

ChatGPT for Self-Regulated Teacher Professional Development: An Autoethnography in an EFL Teacher Development Course

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ABSTRACT

Revealing a course instructor's perspective on ChatGPT in English teacher education offers valuable insider insight into how English pre-service teachers learn about the teaching profession. However, this perspective remains underexplored. This autoethnography explores my experiences of integrating ChatGPT as a self-regulated learning partner in an EFL Teacher Development course for nineteen third-semester English Education students (September 2024–January 2025). Through critical reflections on my instructional decisions and interactions, I traced how my pedagogy evolved while students engaged in weekly ChatGPT conversations about the ELT profession. I implemented four key strategies: providing orientation on pedagogical AI use and prompting, requiring weekly ChatGPT engagement, fostering reflection through journals and video documentation, and connecting AI-based learning with classroom discussions. Despite challenges related to technology access and uneven digital literacy, I found ChatGPT to be valuable teaching partner to use in English teacher education to support English pre-service teachers to learn ELT profession.

KEYWORDS:

Artificial Intelligence;
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Introduction

Since beginning my master's degree in 2016, I have been deeply interested in teacher professional development (TPD), particularly among pre-service teachers. My master's thesis examined language teacher cognition and professional development by exploring EFL pre-service teachers' beliefs and knowledge about English and how these beliefs and knowledge shaped their intentions to use English in their future professional lives. Now, as a faculty member in the Department of English Education, I teach courses on EFL teacher development and TESOL methodology, and I supervise pre-service teachers throughout their professional learning. Having engaged in TPD research for nearly a decade and published several studies in this area, such as Saiful (2025), Saiful and Setyorini (2022), Saiful and Widodo (2019), and

Saiful and Yuniarti (2024), I continue to seek meaningful ways to support my students in becoming knowledgeable, reflective, and autonomous English teachers.

The rapid emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) prompted me to reconsider how I could facilitate professional learning in my classroom. As pre-service teachers, many of my students enter teacher education with limited opportunities to interact with experienced practitioners or to discuss the complexities of English language teaching. Consequently, the EFL Teacher Development course that I have taught since 2018 has become an important space for introducing them to the professional knowledge, pedagogical thinking, and reflective practices expected of English teachers. Despite my efforts, I often found it difficult to provide continuous mentorship beyond classroom meetings or to expose students to diverse professional perspectives.

When ChatGPT became widely accessible in 2024, I began to wonder whether it could complement my role as a teacher educator by functioning as a dialogue partner for students' professional learning. Rather than using it merely to answer questions, I intentionally designed the course around the principles of self-regulated learning (SRL), encouraging students to engage in sustained conversations with ChatGPT outside the classroom to set learning goals, monitor their understanding, evaluate their progress, and reflect on their professional identities. SRL emphasizes learners' active role in planning, monitoring, and regulating their own learning (Zimmerman, 2000), while research has shown that these capabilities can be strengthened through appropriate instructional guidance and scaffolding (Dignath et al., 2008). In this context, I positioned ChatGPT not as a replacement for the course instructor but as a virtual mentor that could extend opportunities for reflection, inquiry, and professional dialogue beyond classroom meetings.

This critical autoethnography examines my experiences of integrating ChatGPT into the EFL Teacher Development course, focusing on the pedagogical strategies I developed and the challenges I experienced while supporting pre-service English teachers' self-regulated professional learning. My reflections are grounded in scholarship that conceptualizes teacher professional development as a self-directed, self-regulated process in which teachers continually identify learning needs, pursue professional knowledge, monitor their progress, and reflect on their practice (Kyndt et al., 2016). This perspective also aligns with contemporary understandings of SRL, which emphasize cyclical processes of goal setting, strategic action, self-monitoring, and reflection as central to meaningful learning (Panadero, 2017). These perspectives informed my design and my integration of ChatGPT as a reflective partner.

