

Exploring changes in preservice English teachers' motivation to enter the teaching profession in the context of policy change

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ABSTRACT

Educators with robust motivation are well-positioned to enhance the facilitation of English language instruction. Nevertheless, alterations in educational policy regarding qualification requirements may influence the motivation of prospective English teachers to pursue a teaching career. This study aims to explore the impact of such policy changes on the motivation of prospective English teachers to enter the language teaching profession. The data were collected through an online open-ended survey, and responses related to participants' initial motivation and motivation at their 8th semester were analysed qualitatively. The survey, distributed via email or message application to 400 English Language Education students, garnered responses from 299 students, yielding a response rate of 74.75%. The qualitative analysis involved coding and labelling responses according to the regulations proposed by the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) of motivation. Results revealed that 48.2% of participants reported their initial motivation as extrinsic, 41.8% as fallback career, 1.7% as amotivation, 7.4% as intrinsic, and 1% as altruistic. Notably, a significant shift from fallback career to more autonomous extrinsic regulations was observed, with 75.9% of participants reporting extrinsic motivation and 6.0% fallback career at their 8th semester. The prevalence of high initial fallback career motivations underscores the necessity for meticulous selection of language teacher education programs. The observed change in fallback careers suggests prospects for enhanced teaching practices among future educators, thereby contributing to the improvement of English language instruction in classrooms.

Keywords: English language education; language attitude; language teaching profession; preservice English teachers

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INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is considered one of the school subjects that instills pride in students, yet it remains challenging to master through formal education alone. The attitudes towards this language, as well as various aspects of the teaching profession, may influence the motivation to pursue a career in teaching—a topic that has garnered increased attention over the last decade (Eren & Yeşilbursa, 2019; Goller et al., 2019; McLean et al., 2019;

Richter et al., 2021; Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018). Motivations for becoming teachers are commonly categorized into extrinsic, intrinsic, and altruistic motives (Bardach & Klassen, 2021; Bergey & Ranellucci, 2020; Klassen & Kim, 2019; Ryan, 2020; Ryan & Deci, 2022). Teachers driven by extrinsic motivation choose the profession for reasons such as job security, manageable workloads, consistent income, and sufficient time for family responsibilities. In contrast, those with intrinsic

motivation are drawn to teaching due to their passion for working with children or the personal fulfillment they experience from educating (Bardach & Klassen, 2021; Bergey & Ranellucci, 2020; Burić & Moè, 2020; Tang et al., 2020). Altruistic motivation, on the other hand, arises from a desire to contribute socially, promote social equity, shape the futures of children, or aid in the country's development. This motivation is viewed as the most appropriate for those choosing teaching as a career (Fray & Gore, 2018; Shak, 2022; Wong et al., 2014).

Motivation is a key determinant of teacher professionalism and effectiveness, particularly within the realm of language education (Khokhar et al., 2021; Lan, 2022; Pishghadam et al., 2021). This is especially true for English, a subject that students often find challenging. Understanding the intricate relationship between teacher motivation and language teaching methodologies is critical in applied linguistics (Lamb, 2017). Moreover, examining how educational policies and changing qualification standards can influence the motivations of aspiring English teachers is vital. These factors significantly impact how linguistic theories are applied in real classroom settings. The concept of language attitude intertwines with teacher motivation, as positive attitudes towards the language being taught can enhance motivation for both teachers and students. Thus, exploring the nexus between motivation, language attitudes, educational policies, and teaching practices provides essential insights. This comprehensive approach can lead to the improvement of language education strategies and the overall effectiveness of language teachers in fostering a more engaging and productive learning environment.

Within the Indonesian educational framework, studies focusing on motivation encompass a broad spectrum of participants, including both preservice and novice teachers (Afrianto, 2014; Asriani et al., 2022; Hartono et al., 2023; Lomi & Mbato, 2021; Novita, 2019; Suryani et al., 2016; Tustiawati, 2017, 2019). Despite the extensive array of theories pertaining to motivation, investigations into the motivation of preservice teachers in Indonesia have frequently employed the Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000), which highlights the intrinsic elements of behavior such as an individual's expectations and values concerning the behavior. In the realm of the teaching profession, the application of the Expectancy Value Theory necessitates an exploration of teachers' expectations of success and their appraisal of the profession's value (Eccles, 2020). Such a methodological approach might neglect, to a certain degree, the external factors that influence preservice teachers' decisions to pursue this career path. Furthermore, the majority of motivation-related studies have utilized the FIT-

