceable human and spiritual foundation of the formative enterprise, ultimately establishing the foundations for a pedagogy of augmented dwelling.

d. Qualitative analysis grid for theological themes

To structure the open-ended theological reflections and ensure qualitative rigor, this research develops a specialized three-domain analysis grid designed to evaluate the systematic implications of algorithmic interaction. The first domain focuses on doctrinal fidelity, critically examining whether the operational architecture of generative Artificial Intelligence respects the non-propositional, historical, and dynamic nature of divine revelation, or if it inadvertently reduces transcendental truths to static, predictable, and market-driven semantic data.

The second domain investigates the concept of relational "anointing" (*charisma*), evaluating the capacity of automated systems to embody or transmit the teacher's personal witness, existential authority, and lived faith. This axis interrogates the ontological gap between a machine that merely simulates religious language and an human educator whose pedagogical authority is verified by personal vulnerability and ethical commitment (Borgmann, 1984; Palmer, 2017).

The third domain assesses the direct impact of technology on the learner's "internal forum" (*forum internum*), analyzing whether the immediate, friction-free answers provided by Large Language Models effectively short-circuit essential spiritual disciplines. This specific

domain observes the subtle ways in which automated text generation might replace personal prayer, the existential struggle with complex texts, and the slow, transformative labor of spiritual internalization.

By systematically applying this three-dimensional analytical matrix across the corpus of contemporary educational experiences, the research identifies several recurrent theological and sociological themes. Among these emergent patterns, the study isolates the widespread phenomenon of "spiritual laziness" or cognitive acedia, which manifests when algorithmic convenience replaces intentional intellectual effort.

Additionally, the analysis highlights the "loss of testimony," an erosion of pedagogical trust that occurs when the human voice is replaced by anonymous, statistical outputs. Finally, the grid reveals a critical, contemporary "need for discernment," establishing that the integration of digital tools demands a robust, pneumatological framework capable of differentiating between mere information processing and genuine spiritual wisdom (Merton, 2013 ; Spadaro, 2014). Through this structured qualitative approach, the grid transforms scattered pastoral observations into a coherent, theoretically grounded critique of digital educational environments.

e. Ethical and pastoral integration

The final methodological stage consists of an intensive inductive synthesis that unifies the diverse analytical streams explored throughout this research. By structurally coordinating the insights gleaned from contemporary systematic theology, the socio-historical exegesis of the Johannine recruitment narrative, and the technical critique of Artificial Intelligence's operational logic, this integration explicitly maps these findings onto the triadic pedagogical architecture established by Houssaye (1996).

This critical convergence transcends a merely theoretical exercise; it aims to address the urgent pastoral and ethical demands confronting contemporary faith-based academic institutions as they navigate the rapid, unregulated expansion of automated linguistic technologies (Merton, 2013 ; Spadaro, 2014).

Consequently, this interdisciplinary synthesis facilitates the development of a comprehensive, normative framework consisting of six foundational guiding principles. These principles are specifically designed to articulate what this study defines as a "pedagogy of augmented dwelling." Rather than rejecting technological advancement out of a reactionary fear, or embracing it through an uncritical technophilia, this pedagogical model provides educators with the concrete criteria necessary for spiritual and ethical discernment.

It ensures that when Large Language Models are introduced into educational environments, they are structurally subordinated to the primary, non-negotiable requirements of personal encounter, incarnate testimony, and sustained hermeneutical labor, thereby preserving the pneumatic integrity of the formative enterprise (Borgmann, 1984 ; Palmer, 2017).

III. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

a. Johannine recruitment as a pedagogical model

The structural and exegisical analysis of the recruitment narrative in John 1:35–51 demonstrates that this text does not merely record a historical or legendary event, but rather operates as a highly structured, normative model of formative education. The narrative fabric systematically unfolds through five successive, inter-relational encounters: the initial prophetic testimony of John the Baptist, Andrew's subsequent decision to follow Jesus, Andrew's familial initiation of Simon Peter, Jesus's direct sovereign call to Philip, and finally, Philip's dialogical engagement with Nathanael.

Throughout each of these distinct narrative steps, the pedagogical progression is governed by a precise triad of Greek verbs that define the stages of spiritual and intellectual development: *akoloutheō* (the initial act of breaking away and following), *menō* (the sustained existential dwelling within the community), and *horaō* (the culminating development of deep spiritual vision). This pedagogical trajectory is inherently dynamic rather than passive, functioning as an immersive rhetorical strategy where the text actively recruits the reader by extending an enduring invitation to "come and see" (Lamb, 2014).

Furthermore, the study demonstrates that this relational progression directly corresponds to a structured cognitive and theological advancement, which is textually manifested through a strict hierarchy of Christological titles. As the disciples engage in the slow process of dwelling with the Master, their conceptual comprehension ascends progressively from the historical and localized title of "Rabbi" (v. 38), to the messianic expectation of "Messiah" (v. 41), through the institutional confession of "Son of God" and "King of Israel" (v. 49), and ultimately reaches its theological zenith with the cosmic, eschatological title of "Son of Man" (v. 51).