Although research on ChatGPT in education has expanded rapidly, autoethnographic accounts of its use to foster self-regulated professional development among English pre-service teachers remain scarce. Existing studies have primarily examined ChatGPT for self-directed professional development and classroom practice among in-service teachers and K–12 educators (Z. Li et al., 2025; van den Berg, 2025), while related work in teacher education has focused mainly on pre-service teachers' use of ChatGPT for lesson planning (van den Berg & du Plessis, 2023). Little is known about how teacher educators design, facilitate, and continually adapt AI-supported professional learning from within their own instructional practice. By documenting my lived experiences as a course instructor, this study offers an insider perspective on how ChatGPT can be pedagogically integrated to support pre-service English teachers' professional learning while revealing the opportunities, tensions, and practical decisions that shaped its implementation.

Conceptual Framework

UNESCO (2024a, 2024b) emphasizes that both students and teachers will inevitably engage with AI throughout their daily lives, making it essential for educational institutions to prepare learners to use AI responsibly and effectively. In response, UNESCO (2024b) introduced the AI Competency Framework for Teachers, which outlines key competencies educators need to meaningfully integrate AI into learning and professional development. AI technologies have demonstrated their potential to support teachers in performing professional tasks more efficiently by fostering active learner engagement and enabling real-time feedback (D. Li & Zhao, 2025; Strielkowski et al., 2024). Generative AI (GenAI), particularly those with natural language processing (NLP) capabilities (UNESCO, 2023), powers intelligent tutoring systems (ITS) that can answer questions, provide explanations, and deliver instruction across various subjects (Kamalov et al., 2023). These systems further support teachers through automated assessments, data-informed instruction, and improved teacher–student collaboration (Kamalov et al., 2023).

Beyond instructional benefits, AI also holds transformative potential for teacher professional development. Tammets and Ley (2023) highlight that AI can enhance teachers' professional practices by strengthening their noticing and decision-making processes, supporting adaptive teaching, fostering alignment with competency frameworks, and cultivating a more refined professional vision. However, a systematic review by Tan et al. (2025), which examined 95 studies published between 2015 and 2024 on teachers' use of AI in teaching and professional development, revealed an imbalance: 65% of the studies focused on AI applications in teaching, while only 35% explored AI's role in enhancing teacher professional growth. This finding suggests that, despite its potential, the integration of AI into professional development remains limited, underscoring the need for further research and innovation to expand teachers' opportunities for autonomous, technology-enhanced learning.

Generative AI applications such as ChatGPT exemplify tools that can facilitate self-regulated teacher professional learning. With their ITS-like functions, such as responding to inquiries, providing explanations, and supporting personalized learning (Kamalov et al., 2023), these tools enable teachers, both pre-service and in-service, to access tailored professional support. For instance, ChatGPT can be used to seek feedback, generate instructional materials, and enhance language competence (He et al., 2025; von Garrel & Mayer, 2024). Recognizing this potential, I incorporated ChatGPT into my "EFL Teacher Development" course as an integral component. I treated ChatGPT as a dialogic mentor, reflective partner, and accessible pedagogical tool to help pre-service teachers strengthen their English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and reflective teaching skills.

In my course, students were assigned to engage in self-directed professional learning with ChatGPT outside of class over one semester. During classroom sessions, they shared their insights, reflections, and learning outcomes derived from their interactions with the tool. Thus, this study aims to explore my experiences, particularly the strategies and challenges involved in implementing AI-assisted, self-regulated TPD using ChatGPT.

Method

This qualitative study employed an autoethnographic design, which was appropriate as it offered insider perspectives on underexplored issues by capturing personal and private experiences (Adams et al., 2017). Accordingly, I was able to shed light on my strategies and the challenges I encountered in implementing ChatGPT-assisted, self-regulated TPD in my

course. The course, titled EFL Teacher Development, was offered to third-semester students in the Department of English Education from September 2024 to January 2025. It aimed to develop students' knowledge of the ELT profession and enhance their professional competencies as future English teachers. A total of 19 students were enrolled in the course. In the first meeting, the students were introduced to ChatGPT and trained in using it to expand their knowledge of the ELT profession and enhance their professional growth, including improving their English proficiency. They downloaded the ChatGPT application on their smartphones and were assigned to have a conversation with it about ELT-related topics at least once a week for at least 3 minutes throughout the semester.

