



1



2



**Mark Arthur**

**The Human Edge: Safeguarding Teacher Agency in the AI Era**

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3

**Teacher Agency**


*“Professional agency is practiced when individuals or groups influence, make choices, and take stances in ways that affect their work and professional identities.”*

Estalberto et al., 2013; Fraig & Romero, (2024)




4

**Teacher Agency: Examples**



Created by KOFIS from New People

**A French Teacher (Canada)** embraced a plurilingual identity by drawing on alternative discourses to establish her legitimacy against the native-speaker ideology



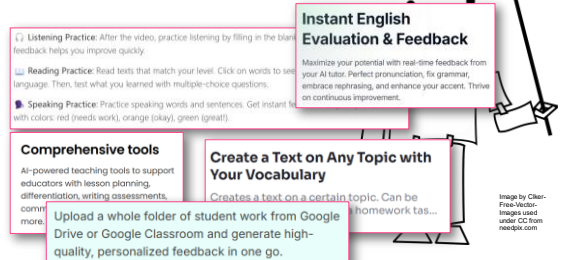
Created by Alamy from Shutterstock Photos

**A pre-service teacher of ELLs** agentively positioned herself as a "bridge" between her students and the local culture, integrating cultural teaching with linguistic assistance.

Based on: Tai, Jan, and Xunong (Andy) Gao. (2021).

5

**What can AI already do?**



**Instant English Evaluation & Feedback**  
Maximize your potential with real-time feedback from your AI tutor. Perfect pronunciation, fix grammar, embrace rephrasing, and enhance your accent. Thrive on continuous improvement.

**Comprehensive tools**  
AI-powered teaching tools to support educators with lesson planning, differentiation, writing assessments, and more.

**Create a Text on Any Topic with Your Vocabulary**  
Creates a text on a certain topic. Can be used for homework tasks.

Upload a whole folder of student work from Google Drive or Google Classroom and generate high-quality, personalized feedback in one go.

Image by Clier-Freak-Vectors. Images used under CC BY-ND 4.0. needq.com

6

### Safeguarding Teacher Agency



**Engage in self-directed, collaborative CPD**

**Be the human in the loop**

**Adopt and excel with innovative teaching practice**

**Bring PEACE to the classroom**

7

### Task 2: AI Skills Reflection



**Rate your answer.**

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

a) I teach lessons that appropriately combine my teaching subject, AI tools, and teaching approaches.

b) I can clearly explain the practical benefits and potential dangers of common AI tools (like chatbots or generators) within my specific teaching subject.

c) I teach students how to behave safely and responsibly when learning with AI tools.

d) I actively seek out information and training to keep pace with new AI technologies and understand how they affect my long-term career.

8

### Engage in Self-Directed CPD

Explore competency frameworks and online courses



Aspects	Acquire	Develop	Create
1. Human-centred mindset	Human agency	Human accountability	Social responsibility
2. Ethics of AI	Ethical principles	Safe and responsible use	Co-creating ethical rules
3. AI foundations and applications	Basic AI techniques and applications	Application skills	Creating with AI
4. AI pedagogy	AI-assisted teaching	AI-pedagogy integration	AI-enhanced pedagogical transformation
5. AI for professional development	AI enabling lifelong professional learning	AI to enhance organizational learning	AI to support professional transformation

9

### Engage in Self-Directed CPD

Explore competency frameworks and online courses



Aspire			
TEACHER COMPETENCY	CURRICULAR GOALS (Teacher training or support programmes, level 2)	LEARNING OBJECTIVES (Teacher can ...)	CONTEXTUAL ACTIVITIES (Teachers can demonstrate the following ethical or behavioral changes)
<b>Ethics of AI</b> 2.1 Ethical principles: Teachers have a basic understanding of ethical issues surrounding AI and of the principles required for ethically sound human-AI interactions including protection of human rights, human agency, promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity, inclusion and environmental sustainability.	CO2.1 Surface ethical competences through a critical examination of use cases of AI in education.  CO2.2 Foster an understanding of essential ethical principles through an examination of use cases related to real-world scenarios including protection of human rights, human agency, promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity, inclusion and environmental sustainability.	CO2.1 I identify fundamental ethical competences in the use of generative AI tools and do so from the perspective of human agency, security, privacy, and linguistic and cultural relevance.  CO2.2 I explain the core ethical principles (as listed in CO2.1) and demonstrate them through the practical selection and use of AI.  CO2.3 I assess key activities of regulators with ethical principles and understand their implications for education.	<b>Perspective taking in ethical dilemmas:</b> (Teachers can demonstrate this following ethical or behavioral changes) based on an understanding of multiple dimensions: human agency, security, privacy, and linguistic and cultural relevance.

