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Ethical Ai-Supported Reflection on Pre-Service Teachers' Pedagogical Discourse

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Abstract: This article proposes an ethical protocol for using generative artificial intelligence to support pre-service foreign language teachers' reflection on pedagogical discourse. A risk-benefit analysis of AI competence frameworks, reflective practice, and classroom discourse research produced a human-led six-step protocol: consent and minimization, teacher question formulation, evidence-bounded AI analysis, counter-reading, teacher-owned redesign, and re-performance. AI outputs are treated as contestable hypotheses linked to a de-identified transcript, never as assessment decisions. A responsibility matrix assigns decisions to student, mentor, and system. The protocol preserves privacy, contextual judgment, authorship, and due process while using AI to broaden—not replace—professional noticing.

Keywords: Generative AI, teacher reflection, pedagogical discourse, ethics, privacy, professional noticing, human oversight.

Introduction: Generative AI can summarize a transcript, identify recurring questions, propose alternative feedback, and prompt reflection. These capabilities may help a novice notice discourse patterns that pass too quickly during teaching. Yet classroom data contain identities, relationships, vulnerability, and contextual meanings that automated text analysis cannot fully interpret. An apparently efficient reflection tool can therefore create privacy risks, false certainty, dependency, and unfair assessment.

The professional issue is not whether AI should be accepted or rejected in the abstract. It is which decisions may be supported, which must remain human, what evidence the system may access, and how a student can challenge an output. This study develops an ethical protocol for AI-supported reflection on pedagogical discourse, with teacher agency and learner protection as non-negotiable conditions.

The dissertation problem isolated in this article is the use of generative AI as an opaque evaluator of sensitive classroom discourse and student-teacher performance. The scope is therefore deliberately restricted: it is not an AI scoring model or a substitute for mentoring, but a human-led reflection protocol with explicit limits. This boundary prevents the recurring term pedagogical discourse competence from turning separate publications into paraphrases of the same claim. It also makes the article accountable for one identifiable conceptual or design outcome.

The analytical unit was defined as consent, data minimization, evidence-bounded prompting, counter-reading, teacher authorship, and due process. Sources were not grouped merely because they used similar terminology. Each proposition was coded for the professional decision it explains, the opportunity it creates or removes for a learner, the evidence by which it can be examined, and the contextual limitation that qualifies the claim. This function-first procedure reduced category inflation and preserved the sequential character of classroom discourse.

The design outcome is a six-step ethical AI-supported reflection protocol and responsibility matrix. Its content validity was examined against three requirements: direct correspondence with the focal problem, visibility in a feasible pre-service teacher task, and capacity to support a subsequent instructional decision. The framework is therefore presented as an

analytically reasoned prototype. It does not convert conceptual synthesis into an unsupported claim of intervention effectiveness.

METHODS

The study used normative design research. UNESCO's AI Competency Framework for Teachers, DigCompEdu, privacy-by-design principles, reflective practice, and classroom discourse scholarship were analyzed through a risk-benefit matrix. Candidate uses were evaluated for pedagogical value, data sensitivity, likelihood of contextual error, effect on authorship, and reversibility.

The design assumes a de-identified transcript of a short microteaching episode. Raw video, learner names, biometric data, grades, and confidential support information are outside the default workflow. AI is not authorized to determine competence levels or disciplinary consequences. The protocol is a proposed governance design and does not claim empirical effectiveness.

The synthesis differentiated the focal problem into de-identifying a selected transcript, asking a teacher-owned question, testing AI suggestions against evidence, and redesigning and re-performing under human judgment. These dimensions should not be read as interchangeable competences. Each captures a different decision point and produces a different kind of evidence. Their connection lies in the movement from interpreting a situation to creating an opportunity, observing its consequence, and deciding what must be retained or redesigned.

The first dimension, de-identifying a selected transcript, establishes the professional purpose of the episode. A novice must distinguish the curricular intention from the discourse action that is supposed to enact it. Without this distinction, an apparently communicative activity may still distribute all interpretive authority to the teacher, while a concise intervention may create substantial room for learner reasoning.

The second dimension, asking a teacher-owned question, concerns the alternatives available at a consequential moment. The relevant question is not whether a preferred form appears, but why that option fits the learners, timing, relationship, and task. Requiring at least two plausible alternatives makes tacit assumptions visible and enables the student teacher to anticipate both an intended opportunity and a foreseeable cost.

The third dimension, testing AI suggestions against evidence, turns the planned decision into inspectable performance. Consider asking AI to propose alternative responses to a de-identified episode while requiring the student to reject any option that ignores tone, relationship, or learner vulnerability. The move cannot be evaluated from wording alone. Its adequacy depends on sequential placement, delivery, the learner's available response route, and what actually happens in the following turn or action.

The final dimension, redesigning and re-performing under human judgment, makes redesign part of competence rather than a remedial activity after failure. A student teacher may retain the original move, modify its timing, combine it with another mode, or reject it after examining evidence. In each case, the decision must be justified by the learning purpose and by an observed learner consequence rather than by personal preference.