The course provided guidance on creating a conducive physical environment for learning with ChatGPT, such as studying in a bedroom or an open, quiet, and comfortable space. It also provided a partial outline of TPD learning areas, including pedagogy, professional identity, and English language teaching, such as teachers' rights, roles, and responsibilities, as well as creative teaching strategies. To document their progress, students were required to record all their conversations with ChatGPT on video. They used two devices: one smartphone with the ChatGPT app for interaction and another device for recording. Each student uploaded their videos to YouTube and submitted the links to the lecturer. In total, each student produced 16 videos corresponding to the 16 meetings held during the semester. Additionally, students were required to write learning reflections in a journal provided by the instructor. After each ChatGPT session, they filled in the journal to document their reflections on learning and the topics of conversation. To evaluate students' comprehension of the ELT profession and the English language, face-to-face classroom meetings were conducted, allowing students to share and discuss what they had learned from ChatGPT. Mid-term and final assessments were also conducted through interviews to assess their understanding of ELT-related concepts and professional development. This design of TPD learning with ChatGPT is aligned with the effective and flexible instructional principles for self-regulated learning proposed by Ley and Young (2001), which include: (1) preparing and structuring the learning environment, (2) organizing and transforming instructional materials, (3) keeping records and monitoring progress, and (4) evaluating performance against a standard.

To explore the strategies and challenges of implementing ChatGPT-assisted, self-regulated TPD in my course, I drew on my own experiences as the primary data source (Mead, 2024). This approach aligns with the core principle of autoethnography, which values personal memory, subjective experiences, and self-reflection as rich sources of meaning-making (Tarisayi, 2023). The data were derived from my critical reflections throughout the course implementation, capturing my evolving thoughts, instructional decisions, and interactions with students as I integrated ChatGPT into the TPD process. The data analysis followed an interpretive approach to my reflections on my experiences and memories. I conducted open coding to identify recurring ideas, pedagogical actions, emotions, and critical incidents related to the implementation of my course. Similar codes were then compared and grouped into broader categories through an iterative process of reflection and constant comparison. From this process, I could have two themes: strategies and challenges in implementing the course. The "strategies" category highlights the pedagogical and technological approaches I adopted to facilitate self-regulated TPD with ChatGPT, while the "challenges" category discusses the obstacles, limitations, and tensions encountered during the implementation. Throughout the analysis, I continually revisited my narratives to ensure that the themes authentically reflected my lived experiences as both a course instructor and researcher. The findings are presented in a narrative, story-based format to maintain the authenticity and continuity of lived

experiences while offering critical insights into the integration of AI in teacher professional development.

To enhance the trustworthiness of this study, I provide a rich, contextualized account of the course, along with detailed and critical reflections on my lived experiences, pedagogical decisions, and evolving understandings throughout the research process. Such thick description and reflexive engagement enable readers to evaluate the credibility and transferability of the findings within similar educational contexts. Besides, this study adhered to ethical research standards. The students were informed that their interactions in the course would be incorporated into my narratives, and I also obtained their consent. To protect their privacy and confidentiality, their real names or other identifiable personal information were not disclosed in my narratives, and all descriptions were presented in ways that minimize the risk of identification while preserving the authenticity of the experiences.

Results and Discussion

Strategies

The following are the key strategies implemented to integrate ChatGPT into the course and support students' learning about the ELT profession.

Structured orientation and training

The first key strategy was to provide structured orientation and training. My students were already familiar with ChatGPT. When I asked about their knowledge of ChatGPT's potential for engaging in interactive conversations, 15 of 19 said they were unaware of it. All of them had used it to search for learning resources (He et al., 2025). They said they used it to retrieve information via text, without exploring its conversational or reflective capabilities. More importantly, they did not recognize ChatGPT's potential to support their professional growth as future English teachers, despite existing research highlighting this potential (Tammets & Ley, 2023; Tan et al., 2025).