choice scale, congruent with EVT, resulting in a diversity of outcomes. For example, in their examination of preservice teachers in Kalimantan, Asriani et al. (2022) discovered that intrinsic motivation was most prevalent among the subjects. In a similar vein, Hartono et al. (2023) found that extrinsic motivation constituted the primary impetus for individuals electing to enter the teaching profession. Additionally, this discourse intersects significantly with the issue of language attitude, implying that the attitudes towards English, as a subject, could profoundly influence motivation, thereby shaping the aspirants' decision to enter and persist in the teaching profession.

Given the variety of outcomes in previous studies, there emerges a pronounced need for further exploration in this field, adopting a theoretical framework that encapsulates diverse viewpoints on preservice teachers' motivation. This necessity has prompted the selection of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) as the foundational theory for the present study. By incorporating SDT, the current study seeks to elucidate the impact of external factors, such as modifications in the academic qualifications for teacher candidacy, and to investigate the regulatory mechanisms that underlie the motivation to embark on a teaching career. Additionally, this study aims to tackle the issue of motivation's fluidity, which may undergo transformations over time (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Contrary to the majority of investigations that evaluate preservice teachers' motivation at a singular temporal juncture, this inquiry will assess how motivation adapts in reaction to specific courses or programs administered by educational institutions. Furthermore, this investigation will explore the correlation between language attitude and motivation, examining how preservice teachers' perceptions of the English language influence their motivation to pursue a career in English language education. Anchored in these considerations, the study will probe two fundamental questions: Firstly, which motivations do preservice teachers exhibit upon entry into the English Language Education program? Secondly, how significantly do the educational programs provided by their departments affect alterations in the participants' motivation?

METHOD

This study presents a qualitative study that investigates the motivation of preservice English teachers to embark on careers within the teaching profession. It specifically aims to explore the intricate relationship between their motivation and attitudes towards the English language, examining how these educators' perceptions of English — whether positive or negative — may significantly influence their professional aspirations and decisions to pursue teaching as a career. It focuses

on preservice English teachers enrolled in the eighth semester of Bachelor in English Language Education (ELE) programs at four universities in Yogyakarta. This study selected participants purposively, targeting exclusively students in their eighth semester. The recruitment process involved disseminating 400 links through WhatsApp or email with assistance from university lecturers. Participation in the study was voluntary, requiring individuals to complete an online questionnaire via Google Forms along with a consent form. During the period from May to June 2023, a total of 299 students submitted the forms, resulting in a response rate of 74.75%.

This study collected data through three open-ended questions focusing on (1) participants' motivation to pursue a career in teaching upon entering the ELE department, (2) their initial motivation for choosing the ELE department, and (3) their motivation to become teachers by the eighth semester. The responses, comprising sentences or phrases, reflected the participants' regulatory processes at the time of their admission into the ELE department and during their eighth semester. The study later analyzed these responses to categorize them according to types of motivation for entering the teaching profession.

The study analyzed the data in accordance with the qualitative data analysis stages (Miles et al., 2014), which included (1) coding and labeling the responses according to the regulatory processes identified; (2) organizing participants' responses into categories and types of regulation as proposed by Self-Determination Theory (SDT); (3) assigning values ranging from 0 to 6 to each category, and (4) employing descriptive statistics for analysis. The assignment of values to the categories took into account the types of regulation delineated by SDT, alongside two specific types of motivation for entering the teaching profession. Consequently, the categories encompassed (1) amotivation, (2) external regulation, (3) introjected regulation, (4) identified regulation, (5) intrinsic motivation, with the addition of (6) fallback career motivation, and (7) altruistic motivation in the coding scheme. This study assigned values from 0 to 6 to all responses, as illustrated in Table 1. This method of labeling was also applied to data reported by participants in their eighth semester.

Table 1
Initial Motivation of the Participants

Regulation/Motivation	Values
Amotivation	0
Fallback career	1
External regulation	2
Introjected regulation	3
Identified Regulation	4
Intrinsic motivation	5
Altruistic Motivation	6

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

By employing a qualitative analysis framework, the study scrutinizes the motivations at the point of entry into the ELE program and their subsequent development by the eighth semester. The discussion further delves into the implications of these findings, considering the theoretical frameworks of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and the relationship between motivation and language attitude. Additionally, it explores the potential impact of these motivations on educational practices and policy making. Through a detailed examination of participant responses and a comparative analysis of existing literature, this section aims to contribute valuable insights to the field of English language teaching and teacher motivation.