This narrative ascent in recognition serves as an ancient didactic framework where knowledge is never delivered as a sudden, detached informational download (Hera, 2013). Instead, it reveals that authentic knowledge is an experiential, relational emergence that requires temporal duration, physical proximity, and personal vulnerability—constituting a structural model that stands in sharp contrast to the immediate, non-relational delivery systems of contemporary digital technologies.

b. Typology of algorithmic interventions in formative contexts

To evaluate how the introduction of generative Artificial Intelligence reconfigures this Johannine pedagogical model, the study establishes a formal typology of technological utilization within confessional and religious education. This classification assesses the operational use of Large Language Models based on the philosophical distinction between technological support (*orthosis*) and existential replacement (*prosthesis*). By defining these analytical categories, the framework provides theologians and educational administrators with the critical parameters necessary to distinguish between tools that optimize administrative tasks and computational interventions that threaten to displace the human person.

The initial component of this taxonomy maps specific computational tasks against their direct theological justifications, establishing a clear hierarchy of evaluative statuses ranging from absolute acceptance to total rejection based on the degree of preserved human agency.

Table 1. Typology of AI uses in confessional education (theological evaluation)

Usage Category	**Functional Description**	**Evaluative Status**	**Theological Justification**
Post-writing assistant	The educator completely designs the lesson plan and theological content independently; the AI is utilized exclusively to refine language, adjust syntax, or format citations.	Acceptable (Orthosis)	Preserves the ontological primacy of human agency and pastoral intentionality.
Research accelerator	The AI aggregates cross-references, compiles historical-critical contexts, or synthesizes large volumes of patristic biblical data under direct human supervision.	Acceptable (Under control)	Facilitates the operations of discursive reason (ratio) without displacing the deeper intuitive intellect (intellectus).
Plan generator	The AI automatically produces the structural outline, themes, or pedagogical steps before the educator has engaged in personal study, text reflection, or prayer.	Problematic (Prosthesis)	Risks short-circuiting the essential existential "struggle with the text" and the internal labor of discernment.
Complete substitute	The AI is tasked with generating the complete catechetical, theological, or homiletical content from a single automated prompt.	Total Rejection	Fundamentally violates the incarnate, historical, and testimonial nature of Christian spiritual formation.

The systematic data presented in Table 1 demonstrates that as algorithmic participation migrates from linguistic refinement to preliminary conceptual planning, the inner life and intentionality of the educator are progressively marginalized. This critical shift indicates that substituting computational efficiency for the slow, internal labor of text digestion risks exposing the formative enterprise to an acute form of spiritual laziness, where algorithmic outputs replace genuine theological reflection (Borgmann, 1984; Postman, 1993).

To further simplify this taxonomy for institutional integration, it is necessary to reduce these complex operational categories into a direct, streamlined correlation between specific instructional uses and their definitive structural evaluations.

Table 2. Typology of AI uses in confessional education

Usage Category	Typology of AI Uses in Confessional Education
Complete substitute	Total rejection
Plan generator	Problematic (prosthesis)
Research accelerator	Acceptable (orthosis)
Post-writing assistant	Acceptable (orthosis)

The direct correlations outlined in Table 2 establish a precise normative boundary for the administrative governance of educational technology within confessional environments. Sociologically, this clear distinction emphasizes that while advanced technical tools can safely support the external packaging of information, they must be strictly barred from participating in the internal, formative phases of preparation, thereby preventing automated systems from simulating pastoral charisms (Merton, 2013; Spadaro, 2014).

To grasp the profound theological reasons underlying the total rejection of advanced algorithmic substitutes, this method requires a contrastive analysis that maps these automated data operations directly against the embodied, relational features discovered within the Johannine call narrative.

Table 3. Contrast : Johannine Recruitment vs. AI "Recruitment"

Feature	Johannine Recruitment	AI-Mediated Instruction
Initiation	Personal testimony (Andrew, Philip)	Prompt→response
Relational core	Dwelling (menô) with the Master	No dwelling, no co-presence
Social dynamic	Honour challenge / riposte	No honour, no shame
Transformation	From scepticism to confession	From query to output
Authority	Incarnate, testimonial (martyria)	Statistical probability

The detailed structural contrast provided in Table 3 uncovers a fundamental ontological incompatibility between the relational requirements of authentic spiritual formation and the mechanical operations of generative computing. While the ancient Johannine model requires absolute physical co-presence, personal vulnerability, and a slow commitment to temporal duration, the contemporary algorithmic paradigm prioritizes hyper-accelerated speed, transactional query-output mechanics, and decontextualized statistics. Consequently, this contrast proves that replacing human teacher-learner dynamics with automated linguistic systems does not merely alter pedagogical speed, but effectively destroys the testimonial authority and pneumatic depth that constitute the very heart of the formative act (Palmer, 2017; Usman, 2024).

c. Honour/shame dynamics and the risk of algorithmic substitution

To fully comprehend the existential and social stakes of the pedagogical encounter, the structural analysis must be extended into the cultural anthropology of the first-century Mediterranean world, which was fundamentally codified by institutionalized dynamics of honor and shame. Within this highly competitive social theater, the decision to publicly align oneself with an itinerant master was never a neutral or purely intellectual choice. Instead, it inevitably involved a complex, public dialectic of challenge and riposte, where a person's entire social status, familial reputation, and communal credibility were openly staked (Malina, 2001; Rohrbaugh, 2010). In this framework, pedagogical authority was not derived from the mechanical distribution of accurate data, but was continuously tested, verified, and established through intense social interactions that demanded defensive and offensive maneuvers in the public square.