10

### Engage in Self-Directed CPD

Explore competency frameworks and online courses



#### AI for Teachers Project (AI4T): Coursebook

11

### Engage in Self-Directed CPD

Explore competency frameworks and online courses



**AI for Teachers Project: Teacher Training**

12

### Engage in Self-Directed CPD

Collective agency through Professional Learning Communities



13

### Engage in Self-Directed CPD

Collective agency through Professional Learning Communities

14

### Safeguarding Teacher Agency

15



16

### Be the Human in the Loop

Ask critical questions pre- and post-implementation

17

### Be the Human in the Loop

Ask critical questions pre- and post-implementation

18

### Task: Critical Questions

*Ask critical questions pre- and post-implementation*

**Case Study 1: AI Writing Assistant**  
 A high school introduces an AI writing assistant. It scores student essays and gives automated feedback on grammar, coherence, and vocabulary.

What critical questions would you ask related to:

- **Teacher Agency**
- **Pedagogy**

**Suggested Questions**

**Teacher Agency:**

- Do teachers understand the scoring algorithm, and can they explain it to students?
- Can teachers intervene when AI feedback contradicts pedagogical goals?

**Pedagogy:**

- Does the system recognize **developmental stages** in learner output or penalize natural errors?
- Is the feedback designed to support **noticing** rather than just correction?

19

### Safeguarding Teacher Agency



Engage in self-directed, collaborative CPD



Be the human in the loop



Adopt and excel with innovative teaching practice




Bring PEACE to the classroom

20

### Adopt and excel with innovative teaching practice

“It is a blow that the first impact of Large Language Models at scale was to usher in the **Homework Apocalypse.**”

Morick, E. (2024)



21

### Adopt and excel with innovative teaching practice

*Curate active learning environments*

**Model of Flipped Learning**

PREPARATION	VERIFICATION	ACTIVE LEARNING
Pre-Class	In-Class	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study</li> <li>• Exercises</li> <li>• Receptive skills</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Planning etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions, Quizzes, Tests (eg Kahoot)</li> <li>• Flashcards</li> <li>• Pair-share</li> <li>• Group work</li> <li>• Self-/peer-assessment (e.g. observation, demonstration, etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication: e.g. tasks, problem-solving, decision-making information gap, role-play, discussion</li> <li>• Higher order thinking</li> <li>• Text-based: e.g. reformulation, elaboration, transformation etc.</li> </ul>
<b>FEEDBACK</b>		

22

### Adopt and excel with innovative teaching practice

*Develop students' AI skills*

Student Skill	What It Means
<b>Understanding</b>	Know what GenAI can and cannot do. Learn how to use it to help students learn, not to replace their thinking.
<b>Accessing</b>	Choose the right GenAI tools that match your students' needs and help them learn better.
<b>Prompting</b>	Write good questions or instructions for GenAI to get useful answers. Improve the questions if needed.
<b>Checking</b>	Make sure the GenAI answers are correct. Compare them with other trusted sources.
<b>Using</b>	Use GenAI results in a smart and honest way. Make sure students still show their own ideas and learning.

Based on Warschauer and colleagues (2023)

23

### Adopt and excel with innovative teaching practice

*Develop students' AI skills*

**Prompt for students to use**

**Developing Logical Arguments**

Act as a critical thinking expert. Help me develop my arguing skills. I am an intermediate level learner of English. Do this by providing the first part of an argument and asking me to complete or support the argument. Wait for me to complete the argument and then provide the first part of another argument.

**Rules:**

We will continue like this until I type "END". You will then give me feedback on how well I completed the arguments.

Based on Peachey, N. 2025

24

**Adopt and excel with innovative teaching practice**  
Develop students' AI skills

**Prompt for students to use**

**Identifying Bias**  
Act as a critical thinking expert. Read through this news article and identify areas where the writer may be showing bias. **Rules:** Describe the areas of bias in a suitable way for B1 level teenage English language learners.