Motivation to Enter the Teaching Profession (Question 1)

The initial finding pertains to the survey's first question: "Had you decided to become a teacher upon entering the English Language Education Department?" Responses to this query were binary, classified as YES (indicating a decision to pursue a teaching career) or NO (indicating indecision regarding a teaching career). An affirmative response denoted existing motivation to embark on a teaching career, thereby categorizing participants as motivated to become teachers. Conversely, a negative response signified a lack of decision towards a teaching career at that juncture, categorizing these participants as considering teaching as a fallback career option. The outcomes of this investigation are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2
Motivation to Enter the Teaching Profession

	N	%	Cum (%)
Motivated	174	58.2	58.2
Fallback Career	125	41.8	100
Total	299	100.0	

Table 2 reveals that 125 participants (41.8%) had not committed to pursuing a teaching career upon their enrollment in the department, indicating a tendency towards considering teaching as a fallback career. These individuals entered the ELE program without a definitive decision to become teachers, harboring aspirations for alternative professions with teaching not initially regarded as a viable option. Conversely, 174 participants (58.2%) had already decided to pursue teaching careers upon their entry into the department, motivated by various regulatory factors – including external, introjected, identified, intrinsic, or altruistic motivations. The prevalence of students with fallback career choices raises concerns regarding the motivation for entering the teaching profession. Should these attitudes persist without evolving towards a genuine commitment to teaching, there exists a potential for

suboptimal performance in theoretical and practical aspects of the profession.

Changes in motivation to become teachers

The study identified two types of data regarding the motivation of preservice teachers. The initial set of data pertained to participants' primary motivation, elicited through their responses to Question No. 2 in the survey: "What motivated you to enroll in the English Language Education department?" This question targeted individuals who affirmed their decision to become teachers in response to Question No. 1. The responses were categorized according to the types of regulation outlined by Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and assigned values ranging from 0 to 6, spanning from amotivation to altruistic motivation. A value of 0, indicative of amotivation, was assigned in the absence of regulatory processes. Contrary to the notion that a fallback career implies a lack of regulatory processes, it indeed suggests the presence of such

processes, albeit at a preliminary level, and thus received a value of 1. This value was positioned above amotivation yet below external regulation, indicating a nascent motivational state. Participants uncertain about their desire to teach upon entering the department were classified under the fallback career category and assigned a motivational value of 1. External, introjected, and identified regulations denoted progressively higher levels of self-regulatory processes, yet remained external to the self. Altruistic motivation, traditionally esteemed as the highest form of motivation for entering the teaching profession, was awarded the maximum value of 6. The second set of data related to motivations expressed in the eighth semester, was gathered through responses to the question: "Why do you want to become teachers?" These motivations were analyzed and categorized similarly to the initial motivations, with assignments ranging from 0 to 6. The aggregation of these findings is presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Initial and Eight-Semester Motivations of Preservice Teachers

Types of Regulation	Initial			Semester 8		
	N	(%)	Cum (%)	N	%	Cum%
Amotivation	5	1.7	1.7	1	0.3	0.3
Fallback career	125	41.8	43.5	18	6.0	6.4
External regulation	22	7.4	50.8	57	19.1	25.4
Introjected regulation	52	17.4	68.2	74	24.7	50.2
Identified Regulation	70	23.4	91.6	96	32.1	82.3
Intrinsic motivation	22	7.4	99.0	45	15.1	97.3
Altruistic Motivation	3	1.0	100.0	8	2.7	100.0
Total	299	100.0		299	100.0	

Upon comparing the regulatory types or responses to Questions No. 2 and 3 as illustrated in Table 3, this study observed shifts in the motivation to become teachers from the initial point to the eighth semester. To analyze these changes, two methods of calculation were employed.