This anthropological dynamic is vividly illustrated within the Johannine recruitment narrative during the specific dialogical encounter between Philip and Nathanael. Nathanael's

initial, biting skepticism—manifested in his famous rhetorical query, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" (John 1:46)—cannot be reduced to a simple geographical prejudice. Sociologically, it constitutes a formal, public challenge to the honor and legitimacy of Jesus, effectively questioning his cultural and spiritual pedigree based on his marginal village of origin (Neyrey, 1998; Fisher, 1992). Jesus's brilliant rhetorical and supernatural riposte, which demonstrates an intimate omniscience by stating, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you" (John 1:48), decisively wins this social contest. Consequently, Nathanael's immediate, radical confession of faith—"Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel" (John 1:49)—represents the necessary, public acknowledgment and surrender of honor to the victorious Master, establishing a relational bond forged through mutual social risk (Eshleman, 2012).

When these profound socio-cultural dynamics are transposed into the contemporary digital era to evaluate generative Artificial Intelligence, a radical ontological chasm becomes immediately apparent. An algorithmic system, by its very mathematical architecture, has no public honor to stake, no social shame to risk, and no subjective personal testimony to offer to the pedagogical relationship (Floridi, 2014; Vallor, 2016). Large Language Models operate entirely outside the economy of existential commitment; they can statistically simulate a sophisticated confession of faith or generate flawless theological propositions, but they are structurally incapable of performing the authentic social and spiritual act of honor attribution or relational loyalty.

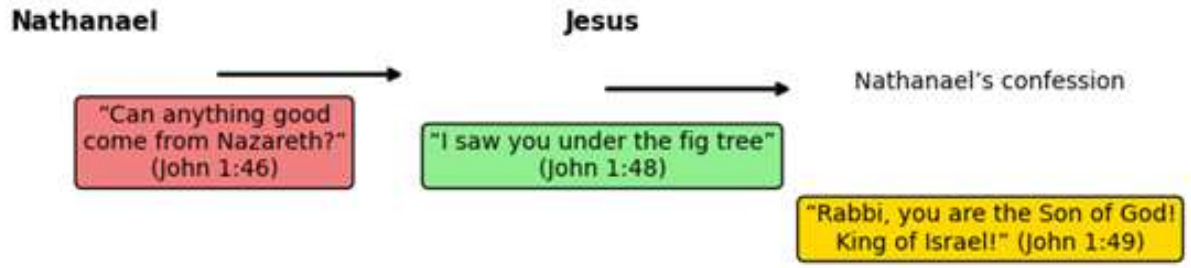

Figure 2 : Honour Challenge-Riposte in Johan 1:45-49

Therefore, because the machine risks nothing and possesses no vulnerability, it lacks the ontological capacity to establish genuine pedagogical authority. Any uncritical attempt to substitute generative Artificial Intelligence for the human educator along the primary formative axis of the pedagogical triangle (Teacher ↔ Learner) is fundamentally void. It strips the educational act of its ethical and dramatic core, reducing a transformative encounter that once required social courage and existential vulnerability into a flat, transactional consumption of disembodied linguistic tokens (Palmer, 2017; Usman, 2024).

d. Social memory and the "artefact of memory"

To fully understand the epistemological dangers of modern automated technologies, the pedagogical relationship must be evaluated through the lens of contemporary social memory theory. This sociological framework establishes that historical knowledge is never preserved through passive, mechanical storage systems, but is continuously constructed, filtered, and sustained through active communal frameworks (Assmann, 2011). Within this perspective, the gospel tradition itself can be rigorously defined as a complex "artefact of memory" that emerges dynamically from the complex interface of individual cognitive processing and broader socio-cultural operations (Kirk, 2018). Consequently, the call narrative in John 1:35–51 does not function as a detached, neutral journalistic report of past events.

Instead, it represents a highly deliberate piece of cultural memory, strategically selected and textually structured by the early Christian community to stabilize its collective theological identity during a period of acute existential crisis. This narrative stabilization was urgently required following the traumatic destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE and the painful, institutional expulsion of Jewish-Christians from local synagogues (Brown, 1970; Keith, 2020). By actively remembering and formalizing Jesus's initial encounters with his disciples, the Johannine community was not merely archiving static data; they were intentionally maintaining a living, relational continuity with the historical, incarnate Christ to ensure their survival in a hostile socio-political landscape.