To address this issue, I conducted an orientation session at the first course meeting to introduce students to the pedagogical use of ChatGPT for TPD. The session included hands-on training in crafting effective prompts and employing conversational strategies, such as asking critical questions and seeking feedback from ChatGPT. In addition, students were guided on how to record and upload their TPD dialogue videos to YouTube and how to submit the links for evaluation. I also introduced them to the journal writing worksheet, which they were required to complete after each ChatGPT session to document their reflections and learning insights. During the orientation, I also provided guidance on creating a conducive physical learning environment, such as studying in a quiet, comfortable setting, either in a private room or an open, peaceful space. The session also included an overview of the TPD learning areas, including pedagogy, professional identity, and English language teaching, such as teachers' rights, roles, and responsibilities, as well as creative teaching strategies.

This structured orientation and training proved highly beneficial, as I observed that it developed my students' understanding of ChatGPT's roles. My students became more confident and purposeful in using ChatGPT as a professional learning partner rather than merely as an information retrieval tool. Besides, the orientation and training help my students better understand the expectations for my course assignments. Consequently, it supported the course's broader goal of fostering students' autonomous engagement in professional

learning through AI-assisted dialogue. This strategy aligns with Ley and Young's (2001) principle of self-regulated instruction, particularly the importance of preparing and structuring learners' cognitive and learning environments to facilitate effective self-regulated learning.

This strategy transformed not only my students' understanding of the content and the course, but also my own professional growth as a teacher educator in the AI era. I came to realize that integrating AI into teacher education requires substantially more preparation than teaching conventional courses. Beyond designing course content, I needed to anticipate students' levels of AI literacy, explicitly introduce the pedagogical purposes of ChatGPT, and scaffold their use of the technology before expecting them to learn independently. This experience deepened my awareness that effective AI integration is fundamentally a pedagogical endeavor rather than merely a technological one. It prompted me to rethink my instructional role, not only as a knowledge provider but also as a facilitator who prepares students to engage critically, ethically, and autonomously with AI for their ongoing professional development.

Thus, I found that my lived experience extends existing scholarship on TPD. Li et al. (2025) argue that orientation and training are necessary to help teachers organize learning strategies, monitor progress, and engage in self-directed professional development. I further found that the orientation can be operationalized in English teacher education through TPD, particularly regarding AI, through structured AI literacy training, prompt design, and explicit expectations for reflective professional dialogue. Furthermore, whereas van den Berg (2025) attributes teachers' reluctance to adopt AI largely to limited training and familiarity, my experience suggests that pedagogically oriented training can transform initial uncertainty into sustained and self-regulated engagement with ChatGPT.

Authentic and Continuous AI Integration

I required students to engage in sustained weekly conversations with ChatGPT on topics related to the ELT profession. I adopted this strategy to provide continuous exposure to professional concepts, classroom practices, and contemporary issues in English language teaching, thereby helping students bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical understanding. As novice members of the profession, my students had limited opportunities to discuss authentic teaching-related issues with experienced practitioners. Therefore, I positioned ChatGPT as a dialogue partner through which they could regularly explore the roles, responsibilities, and challenges of English teachers while simultaneously developing their English language proficiency. By conducting these conversations in English, students were encouraged to strengthen both their professional knowledge and their communication skills in authentic ELT contexts. Throughout the semester, I observed noticeable growth in their confidence in using English, particularly in speaking, as well as a deeper understanding of the ELT profession.

These observations resonate with previous studies showing that ChatGPT can support learners by providing feedback, generating instructional ideas, and enhancing language competence (He et al., 2025; von Garrel & Mayer, 2024). They also align with Jo's (2024) finding that sustained engagement with ChatGPT promotes knowledge acquisition and application. My experience extends these findings by illustrating how regular, profession-oriented conversations with ChatGPT can support pre-service English teachers' developing understanding of the ELT profession while simultaneously strengthening their English proficiency. Nevertheless, these observations are grounded in my lived experiences as a

course instructor and should be examined further through empirical studies that draw on multiple data sources and participants.