The first method involved comparing the counts of participants associated with each type of motivation and regulation. The most notable alteration occurred in the fallback career category, which saw a decrease of 107 participants (85.6%) or 35.8% of the total cohort, by the eighth semester. Similarly, the number of participants identified with amotivation declined by 80%, from five participants

to one, accounting for 1.4% of the total participant pool. Conversely, the count of participants reporting the other three types of regulation, which constitute controlled motivation, exhibited an increase: external regulation by 35 participants (159% increase, or 4.6% of the total participants), introjected regulation by 25 participants (48% increase, or 7.3% of the total participants), and identified regulation by 26 participants (from 70 to 96, marking a 37.1% increase or 17.6% of the total participants). The incidence of participants reporting intrinsic and altruistic motivation saw an uplift of 7.7% and 1.7% respectively. The outcomes of this comparative analysis are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4
Comparison of Initial and Eight-Semester Motivations

	Initial Motivation		Semester 8 Motivation	
	N	%	N	%
Amotivation	5	1.7	1	0.3
Fallback Career	125	41.8	18	6.0
External Regulation	43	14.4	57	19
Introjected Regulation	52	17.4	74	24.7
Identified Regulation	49	16.4	96	32.1
Intrinsic Motivation	22	7.4	45	15.1
Altruistic Motivation	3	1	8	2.7
Total	299	100.0	100.0	

To derive deeper insights from Table 4, it is imperative to examine each initial type of regulation individually. The categories of Amotivation and Altruistic Motivation exhibited minimal changes. Out of five students who initially reported amotivation, only one continued to express uncertainty regarding their reason for enrolling in the ELE program. The remaining four students recognized the teaching profession's relevance to their interests, indicating that the eight semesters of instruction fostered an interest in and a desire to pursue teaching as a career. Additionally, the findings indicated that among these four students, two identified the potential rewards of the teaching

profession—such as financial security and social status (external regulation)—as their motivation. In contrast, the other two students felt that becoming teachers would assist them in achieving their life goals (identified regulation).

The analysis of regulatory process changes among students who initially reported a fallback career upon entering the department yielded an intriguing perspective. Of the 125 students identified, 107 reported significant changes in their regulatory motivations. Table 5 delineates these changes in the regulatory processes for participants who cited a fallback career as their initial motivation.

Table 5
Changes Among Participants with an Initial Fallback Career

		N	%	Cum %
Valid	Fallback career	18	14.4	14.4
	External Regulation	28	22.4	36.8
	Introjected Regulation	22	17.6	54.4
	Identified Regulation	44	35.2	89.6
	Intrinsic Motivation	12	9.6	99.2
	Altruistic Motivation	1	.8	100.0
Total		125	100.0	

Table 5 indicates that of the 125 participants, only 14% who initially reported a fallback career continued to express disinterest in teaching after eight semesters of instruction in their department. Eighty-six percent articulated a newfound intention to teach, citing various motivations. According to Table 5, 40% expressed a desire to teach due to influences either internal (introjected regulation, 17.6%) or external (external regulation, 22.4%). Additionally, 35.2% of participants initially inclined towards a fallback career acknowledged identified regulation by their eighth semester, indicating a recognition of the teaching profession's benefits. The reasons this group provided for pursuing teaching included aspirations for a better life, social respect, and enhanced knowledge. Another 12 participants (9.6%) reported a genuine affection for teaching and enjoyment derived from practical experiences in schools, thus classifying their motivation as intrinsic.

The findings indicate an increase in regulatory processes among the participants. The transition from a fallback career to external, introjected, and identified regulations was observed. According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), this suggests that participants engaged in continuous self-regulation concerning their career choices in teaching. As they began to regulate their motivations, they also underwent internalization. While it may not be the case that their choice of teaching stemmed from inherent rewards associated with the profession, the recognition of potential growth within the teaching field proved to be satisfactory.

Discussion

This study highlights at least two significant findings that warrant further discussion. The first pertains to the substantial number of participants identifying with a fallback career upon entering the department. Ideally, the proportion of individuals considering teaching as a fallback career would be minimal; however, within the context of Indonesia, the prevalence of such a motivation to become teachers is not unprecedented. Suryani et al. (2016) discovered that more than 50% of their sample did not initially choose teaching as their preferred career path. The second notable finding concerns the reported change in motivation among participants, particularly those who expressed a fallback career motivation upon department entry, by the time they reached their 8th semester. A majority of these students reported a shift in their motivation towards becoming teachers.

