Pre-service teachers slowing down to develop pedagogical tact by using digital logbooks

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How I understand learning

- Learning is discontinuous. It relies on limit experiences: ‘interruptions’ (English, 2013), ‘blind spots’ (English, 2016), ‘disturbances’ (Mason, 2002), meeting the ‘alien’ (Waldenfels, 2011), e.g. through tactlessness.
- Noticing (Mason, 2002) and systematically working through such moments develops pedagogical tact: ‘knowing what to do when you don’t know what to do’ (van Manen, 2015) — an embodied sensitivity to respond appropriately in the moment.
- A didactic of error encouragement and error exploring, not error avoidance (Oser and Spychiger in English, 2016).

How I understand teaching

- Teacher's narrative capacity: seeing the class as a text; holding learners' "ever evolving 'stories' in their mind [...] in order to continue to imagine what is possible" (English, 2016: 8).
- Dialogic teaching: being with learners, so they can be 'with' the world and others (English, 2016) — experiencing fallibility, developing humility, empathy and imagination. Can my views be otherwise?
- Teacher reflection is contagious: learners are also encouraged to turn inward, question what is taken for granted, imagine new realities (English, 2016).

The practicum context

- A time-limited teacher education practicum, incorporated in a regular semester.
- Multiple sources of support: university classes, school-based mentors, human mentors and Noa from the Noticing platform — a non-judgemental, coaching approach to mentoring (Malderez, 2024).
- Still vulnerable: stress from workloads, time pressures, institutional restrictions, new professional relationships (Hordvik et al., 2019).

Challenge for pre-service teachers

Contextual ‘noise’ makes limit moments hard to notice and recall — reflective breaks need building in.

Challenge for the teacher educator

Accessing work by, and developing narrative capacity for 30+ pre-service teachers, to be with them more productively.

Digital logbooks which ‘speak back’

- Immediate recording of standout moments, across contextual boundaries, by email — text, audio, photo or video. Artifacts are autogenerated, ready for the pre-service teacher to choose which to dive deeper into.
- Reminders of aims, and support for self-assessment (Dam, 2009).
- Support for reflection.
- Facilitating teacher–learner and learner–learner communication.
- Grounded in the teacher educator’s learning theories — unlike other learning analytics dashboards (Masiello et al., 2024).

Inside the logbooks

Six artifacts from one practicum. All examples taken from the Noticing platform.

Standout moments, captured by email

Student A / Email / School Visits – May 11th, 2026

13/05/26 @ 21:40 — to: **logbook**, **noa**

Student B and I taught the classes on May 11th, in both II-4 & II-5. - Topic: natural phenomena/disasters - Grammar unit: expressions with ‘make’ In the first halves of the class, A...

Artifact / Help Me Notice

I experimented with giving students agency by letting the winners choose the activities for the next class. In II-5, this led to an interesting misunderstanding where they thought they were choosing a social activity for us rather than a teaching method, which required some clarification.

chat with noa

Artifact / Help Me Understand

I noticed a contrast between my two classes: II-4 was extremely excited about the Kahoot, while II-5 was more reserved and preferred the guessing game. I’m thinking about how different groups respond to gamification and why the Kahoot didn’t land the same way in both.

chat with noa

Artifact / Post Lesson Reflection

I feel that these classes were the most comfortable and productive ones so far. The students seemed comfortable with us and we have already fallen into a type of dynamic where they enjoy the creative activities and respond very well to them.

chat with noa

view view reply

Notes from a meeting with a human mentor

Mentor conversations are logged the same way: the pre-service teacher's emerging questions become artifacts, ready for later reflection.

Student A / Artifact / Mentor Meeting

I'm reflecting on my students' 'intense' responses to a writing prompt about news reports. I'm considering if this stems from an association of news with negativity or if they were testing the boun...

chat with noa

Student A / Artifact / Mentor Meeting

I want to create a framework for my students to exercise creative freedom while still producing constructive content. I'm thinking about shifting the focus toward positive news topics like astronom...

chat with noa

Student A / Artifact / Mentor Meeting

I'm exploring how student responses in my classroom might be explained through leadership styles, group dynamics, and Biesta's Subject vs. Object theory.

chat with noa

A post-lesson reflection, summarised

A conversation with Noa starts from an artifact. The exchange is summarised for the pre-service teacher to return to later.