The primary evidence is an audit trail showing what data entered the system, what claim was generated, how it was challenged, and who made the final decision. This formulation guards against counting visible techniques as proof of competence. A question, recast, pause, visual support, or feedback statement becomes professionally meaningful only when its function and the learner opportunity that follows can be reconstructed from the episode.

RESULTS

Step one is consent and data minimization. Participants know why the episode is recorded, which excerpt will be processed, who can access it, and when it will be deleted. Step two is teacher question formulation. The pre-service teacher identifies a focused question—for example, whether follow-up moves expanded learner reasoning—before requesting AI assistance.

Step three is evidence-bounded analysis. The system is instructed to cite exact transcript turns, distinguish observation from interpretation, express uncertainty, and avoid inferring personality, ability, emotion, or protected characteristics. Step four is counter-reading: the student and mentor locate missing context, alternative explanations, and contradictions in the output.

Step five is teacher-owned redesign. The student creates at least two alternatives and records which elements came from personal reasoning, mentor dialogue, or AI suggestion. Step six is re-performance. One alternative is enacted, and its effect is inspected in the next learner turn. This closes the cycle with human action rather than generated text.

The responsibility matrix assigns consent, purpose, final interpretation, and assessment to humans. The system may organize text, surface patterns, and generate questions within the provided evidence. The

institution remains responsible for procurement, security, retention, accessibility, and an appeal route.

Table 1. Responsibility matrix for AI-supported reflection

Decision	Pre-service teacher	Mentor/institution	AI system
Purpose	Formulates the inquiry	Checks educational legitimacy	Does not set the goal
Data	Confirms consent and excerpt	Secures and deletes	Receives minimum de-identified text
Analysis	Challenges and contextualizes	Supports counter-reading	Cites patterns and uncertainty
Redesign	Creates and owns alternatives	Questions feasibility and ethics	May suggest options
Assessment	Provides evidence and response	Makes transparent human judgment	No final rating

The specific contribution is retaining privacy, contextual judgment, and professional authorship while using AI to widen noticing. This distinguishes the article from the other studies in the publication set. It neither reclaims their models nor repeats their assessment constructs; it develops the single dissertation problem assigned to this paper and states what falls outside its explanatory reach.

In teacher education, a six-step ethical AI-supported reflection protocol and responsibility matrix can organize a compact cycle of transcript comparison, individual design, peer challenge, microteaching, and evidence-based revision. The tutor supplies a consequential situation rather than a model answer. Students first articulate the purpose, then compare alternatives and predict learner opportunities before performance. Post-performance discussion begins with a selected piece of evidence, which limits impressionistic praise or criticism.

Context sensitivity remains essential. The same linguistic form can perform different work with another age group, proficiency level, institutional norm, or interactional history. Consequently, the framework is not a script or a frequency checklist. Its educational value lies in making the grounds and consequences of a choice discussable while preserving the teacher's responsibility for situated judgment.

Future empirical work should collect an audit trail showing what data entered the system, what claim was generated, how it was challenged, and who made the final decision across repeated episodes. Expert review can establish relevance and clarity, but developmental sensitivity requires longitudinal comparison of student decisions. Learner response, student-teacher explanation, and mentor observation should be triangulated so that neither external scoring nor self-report becomes the sole warrant for a claim of growth.

Uzbek pedagogical research reinforces the human-led character of the proposed protocol. Muslimov and colleagues regard professional competence as the teacher's accountable capacity to analyze a situation, select a solution, and improve performance. Xodjayev places reflective judgment within the broader unity of pedagogical theory and practice, while Ishmuhamedov and colleagues treat technology as a means for organizing learning activity rather than an autonomous decision maker. Applied to generative AI, these positions require the student teacher and mentor to retain authorship, contextual interpretation, and final responsibility; the system may broaden noticing but cannot legitimately assign a professional judgment.

DISCUSSION

The protocol positions AI as a fallible noticing partner. This differs from automated scoring, where a model's output can acquire institutional authority without transparent evidence. Requiring turn-level support and counter-reading reduces—but cannot eliminate—hallucination and contextual misinterpretation.

Authorship is protected by asking the student to formulate the inquiry and own the redesign. If the system generates the reflective narrative, the learner may submit polished language without developing professional judgment. Provenance notes and re-performance make the locus of learning visible.

Data minimization may reduce the contextual richness available to the model, but this is an appropriate ethical trade-off. Sensitive context can be discussed with a human mentor rather than uploaded. Future research should investigate whether the protocol expands noticing, how often AI claims survive counter-reading, and whether students retain the ability to analyze without the tool.

CONCLUSION

An ethical six-step protocol was developed for AI-supported reflection on pedagogical discourse. It confines AI to evidence-bounded, challengeable

support while reserving purpose, interpretation, redesign, and assessment for humans. Consent, minimization, provenance, counter-reading, and re-performance convert AI use from automated judgment into accountable professional inquiry.

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