

Poetry, Voice, and Artificial Intelligence: Epistemological, Methodological, and Ethical Challenges in FLE Didactics

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Abstract

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming research practices across disciplines. This article examines the challenges and opportunities of using AI in research on French as a Foreign Language (FLE) didactics and literature, with a particular focus on children's poetry. It draws on fieldwork conducted in Khenchela with young learners as part of an experimental project aimed at reconnecting students with poetic texts. Grounded in the theoretical frameworks of Serge Martin and Henri Meschonnic, the study conceives language as both voice and rhythm and advocates for slow, interpretative, and ethically engaged research. The article proposes a cautious use of AI—limited to peripheral support in scientific writing—while emphasizing the need to preserve the subjectivity and uniqueness of both the researcher and the learners.

Keywords: FLE didactics, children's poetry, voice, artificial intelligence, qualitative methodology, scientific writing

1. Introduction

Research in the social sciences and humanities is currently experiencing unprecedented acceleration. Digital tools and AI promise efficiency in generating text, structuring articles, and producing automatic bibliographic summaries. However, these advances pose challenges for qualitative

research, particularly in FLE and poetry didactics, where language functions simultaneously as a tool and as an object of inquiry.

Children's poetic productions are not mere data points; they embody unique attempts to express the world, with their ruptures, silences, and rhythms. Analyzing such texts requires an interpretative stance that respects the learner's voice and creative agency.

This article explores the possible—but limited—role of AI in research, highlighting a methodology developed through fieldwork in Khenchela. Emphasis is placed on the interplay between voice, text, and researcher, and on the value of slowness as a condition for scientific rigor.

2. Theoretical Framework: Voice, Rhythm, and Poetry

2.1 Language as Rhythm and Voice

Henri Meschonnic (1982, 1995) conceptualizes language as inseparable from the speaking subject: rhythm is not merely metric but constitutes "*the organization of the movement of speech in writing.*" Serge Martin (2014) extends this perspective in French didactics, emphasizing the poetics of relationality: literature becomes a space for experience, ethics, and subjectivation.

In FLE didactics, this approach implies viewing linguistic productions not as objects to be corrected but as meaningful language events that carry subjectivity and creativity.

2.2 Children's Poetry: A Unique Field

Children's poetry provides a privileged context for observing the emergence of voice. It allows learners to move beyond prescriptive norms and experiment with language. These poetic productions reveal continuous negotiations between first and second languages, creativity, and academic constraints. Their analysis requires careful qualitative attention, which cannot be fully automated.

3. Artificial Intelligence and the Humanities

3.1 Contributions and Limitations of AI

Generative AI can be helpful in:

- Rewriting or structuring scientific texts
- Checking orthographic and syntactic coherence
- Rapidly exploring bibliographic corpora

However, AI cannot replace interpretative analysis of qualitative data, nor can it fully capture rhythm, voice, or learner subjectivity.

3.2 Acceleration and Standardization

The widespread use of AI contributes to the acceleration of scientific practices (Rosa, 2010). While it can enhance efficiency, it may also promote standardization, sometimes at the expense of depth and uniqueness. This is particularly critical in children's poetry, where unpredictability and rupture are essential.

4. Methodology: Fieldwork in Khenchela

4.1 Field Overview

The study involved multiple schools in the Khenchela region, with FLE learners from multilingual backgrounds. The project aimed to facilitate access to poetry, overcoming fear of texts and dependence on prescriptive norms.

Activities included:

- Shared and aloud reading of poems
- Individual and collective free poetic writing
- Oral performance and poetic enactment
- Participant observation and informal interviews

4.2 Corpus Composition

The corpus comprised:

- Written poetic texts
- Audio recordings of readings
- Observation notes
- Interviews with students and teachers

4.3 Methodological Approach

Analysis followed a qualitative, interpretative approach, focusing on the poetics of rhythm and voice. AI was employed solely for bibliographic organization and scientific formatting, preserving human interpretation of the learners' productions.

5. Results and Discussion: Listening to Voices

The activities yielded a rich corpus. Selected trends are illustrated below.