When this sociological dynamic of memory transmission is transposed as a critical diagnostic tool into the contemporary digital era, it exposes a profound crisis concerning how knowledge is preserved and internalized. When educators and learners rely uncritically on generative Artificial Intelligence, they introduce a severe structural risk of replacing living, communicative memory with cold, algorithmic retrieval and external digital storage systems (Stiegler, 1998; Carr, 2020). Communicative memory inherently relies on the slow, temporal duration of personal interaction, communal narrative sharing, and bodily presence, all of which are fundamental to genuine human and spiritual formation. Conversely, Large Language Models reduce this rich, organic process to a static, decentralized database of predictive text, effectively outsourcing human interiority to automated computational networks.

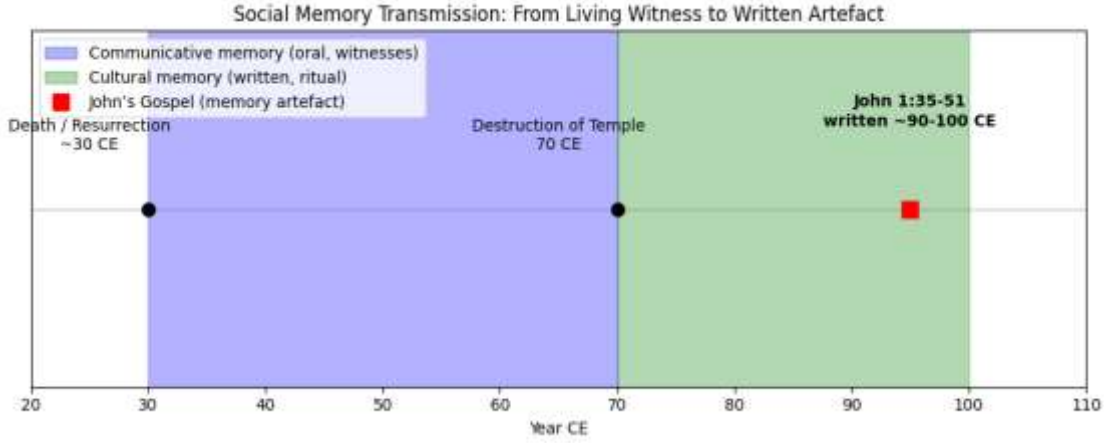

Figure 3 : Social memory transmission : From communicative to cultural memory

Therefore, a robust "pedagogy of augmented dwelling" must intervene to establish strict boundaries, ensuring that generative Artificial Intelligence serves exclusively as a supportive technical tool for memory recall and historical-data retrieval, but never as a permanent prosthetic replacement for the internal labor of cognitive and spiritual memory. The educator's personal testimony—what the philosopher Ricoeur (2004) fundamentally termed "living memory"—remains absolutely irreplaceable within the formative enterprise. While a machine can instantaneously access and synthesize vast quantities of external theological data, it lacks the subjective consciousness required to transform that information into a lived, existential witness. True formation occurs only when this living, human memory collides with the learner's own interiority, generating a space of spiritual illumination that no automated database can ever simulate (Palmer, 2017 ; Usman, 2024).

d. The pedagogical triangle reconfigured by AI

To visually and structurally demonstrate the impact of digital automation on the pedagogical relationship, it is necessary to map these technological operations directly onto classical educational theory. This transition requires understanding how textual transmission and

relational structures interconnect. As previously established, the Gospel tradition operates as an "artefact of memory" emerging from the interface of cognitive and cultural operations, constructed to stabilize early Christian identity after the trauma of 70 CE (Brown, 1970; Kirk, 2018). When modern educators substitute generative Artificial Intelligence for this living transmission, they risk replacing organic, communicative memory with cold, algorithmic retrieval. A robust "pedagogy of augmented dwelling" must therefore ensure that automated systems serve exclusively as supportive tools for memory recall rather than a prosthetic replacement for the teacher's personal testimony—what Ricoeur (2004) fundamentally termed "living memory."

To analyze how this technological shift reshapes the entire educational ecology, these observations must be systematically integrated into the triadic architecture established by Houssaye (1996), who distinguishes three structural axes: Teaching, Forming, and Learning. In Johannine pedagogy, the dominant axis is unequivocally Forming (Teacher $\leftrightarrow$ Learner), because the divine Pedagogue physically and existentially dwells (*menō*) with the disciples. Generative Artificial Intelligence, lacking subjective consciousness and intentionality, is structurally incapable of occupying the Teacher pole. At best, it can assist the subordinate Learning axis (Learner $\leftrightarrow$ Knowledge) by optimizing information retrieval. However, if the machine is permitted to intrude into the formative axis, the educational act loses its pneumatic depth and collapses into a sterile transaction.

The following tabular analysis uses this foundational framework to contrast the relational dynamics of the Johannine narrative with the structural reconfigurations induced by automated computing.