I have learned an important lesson from implementing this strategy. I realized that meaningful AI integration depends not simply on providing students with access to ChatGPT but on designing sustained, authentic learning experiences that connect AI-assisted dialogue with students' future professional identities. This experience shifted my role from primarily delivering course content to intentionally orchestrating learning environments in which AI could facilitate continuous reflection, professional inquiry, and language development beyond classroom meetings. It also developed my awareness that, as a teacher educator, I must continually develop my own AI pedagogical competence to design purposeful learning experiences that enable students to engage critically, autonomously, and professionally with emerging technologies throughout their teacher professional development.

Progress Assessments through Journals and Video Documentation

I believed that students' progress in learning about the ELT profession through ChatGPT should be systematically monitored and evaluated, as this reflects a core principle of self-regulated learning: ongoing self-monitoring and evaluation (Ley & Young, 2001). To support this process, I asked students to complete a weekly reflective journal after each ChatGPT conversation. Through these journals, I gained insights into the professional topics they explored, the knowledge they constructed, and the reflections they developed from each interaction. In addition, I required students to document their conversations with ChatGPT in the video format, upload the recordings to YouTube, and share the links with me. These recordings enabled me to examine not only the prompts students used to explore ELT-related issues but also the quality of their interactions, including their engagement, confidence, expressions, tone of voice, and overall enthusiasm throughout the learning process.

Reviewing these reflective journals and video recordings revealed that students were genuinely engaged in learning with ChatGPT. Their prompts reflected authentic professional curiosity rather than a desire for quick answers. For example, students asked questions such as, "Please give me strategies to handle naughty students," "What are the strategies to teach grammar creatively?" and "I want to improve my speaking skill; give me ways to do it." Their reflective journals further indicated that regular conversations with ChatGPT broadened their understanding of grammar instruction, classroom management, and English-speaking skills. At the same time, the reflections uncovered important learning challenges. Five students reported that ChatGPT occasionally failed to generate the responses they expected, which they gradually attributed to vague or poorly structured prompts. Three students observed that when ChatGPT interacted orally in English, it sometimes responded in another language, such as Japanese, due to pronunciation difficulties or strong accents. Rather than abandoning the interaction, all students revised their prompts, rephrased their questions, or repeated their utterances until they achieved the desired response. These experiences demonstrated that learning with ChatGPT required students not only to acquire professional knowledge but also to regulate their learning strategies by identifying problems, adapting their communication, and evaluating the effectiveness of their interactions.

My observations extend previous research on reflective practice in teacher education. While earlier studies have shown that reflective journals enhance pre-service teachers' reflective thinking and self-regulated learning by supporting planning, monitoring, and evaluation (Jado, 2015), my findings suggest that combining reflective journals with video documentation provides a more comprehensive understanding of AI-supported professional

learning. Reflective journals captured students' cognitive and metacognitive reflections, whereas video recordings revealed behavioral and communicative aspects of self-regulated learning, including how students formulated prompts, responded to challenges, and sustained professional dialogue with ChatGPT. These complementary forms of assessment allowed me to understand not only what students learned but also how they learned through AI-assisted interaction.

Implementing this assessment strategy has taught me something critical. I have realized that my responsibility extends beyond evaluating students' mastery of course content; it also involves making their learning processes visible and supporting their development as self-regulated professional learners. Consequently, I began to view assessment not as a means of measuring outcomes but as an integral component of AI-supported pedagogy that informs instructional decisions and guides students' professional growth.

Blended Learning and Collaborative Sharing

I integrated both online (ChatGPT-based TPD activities) and offline (face-to-face classroom discussions) components in my course to help students consolidate and contextualize their AI-mediated learning about the ELT profession. The offline discussions functioned as collaborative spaces where students and I shared insights, clarified misconceptions, and validated knowledge gained through ChatGPT. These sessions significantly enhanced students' understanding of the ELT profession. Some students who worked part-time as private tutors contributed valuable field-based experience, enriching peer learning and connecting theoretical discussions to authentic teaching contexts. Drawing on my experience as an English teacher in Indonesia and overseas, as well as my role as a national facilitator for teacher professional development, I offered additional insights into the ELT profession at both national and international levels.

