

Contribution of the Keynote Speaker



Prof. Usree Bhattacharya
Associate Professor
Language and Literacy Education
University of Georgia
Athens

Dr. Usree Bhattacharya is an Associate Professor in the Language and Literacy Education Department at the University of Georgia. She holds a PhD in Education from the University of California, Berkeley (2013). Her research focuses on diversity, equity, and access in multilingual education, with particular attention to how language ideologies sustain educational hierarchies. Further, as director of the Rett Lab@UGA, she leads research on eye-tracking augmentative and alternative communication for individuals with Rett syndrome. Currently, she is heading a project on AI and disability bias within the Lab. Dr. Bhattacharya also teaches courses on AI in education at UGA, exploring how AI can help support more inclusive, technology-enhanced learning environments. In Fall 2024, Dr. Bhattacharya is participating in a U.S. Department of State virtual project to train English teachers of STEM students, focusing on Project-Based Learning and AI technology to help improve speaking skills.

Reclaiming Inquiry: Rethinking Research in the Age of AI

To speak of “research excellence” today is to navigate an unsettled epistemological terrain where artificial intelligence is reshaping how we recognize, value, and produce knowledge. What constitutes rigor, originality, or discovery when algorithmic processes increasingly thread through research practice? The terms we inherit—authorship, creativity, novelty, discovery—are being recast, their meanings destabilized and renegotiated in ways we are only beginning to articulate. In these remarks, I discuss AI not as a tool or a threat but as a force that exposes the assumptions, hierarchies, and aspirations embedded in research culture itself. Language, as the medium through which we constitute knowledge, becomes the critical site for this reckoning. I argue that universities must meet this transformation with both rigor and imagination—alert to the genuine risks of superficiality, proprietary enclosure, and eroded judgment, while actively reclaiming inquiry as moral practice and intellectual adventure: transforming what becomes possible without relinquishing what remains irreducibly human.