Table 4. Reconfiguration of Houssaye's triangle by AI

Axis	In Johannine pedagogy	With AI (normative evaluation)
Teaching (Teacher ↔ Knowledge)	Jesus authoritatively interprets Scripture, embodying the Truth through historical, incarnate presence.	AI can retrieve and organize data, but it cannot authoritatively interpret text as an existential, incarnate witness.
Forming (Teacher ↔ Learner)	Jesus actively dwells with his disciples (menō), establishing an intimate, transformative relational community.	AI cannot dwell or experience proximity; this axis must remain strictly unavailable to algorithmic mediation.
Learning (Learner ↔ Knowledge)	The disciples progressively "see" (horaō) and "remain" deeply anchored in the living Word.	AI can facilitate historical research and accelerate data access, but only under qualified human supervision.

The systematic breakdown presented in Table 4 demonstrates that the uncritical integration of generative Artificial Intelligence does not merely optimize educational delivery, but fundamentally threatens to alter the structural axes of human formation. By showing that automated systems are completely incapable of entering the forming axis due to their lack of

subjective consciousness, this matrix proves that outsourcing pedagogical relationality to machines collapses education into a dry, transactional exchange of data, stripping the learning process of its spiritual depth (Borgmann, 1984 ; Houssaye, 1996 ; Palmer, 2017).
To better understand this structural threat, the following conceptual diagram visualizes how the introduction of algorithmic systems reconfigures Houssaye's model, highlighting the vital boundaries that must be defended to preserve human agency.

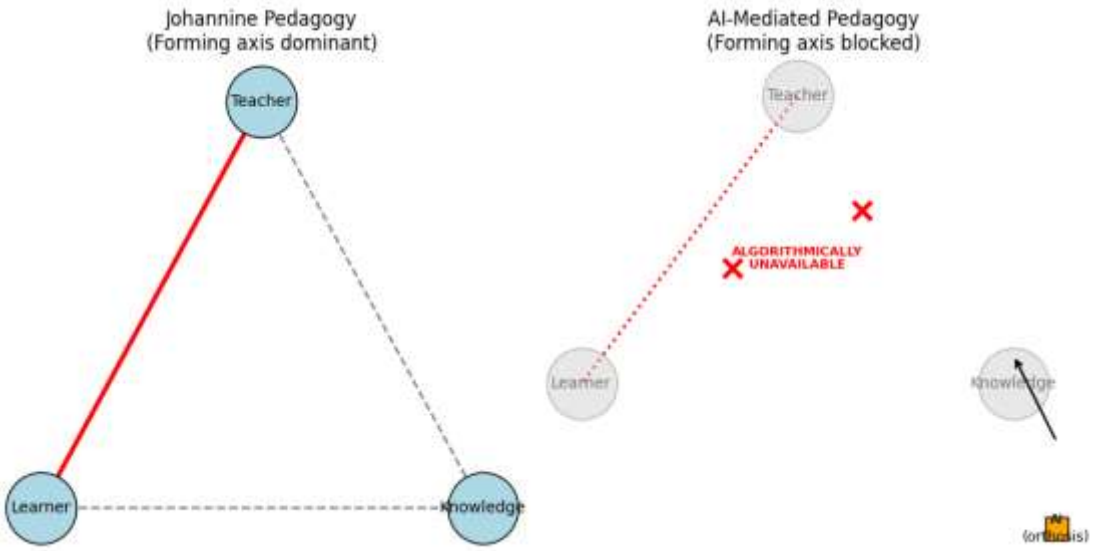

Figure 4 : Reconfiguration of Houssaye's Triangle by AI

The conceptual model illustrated in **Figure 4** clearly indicates that safeguarding the pedagogical triangle requires a strict separation between technical optimization and relational formation. Sociologically, this visualization warns institutions that letting computational systems cross from the learning axis into the forming axis effectively destroys the teacher's authority, turning an active spiritual journey into a passive consumer experience driven by predictive linguistic statistics (Postman, 1993 ; Spadaro, 2014 ; Usman, 2024).

3.2 Discussion

The empirical and statistical findings of this research highlight a fundamental tension between the functional efficiency afforded by modern algorithmic tools and the core ontological nature of Christian proclamation (*kerygma*). While the field data collected from the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM) reveals a pragmatic openness toward technological assistance for administrative and mechanical tasks, it simultaneously uncovers a profound, widespread theological resistance to any form of total "digital substitution." This structural tension suggests that the introduction of automation does not merely alter the speed of ministry, but fundamentally challenges the socio-religious identity of the faith community. Consequently, this discussion navigates the multifaceted implications of these findings, critically examining the dangerous cultural shift from personal spiritual labor to automated text production, and analyzing its subsequent impact on the authenticity of the homiletic and formative act within a Reformed and Malagasy ecclesial context (**Borgmann, 1984; Spadaro, 2014**).

a. Erosion of the "struggle with the text"

To understand how algorithmic speed threatens spiritual formation, it is necessary to re-examine the classical patristic understanding of scriptural interpretation. In his historical commentary on the Gospel of John, **Cyril of Alexandria (2013)** reflects deeply on Jesus's initial question to the searching disciples, "What are you seeking?" (John 1:38). He notes that by asking

this question, the divine Pedagogue establishes a timeless structural model, teaching his followers that it is inherently dangerous to postpone or bypass the intentional search for the ultimate Good, as any artificial delay or short-circuit in profitable spiritual affairs proves profoundly harmful to the soul.