5.1 Frequency of Poetic Errors

Error Type	Occurrences
Morphosyntactic	15
Syntactic breaks	10
Lexical inventiveness	12

Figure 1. Frequency of poetic errors among students

Analysis:

Morphosyntactic errors were most frequent but acted as vectors for poetic creativity. Syntactic

breaks and lexical inventiveness highlight students' capacity to experiment with language, surpassing normative constraints.

5.2 Student Participation

Activity	Number of Participants
Aloud reading	25
Free writing	30
Oral performance	20

Figure 2. Student participation in poetry activities

Analysis:

Free writing attracted the largest participation, fostering personal expression and discovery of

voice. Aloud reading and oral performance engaged other skills, stimulating rhythm and vocalization.

5.3 Thematic Distribution of Poems

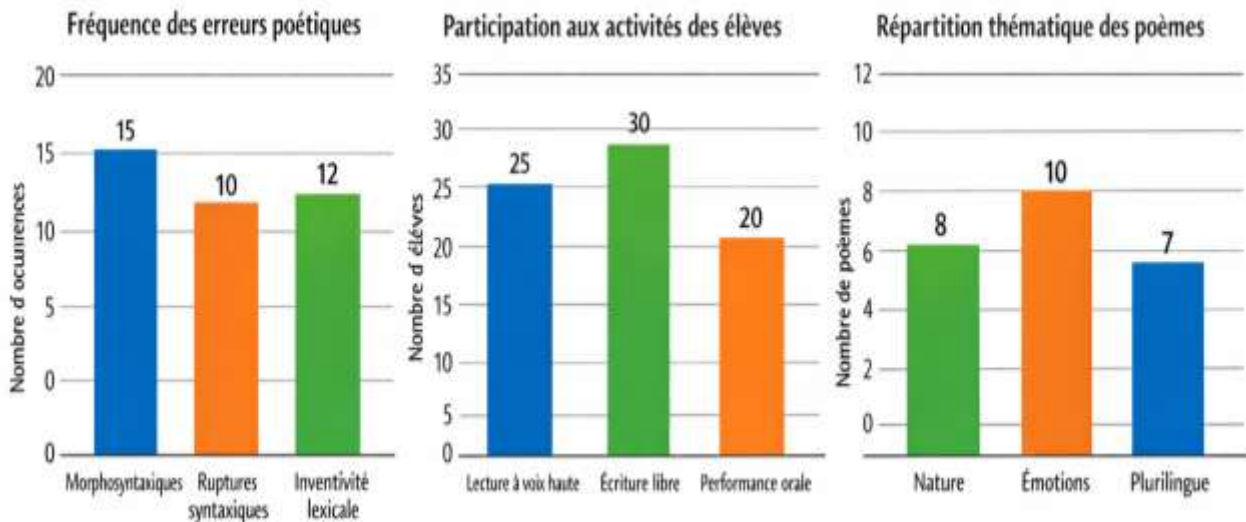
Theme	Number of Poems
Nature	8
Emotions	10
Multilingual	7

Figure 3. Thematic distribution of student poems

Analysis:

Emotion-themed poems were predominant, reflecting the expressive dimension of children's poetry. Poems about nature and

multilingual experiences demonstrated learners' creativity and negotiation between languages.



5.4 General Discussion

These findings indicate that:

- Poetry stimulates subjective expression and creativity.
- Errors and syntactic breaks serve as poetic resources.
- Vocalization reveals interpretative dimensions invisible in writing.
- Classroom interactions are essential for co-constructing meaning.
- AI can support scientific organization but cannot replace qualitative, interpretative analysis.

6. Ethics and Responsibility

AI use should remain peripheral and transparent. Respecting the individuality of both researcher and learners is essential for scientific validity and ethical integrity. Situated interpretation and human-authored writing remain irreplaceable.

7. Conclusion

In the context of accelerated scientific practices and digital tool proliferation, it is crucial to advocate for slow, attentive research that respects voices and rhythms, especially in children's poetry didactics. AI can complement research but must never replace the researcher's critical and interpretative responsibility.

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