This blended learning approach, combining autonomous AI engagement with collaborative in-class reflection, ensured that students' knowledge was expanded, validated, and contextualized. Research has shown that blended learning models for AI competency training can significantly improve teachers' professional knowledge and pedagogical skills (Purnomo et al., 2024). Moreover, I found that collaborative sharing meaningfully enhanced teachers' professional knowledge and that blended TPD fostered comprehensive professional growth. Similarly, Guo et al. (2025) demonstrated that collaborative lesson planning among prospective teachers facilitated the sharing of diverse ideas, peer feedback, and joint reflection, which substantially enhanced their teaching competencies. My findings extend this understanding by showing that collaborative sharing among teachers, experts, and AI extends beyond lesson planning and can deepen teachers' understanding of the ELT profession. This approach is particularly valuable in teacher education, where pre-service teachers often have limited or no teaching experience, and thus greatly benefit from collective dialogue, mentorship, and professional modeling.

By implementing this strategy, I realized that AI cannot replace my role in guiding students' professional learning; instead, it challenges me to become a more intentional facilitator, helping students critically interpret, validate, and contextualize what they learn through ChatGPT. This experience reshaped my understanding of teaching, reinforcing that meaningful AI integration depends not only on the technology itself but also on my pedagogical ability to connect AI-assisted learning with reflective, collaborative classroom interactions.

Challenges

The following are the key challenges encountered in integrating ChatGPT into the course and supporting students' learning about the ELT profession.

Technological Limitations and Access Issues

During the implementation of my ChatGPT self-regulated learning project, I did not encounter any technological or access issues myself. However, I discovered that my students did. I learned about these challenges through their learning journals and interviews. 15 of them faced technological limitations and access constraints. For example, five students had unstable internet connections, while three of them had insufficient device storage, which disrupted their ability to record and upload videos or maintain consistent interaction with ChatGPT. To address these issues, I encourage students to use the free campus Wi-Fi available on school grounds, such as in the school yard or common areas, to conduct their ChatGPT conversations. I also suggested a practical workaround for their recording difficulties: they could record using their smartphones, transfer the video files to their laptops via USB or Wi-Fi, and then upload them to YouTube when they have access to a more stable connection.

Additionally, I created a WhatsApp group for the class where students could share concerns, problems, or feedback about the project. This constant, open communication channel allowed me to respond quickly to any issues. Such an online communication space is essential because it enables students to reach out at any time, share their progress in self-regulated learning, and maintain motivation. Research has confirmed that although university students use digital technologies, their use for self-regulation is often limited. Notably, one of the most used tools for supporting self-regulated learning is communication platforms such as WhatsApp or Google Talk (Yot-Domínguez & Marcelo, 2017). Therefore, selecting tools that students are already familiar with and comfortable with is crucial, as this supports their learning more effectively.

Furthermore, research has shown that instructional support and guidance significantly enhance students' engagement in self-regulated learning environments, particularly when direct teacher presence is limited (Al Mamun & Lawrie, 2023). My findings extend this work by demonstrating that a WhatsApp group can function as an effective pedagogical support space alongside AI-assisted learning. Rather than serving merely as a communication tool, the WhatsApp group provided continuous instructional guidance by allowing students to ask questions, receive timely feedback, and remain engaged throughout the learning process. This finding suggests that self-regulated learning with ChatGPT should not be viewed as an entirely independent activity; instead, it benefits from ongoing teacher facilitation through accessible digital communication platforms that sustain students' motivation and learning beyond face-to-face classroom interactions.