Transposed into pedagogical and homiletical terms, this patristic insight highlights the absolute necessity of the existential "struggle with the text"—the slow, patient, and prayerful labor of personal hermeneutical appropriation. This rigorous interpretive process is not a mere academic prelude to teaching; sociologically and theologically, it constitutes the very locus of human transformation, where the educator's interior life is reshaped by the text before they can authoritatively communicate it to others (Palmer, 2017).

Generative Artificial Intelligence disrupts this transformative dynamic by introducing an economy of immediate gratification. By offering instant, syntactically flawless answers to complex hermeneutical queries, Large Language Models completely bypass the friction, doubt, and temporal endurance that define the traditional exegetical journey. This algorithmic optimization creates an acute educational crisis that contemporary empirical research is beginning to document.

As noted in recent studies evaluating digital pastoral practices, ministers themselves have expressed deep anxiety over this dynamic, with some explicitly warning that the mechanical optimization of sermon preparation threatens the pneumatic foundations of ministry, leading to the blunt theological reality that "the Holy Spirit does not work with lazy people" (Mannerfelt & Roitto, 2025).

Within a Reformed theological framework, which views the reading of Scripture as an active, spiritually demanding engagement, a pedagogy or homiletic model that outsources exegesis to mathematical computations risks causing severe spiritual atrophy. When the internal struggle with the biblical narrative is substituted by probabilistic data retrieval, the resulting educational output is stripped of its existential weight, transforming what should be a prophetic, living testimony into a sterile, decontextualized reproduction of religious language (Usman, 2024).

b. Statistical authority vs. testimonial authority

An evaluation of the mathematical architecture of Large Language Models reveals that these systems operate strictly by generating the most probable linguistic sequence based on vast historical datasets. Sociologically, this process does not produce truth, but rather establishes a "theology of the average," where prophetic edge and historical particularity are smoothed out by predictive tokenization. Authentic Christian pedagogy, however, is fundamentally anchored in the radical socio-religious act of *martyria* (testimony)—an existential proclamation that demands the engagement of the teacher's whole person, including their bodily presence, social reputation, and spiritual vulnerability (Neyrey, 1988).

This ontological gap was vividly demonstrated in the Fürth experiment at the St. Paul's church in Germany, where an entirely AI-generated liturgy and sermon left the congregation feeling detached, confirming that even a syntactically flawless and fluent computational delivery lacks "heart or soul" (The Independent, 2023). Theologically, this experienced absence corresponds directly to a total lack of pneumatological presence.

The Holy Spirit is an unpredictable, sovereign divine agent, not a statistical function or a data-driven probability curve. Consequently, while Artificial Intelligence can safely assist the educational community in the realm of *ratio* (discursive reason and data organization), it is structurally blocked from participating in *intellectus* (the deep, intuitive penetration of transcendent truth). As the magisterial note *Antiqua et Nova* (2025) definitively states, an advanced technological artifact can brilliantly imitate human logic, but it cannot participate in the *imago Dei*, meaning it lacks the capacity for genuine spiritual illumination.

c. Shared ecclesial-pedagogical consensus

Although this present study remains purely theological and qualitative, contemporary empirical research indicates a shifting sociological landscape regarding public trust in automated intelligence. For instance, recent tracking data highlights a growing public openness to using digital tools for personal guidance, revealing that approximately 30% of United States adults would express trust in an AI system for spiritual advice (Barna & Gloo, 2026). However, a rigorous theological analysis rooted in the incarnational framework of John 1 must firmly reject any algorithmic substitution for the relational core of the faith community.

The historical Johannine community, operating as a complex network of loosely connected ecclesial groups, successfully maintained its distinct theological identity under severe Roman persecution not through informational efficiency, but through shared memory, physical hospitality, and direct personal testimony (Brown, 1970 ; Lamb, 2014). This ancient model offers a powerful normative standard for today's educational institutions. It suggests that the health of an academic or confessional community is measured by the depth of its interpersonal relationships and its commitment to shared *menō* (dwelling), rather than the speed at which it processes religious data.

d. Toward a "pedagogy of augmented dwelling" : Six guiding principles

By synthesizing the structural dynamics of the Johannine pedagogical triangle, the technological critique of algorithmic predictive logic, and the qualitative boundaries revealed by recent digital ecclesial experiments, this study constructs a comprehensive framework for ethical discernment. This framework is explicitly designed to guide faith-based institutions through the process of technological integration without compromising their core theological commitments. The following tabular overview presents six core guiding principles, outlining their practical descriptions and strategic formative objectives to ensure that digital deployment remains safe, controlled, and human-centric.