Based on Peachey, N., 2025

25

**Adopt and excel with innovative teaching practice**  
Self-directed Learning

**Prompt for students to use**  
*I am a high school student learning English and I struggle with verb tenses and phrasal verbs. Please create a quiz with 10 sentences where I have to choose the correct verb tense (past, present, or future), and explain why the answer is correct.*

**Prompt for students to use**  
*Check this essay for my use of past tense and vocabulary mistakes. Highlight errors, explain why they are wrong, and suggest better alternatives. Then give me a quiz so I can practice the correct past tense form or vocabulary use.*

Mohrhouse, G. L., Wong, K. M., 2025

26

**Safeguarding Teacher Agency**

- Engage in self-directed, collaborative CPD
- Be the human in the loop
- Adopt and excel with innovative teaching practice
- Bring PEACE to the classroom

27

**Bring PEACE to the Classroom**

AI can give me the answers, but my teacher gives me the reason to care about the answers.



28

**Bring PEACE to the Classroom**

- Preparation
- Expertise
- Authenticity
- Caring
- Engagement



(Saucier, 2019; Saucier, 2022; Saucier, Jones, Schiffer, & Rankin, 2022)

29

**Bring PEACE to the Classroom**

- Preparation
- Expertise
- Authenticity
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- Engagement



(Saucier, 2019; Saucier, 2022; Saucier, Jones, Schiffer, & Rankin, 2022)

30

### Bring PEACE to the Classroom

*Build a positive classroom dynamic*



**Shaking Hands**  
Students circulate the room in three rounds:

1. Shake hands with everyone.
2. Shake hands and say their name.
3. Introduce someone they've met to another peer.

Source: Modified, J. (2002)

31

### Bring PEACE to the Classroom

*Build a positive classroom dynamic*

**Group Advert**  
After analysing language from written ads, students use positive superlative adjectives to design an ad promoting their class.

The goal: persuade another teacher to take over the group by showcasing its strengths.

**Example**  
**The Most Amazing Class Ever!**

Are you ready to teach the **friendliest**, **funniest**, and **most enthusiastic** group of students in London?

We are:  
The **most curious** learners  
The **most creative** thinkers  
The **most supportive** teammates

Join us for a summer full of laughter, learning, and unforgettable moments. Teaching us will be the **most rewarding** experience of your career!

Source: Modified, J. (2002)

32

### Bring PEACE to the Classroom

*Build a positive classroom dynamic*

**If I were you**

Students work in pairs (preferably back-to-back) and complete a questionnaire as if they were their partner, without conferring. They then compare answers and discuss accuracy.

**Complete the sentences as if you were your partner.**

If I found some money in the street I would \_\_\_\_\_

If I saw a rat in the bedroom, I would \_\_\_\_\_

If I could travel anywhere in the world, I would \_\_\_\_\_

My idea of a good evening out would be to \_\_\_\_\_

If I won a lot of money I would \_\_\_\_\_

A perfect day for me would be one where \_\_\_\_\_

Source: Modified, J. (2002)

33

### Bring PEACE to the Classroom

*Develop students' social and emotional competencies*

**"Yes, but..."**

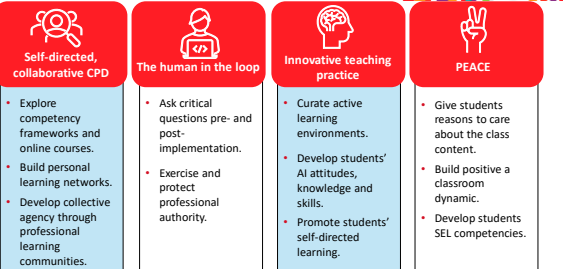
1. Guided visualization: imagine a surprise situation and reflect on thoughts/emotions.
2. Identify negative thoughts and reframe them using "Yes, but..." (e.g., "I can't spell" → "Yes, but with practice I'll improve.")
3. Group discussion.
4. Reflect on how changing the story we tell ourselves can change how we feel.

I don't know much about AI!

Yes, but it'll be a great opportunity for you to learn about it!

34

### Conclusion: Safeguarding Teacher Agency



- Self-directed, collaborative CPD**
  - Explore competency frameworks and online courses.
  - Build personal learning networks.
  - Develop collective agency through professional learning communities.
- The human in the loop**
  - Ask critical questions pre- and post-implementation.
  - Exercise and protect professional authority.
- Innovative teaching practice**
  - Curate active learning environments.
  - Develop students' AI attitudes, knowledge and skills.
  - Promote students' self-directed learning.
- PEACE**
  - Give students reasons to care about the class content.
  - Build positive a classroom dynamic.
  - Develop students SEL competencies.

35

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36