Variations in Digital Literacy and Prompting Skills

Another major challenge that I encountered during the implementation of this project was managing the wide variation in students' digital literacy and prompting skills. Although I conducted a training session during the first meeting to demonstrate how to generate effective prompts and use ChatGPT for TPD, some students still struggled to formulate appropriate prompts. For example, several students provided vague or incomplete prompts, such as asking ChatGPT to "explain teaching" without specifying the context, the target

learners, or the pedagogical focus. Others typed overly general requests, such as “give me everything about lesson plans,” which led to long, unfocused responses that did not support their self-regulated learning goals. A few students also used very short prompts that lacked clear direction, causing ChatGPT to produce irrelevant or superficial answers.

Through their journals and interviews, I realized that these difficulties stemmed from differences in students’ prior exposure to digital tools, information-searching strategies, and critical thinking skills. Students with stronger digital literacy were able to refine their prompts, iterate based on ChatGPT’s responses, and use the tool more strategically to support their learning. In contrast, students with limited experience tended to rely on single-shot prompts, accept ChatGPT’s output without evaluation, or become frustrated when the answers did not meet their expectations. This variation in prompting competency required me to continuously adjust my support during the project. To address the issue, I began providing additional examples of effective and ineffective prompts during weekly check-ins. I also encouraged students to share their successful interactions with peers through the WhatsApp group, which gradually became a collaborative learning space where they exchanged prompt ideas, clarified misunderstandings, and learned from one another’s strategies.

Over time, I observed that all students became more confident in revising, refining, and expanding their prompts, demonstrating growth in both digital literacy and self-regulated learning skills. This observation aligns with Aruleba et al. (2025), who argue that students gradually shift from passive users of generative AI to active co-creators as they receive feedback and opportunities to iteratively improve their prompts. My findings extend this perspective by illustrating the teacher educator’s role in facilitating this transition within teacher professional development. Rather than occurring automatically through repeated use of AI, students’ development as self-regulated learners was fostered through continuous pedagogical guidance, timely feedback, and structured opportunities to reflect on and refine their interactions with ChatGPT.

Conclusion

This autoethnographic study explores my lived experiences as a course instructor, focusing on the strategies I developed and the challenges I encountered in implementing ChatGPT-assisted self-regulated learning to support English pre-service teachers’ understanding of the ELT profession. Throughout the course, I adopted four key strategies: providing an orientation to the pedagogical use of AI and effective prompting techniques; requiring students to engage in weekly conversations with ChatGPT; encouraging critical reflection through journals and video documentation; and connecting AI-assisted learning with face-to-face classroom discussions. At the same time, I encountered two major challenges: limited access to technology and students’ varying levels of digital literacy.

Drawing on these experiences, I recommend that teacher educators and curriculum designers consider integrating ChatGPT as a learning mentor in teacher professional development (TPD)-related courses to extend pre-service teachers’ professional learning beyond classroom meetings. However, successful implementation requires careful instructional design. Teacher educators should adapt the four pedagogical strategies identified in this study while also anticipating and addressing contextual challenges, such as technological constraints and differences in students’ digital competencies. By doing so, teacher development courses can become more interactive, reflective, and impactful, enabling

pre-service teachers to engage in sustained professional dialogue about the ELT profession beyond formal classroom instruction.

More broadly, my lived experiences illustrate how ChatGPT can complement, rather than replace, the role of teacher educators by serving as a pedagogical partner that supports self-regulated professional learning. This study, therefore, provides practical insights for designing AI-supported professional development for English language teachers. Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. As an autoethnography, it is grounded in my own experiences as a single course instructor, and the findings are therefore context-specific rather than intended for broad generalization. Future research could incorporate the experiences of multiple teacher educators through collaborative or comparative autoethnography to provide a richer understanding of AI-supported teacher professional development across different contexts. Furthermore, while my narratives suggest that ChatGPT facilitated students' understanding of the ELT profession, these interpretations remain grounded in my lived experiences. Future qualitative case studies and mixed-methods research are needed to systematically examine how ChatGPT influences English pre-service teachers' professional learning, pedagogical development, and understanding of the ELT profession.

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