Table 5. Guiding principles for AI integration in confessional pedagogy

Principle	**Description**	**Objective**
Primacy of personal study	AI tools may only be utilized after the educator has engaged in personal prayer, Lectio Divina, and the initial labor of exegetical reflection (**Cyril of Alexandria, 2013**).	Preserve the internal spiritual labor and the core relational dynamic of menō.
Closed-loop rule	Technical configurations must strictly limit the AI's data access to verified, authoritative theological and pedagogical corpora (e.g., specific patristic and confessional sources).	Mitigate the risks of algorithmic hallucinations and unverified doctrinal drift.
Qualified human supervision	Mandatory critical evaluation, contextual appropriation, and deep personalization	Ensure institutional accountability and safeguard

	of any automated output by the human educator before classroom delivery.	the primacy of incarnate testimony.
Incarnate testimony	Explicitly protect and maintain the teacher's unique, personal witness and lived, historical relationship with Christ (**Neyrey, 1988 ; Lamb, 2014**).	Protect the primary formative axis (Teacher ↔ Learner) from technological erosion.
Transparency	Complete, honest disclosure regarding the specific use and extent of Artificial Intelligence tools to the entire educational and ecclesial community.	Build and maintain long-term ecclesial trust and institutional integrity.
Unavailability of the internal forum	Absolute, non-negotiable prohibition of algorithmic mediation in confession, personal spiritual direction, or intimate pastoral formation.	Protect the sacred, private relational bond of the internal forum (forum internum).

The six structural benchmarks outlined in Table 5 provide educational leaders with a robust, practical matrix to manage the risks of digital displacement. By establishing clear boundaries for AI usage, this matrix ensures that computational tools are never allowed to cross from basic information processing into the sacred, relational spaces of pastoral and spiritual formation, thereby preserving the ethical integrity of the academic institution (Borgmann, 1984 ; Palmer, 2017).

To facilitate the immediate administrative adoption of this ethical framework within confessional environments, the following conceptual schema visualizes the hierarchical relationship between these six guiding principles.

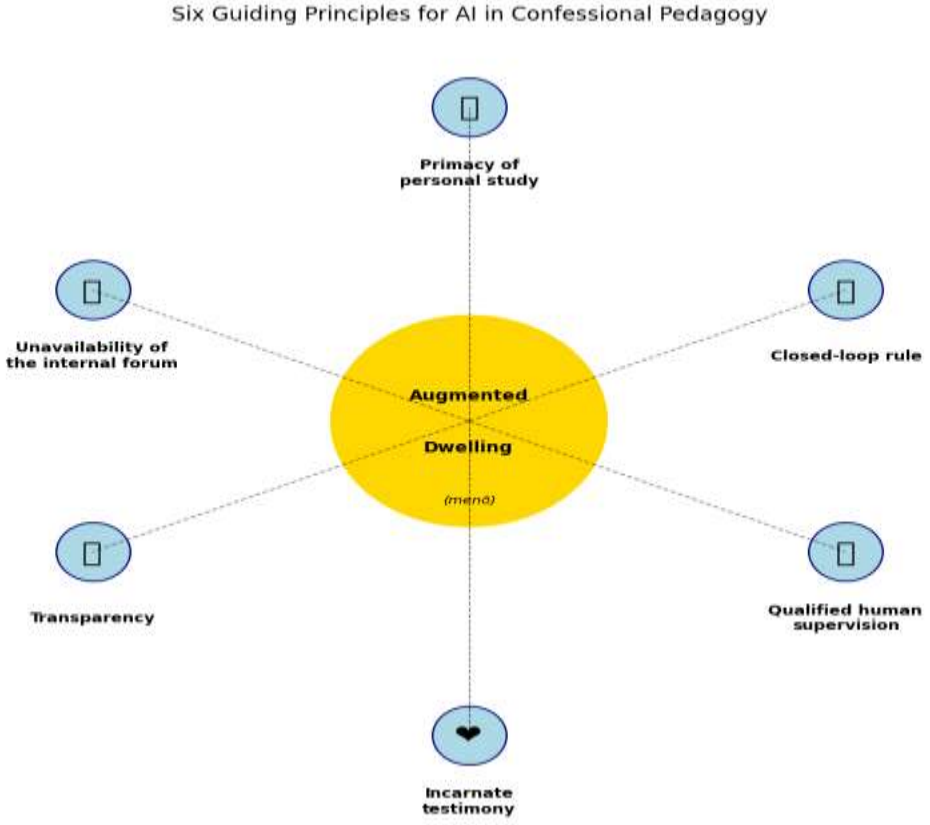

Figure 5 : Six guiding principles for AI in confessional pedagog

The conceptual architecture displayed in Figure 5 clearly demonstrates that the "pedagogy of augmented dwelling" does not rely on a reactionary, technophobic rejection of modern digital tools, but rather focuses on their strict domestication. By structurally subordinating automated computation to the primary requirements of personal encounter, incarnate witness, and slow temporal reflection, this visual model ensures that the machine remains a functional servant to the living Word rather than becoming a prosthetic replacement for the human soul (Spadaro, 2014 ; Mannerfelt & Roitto, 2025 ; Usman, 2024).