Student A / Conversation / Post Lesson Reflection / Student enthusiasm through choice

19/05/26 @ 15:37 — 19/05/26 @ 17:19

> I noticed that the students were working well and maintained a wonderful working atmosphere during the classes taught by Velko and Lea. It felt especially productive because we included activities ...

I reflected on my recent school visits where I noticed that students were significantly more enthusiastic and productive when we incorporated their suggestions, such as playing Kahoot or hangman, into our lessons. I explored why this happened, considering the contrast between our approach and the traditional, frontal teaching style they usually experience. I linked this to theories like Biesta's subjectification, self-determination theory, and leadership styles. Moving forward, I am committed to maintaining student autonomy by offering choices in tasks and ensuring I follow through on promises made to the students, while filtering their suggestions through my own pedagogical principles.

chat review generate story add to analysis

Lesson plan feedback from Noa

Noa reads the lesson plan alongside the pre-service teachers' own recorded conversation, then responds by email.

Student A / Email / Re:

03/04/26 @ 09:46 — to: student.a@gmail.com

Hi Student A,

I've listened to your conversation with your colleague and read through your lesson plan. What strikes me is how clearly you named your uncertainties from the start — you knew exactly where the friction points were, and you and your colleague worked right into them. [...]

You said you were "risking making them uncomfortable and overwhelmed," and your colleague suggested choice. But as you both talked, something more nuanced emerged [...] There's something in that middle ground worth examining: what are you actually trying to protect for, and what does that look like in the moment?

If you want to talk any of this through and dig deeper into these moments, come find me in Lesson Fortification.

Noa

view

A periodic review of the whole logbook

A semester of logs can be reviewed for what was overlooked. But it is difficult to log regularly, and reflection can become a demand.

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER → NOA

Student A / Email

19/05/26 @ 18:12 — to: **noa**

Could you recommend a point throughout my logs from the school visitations and lessons this semester that I could have undermined that is worth exploring, for a post lesson reflection?

> I'm looking back at my logs from school visitations and lessons this semester to find a specific moment I might have undermined or overlooked that would be worth exploring in a deeper post-lesson r...

view view reply

THE SAME PRE-SERVICE TEACHER, LATER

Student A / Email / Final Reflective Essay – Summer Semester 2025/2026

22/05/26 @ 08:23 — to: **logbook**

[...] The responsibility of being a future educator has really been weighing on me and I have been becoming extensively aware of how much responsibility I'll have and how my choices affect the students. [...]

view

The teacher educator logs too

I email Noa my own logbook entries with noticings from the past week — and the pre-service teachers know it. I add: ‘Are you noticing anything else @noa?’

NOA → THE TEACHER EDUCATOR

Noa / Email / Re: Weekly noticings

20/05/26 @ 08:12 — to: elena.oncevska@flf.ukim.edu.mk

Yes. I’m noticing that several threads weave through here: how to calibrate demand so students can breathe while still engaging deeply, how reflection itself becomes a tool for that rather than another weight, and how your own facilitation choices (like interrupting, or stepping back) shape the safety and momentum of the room.

I’m also noticing something you’ve already named — that when students encounter **their own** ideas and materials, something shifts. Engagement changes. That’s worth understanding more fully.

view

Conclusions

Noa can support working with logbooks by:

- Organising raw, unfiltered practicum notes so pre-service teachers can notice their limit experiences.
- Offering safe spaces to slow down and process experience — developing reflective and critical capacities, and hopefully tact.
- Reflecting back and redirecting attention.
- Modelling and supporting teacher narrative capacity.
- Enabling teacher educators to be ‘with’ pre-service teachers during the practicum.
- Encoding the teacher educator’s expertise in the platform, so experiences remain pedagogically sound.

Thank you!

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