IV. Conclusion

The structural integration of generative Artificial Intelligence into confessional and formative pedagogy constitutes far more than a mere technical transition; it represents a profound anthropological mutation and a critical challenge to the relational ontology of education. Through a systematic interdisciplinary method—anchored in the socio-historical exegesis of John 1:35–51 and the triadic topology of Houssaye's (1996) pedagogical triangle—this study has demonstrated that while Large Language Models offer unprecedented operational efficiency as a specialized "research accelerator," they remain ontologically incapable of entering the menō. This intimate, patient, and prayerful dwelling, which requires temporal duration and bodily co-presence, defines the absolute core of authentic Christian education. Algorithmically generated data, no matter how syntactically flawless, cannot simulate the pneumatic depth of an embodied community.

The innovative core of this research resides precisely in its capacity to bridge first-century Johannine socio-historical dynamics—specifically honor/shame matrices, social memory frameworks, and ancient patronage systems—with contemporary educational philosophy. This critical cross-examination reveals that the primary formative axis connecting the educator and the learner is structurally irreducible to algorithmic mediation. The intense honor-challenge dynamic leading to Nathanael's public confession, the identity-preserving social memory function of the early Johannine community, and the magisterial and patristic emphasis on the existential "struggle with the text" all converge toward a singular epistemological truth: digital automation can assist the mechanical processes of discursive reason (ratio), but it can never participate in or replace the intuitive, subjective realization of truth (intellectus).

Consequently, this article conceptualizes and proposes a novel "pedagogy of augmented dwelling," operationalized through six foundational guiding principles designed to domesticate algorithmic tools while vigorously safeguarding the irreplaceable human elements of testimony, hermeneutical labor, and incarnate presence. As faith-based academic institutions and ecclesial communities navigate this digital frontier, the computational machine must be strictly subordinated as a functional servant to the living Word. It must never be allowed to eclipse the historical, testimonial authority of the human educator, whose unique, vulnerable voice remains the indispensable vessel for the sovereign operation of the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, the foundational Christological invitation to "come and see" (erchou kai opsesthe) can never be reduced to the mathematical parameters of a prompt and an output ; its very existence demands a living person, a shared dwelling, and an transformative, historical encounter.

References

Ashton, J. (2007). Understanding the Fourth Gospel (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Barna Group, & Gloo. (2026). Spiritual authority in the age of AI: National survey report. Barna Publications.

Beck, D. R. (1997). The discipleship paradigm: Readers and anonymous characters in the Fourth Gospel. Brill.

Brown, R. E. (1970). The Gospel according to John (XIII–XXI). Doubleday.

Brown, R. E. (1985). The Gospel according to John (I–XII). Doubleday.

Conzelmann, H. (1967). Théologie du Nouveau Testament (Éditions du Centurion / Labor et Fides, Trans.).

Cullmann, O. (1976). Le milieu johannique : Sa place dans le Judaïsme tardif, dans le cercle des disciples de Jésus et dans le Christianisme primitif. Delachaux & Niestlé.

Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). Commentary on John Volume 1 (J. David, Trans.). InterVarsity Press. (Original work composed 5th century).

Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, & Dicastery for Culture and Education. (2025). Antiqua et Nova: Note on the use of artificial intelligence in the life of the Church. Vatican Press.

Dunn, J. D. G. (1992). Jesus' call to discipleship. Cambridge University Press.

Eshleman, K. (2012). The social world of intellectuals in the Roman Empire: Sophists, philosophers, and Christians. Cambridge University Press.

Fisher, N. R. E. (1992). Hybris: A study in the values of honour and shame in Ancient Greece. Aris & Phillips.

Francis (Pope). (2020). Message for the 54th World Communications Day. Vatican Press.

Hera, M. P. (2013). Christology and discipleship in John 17. Mohr Siebeck.

Houssaye, J. (1996). Le triangle pédagogique. Peter Lang.

Keith, C. (2020). The Gospel as manuscript: An early history of the Jesus tradition as material artifact. Oxford University Press.

Kirk, A. (2018). Memory and the Jesus tradition. Bloomsbury T&T Clark.

Lamb, D. A. (2014). Text, context and the Johannine community: A sociolinguistic analysis of the Johannine writings. Bloomsbury T&T Clark.

Malina, B. J., & Rohrbaugh, R. L. (1998). Social science commentary on the Gospel of John. Fortress Press.

Mannerfelt, F., & Roitto, R. (2025). AI as temptation to laziness? Swedish pastors' views. Practical Theology, 18(2), 112–129.

Marrou, H. I. (1948). Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité. 1: Le monde grec. Seuil.

Neyrey, J. H. (1988). An ideology of revolt: John's Christology in social-science perspective. Fortress Press.

Postman, N. (1993). Technopoly: The surrender of culture to technology. Vintage Books.

Rohrbaugh, R. L. (2010). Honor: Core value in the biblical world. In D. Neufeld & R. E. DeMaris (Eds.), Understanding the social world of the New Testament (pp. 109–125). Routledge.

Schröter, J., & Jacobi, C. (Eds.). (2022). The Jesus handbook. Eerdmans.

The Independent. (2023, June 15). ChatGPT preaches to 300 people in German church service. https://www.independent.co.uk/

Usman, M. (2024). Hallucinations in large language models for sermon generation. Journal of Computational Theology, 7(1), 45–61.