Fallback career phenomenon

The present study's revelation that a significant number of participants (41.8%) did not initially aspire to become teachers upon their entry into the ELE program, identifying with what is known as a fallback career, prompts further investigation into the interplay between this phenomenon and language attitudes. Traditionally, the notion of a fallback career, where the teaching profession is seen as a non-preferred option or a last resort, has been minimal in the context of deciding to enter the teaching field (Klassen et al., 2011; Watt & Richardson, 2012). This condition aligns with König and Rothland (2012), who found that individuals viewing teaching as a fallback career were less

intrinsically motivated and less inclined towards achieving altruistic aims through teaching than those for whom teaching was the first choice. Furthermore, such a career path is often linked with a "lack of professional ethos" (Fray & Gore, 2018; Shak, 2022; Wong et al., 2014), and additional studies have highlighted a negative correlation between fallback career motivations and factors like effort, involvement, and affective commitment, framing the fallback career as a maladaptively motivated choice (Collie & Martin, 2017). The concerning aspect of these findings becomes even more pronounced when considering the role of language attitudes within the ELE context. The attitudes toward the English language, whether positive or negative, can significantly influence an individual's motivation to pursue teaching in this field. A more positive attitude towards the language could potentially mitigate the fallback career phenomenon by enhancing intrinsic motivation and the perceived value of teaching as a profession. Conversely, negative language attitudes may reinforce the fallback career pathway by aligning with the lack of enthusiasm for teaching, thus underscoring the need for targeted interventions to address and improve language attitudes among preservice ELE teachers.

The significant number of participants reporting a fallback career choice diverges from many existing study on preservice teachers' motivation, especially studies based on the Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) (Kuhn et al., 2022). EVT primarily scrutinizes the profession's inherent aspects, with a focus on individuals' achievement expectations and the value they place on the profession (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2014; Jud et al., 2023). However, interpreting how individuals value the teaching profession to infer their motivation might lead to misunderstandings. A positive valuation of the teaching profession does not necessarily translate into a willingness to pursue teaching as a career. This discrepancy highlights the complex relationship between motivation to teach and language attitude, particularly in the context of ELE. While EVT examines the intrinsic values and expectations associated with the teaching profession, the issue of language attitude introduces an external dimension that EVT alone may not fully capture. The attitude towards the English language—whether positive or negative—can significantly influence one's motivation to enter the field of English language teaching. For instance, a positive language attitude might enhance the perceived value of the teaching profession and thereby increase the motivation to teach, despite initial fallback career considerations. Conversely, a negative attitude towards English could exacerbate the fallback career phenomenon, deterring individuals from fully embracing teaching as a viable and fulfilling career choice. Thus,

understanding preservice teachers' language attitudes becomes crucial in addressing the gap between the intrinsic valuation of the teaching profession and the actual decision to pursue teaching as a career.

In this study, the substantial number of participants identifying with a fallback career is, to some extent, understandable due to several factors. The first explanation pertains to the capacity of ELE programs to secure graduates' entry into the teaching profession. As outlined in the introduction, following the enactment of Law No. 20/2003 concerning the National Education System (MoE, 2003) and Law No. 14/2005 regarding Teachers and Lecturers (MoE, 2005), merely obtaining a four-year bachelor's degree in education is insufficient. Graduates must also acquire a teaching certificate through a one-year certification program. The competitive landscape for ELE graduates has intensified with the allowance for graduates from non-education English departments to enter the teaching profession, as stipulated in the Decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia No. 87/2013 concerning the Preservice Teacher Development Program (MoEC, 2013). To qualify as professional teachers, individuals are required to complete a bachelor's degree in addition to a one-year teacher professional education program. This regulatory environment can influence language attitudes among ELE students by introducing additional barriers to entry into the teaching profession, potentially affecting their initial motivation and consideration of teaching as a viable career path. The stringent requirements and competitive nature of the profession may lead some to view teaching as a less attainable goal, thereby contributing to the fallback career phenomenon. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for evaluating how language attitudes and regulatory policies intersect, shaping the motivations and career trajectories of preservice English teachers.

The second explanation concerns the expanded graduate profiles developed by most ELE departments in response to the increasing prerequisites for becoming teachers and the reality that their graduates cannot directly proceed to the teaching profession. Due to restrictions preventing ELE graduates from immediately becoming teachers, some ELE departments have revised their graduate profiles to encompass a broader array of professions beyond teaching. This diversification of career prospects offered by most ELE departments has attracted a wider range of students, including those for whom teaching is not a preferred career path. Such individuals pursue careers as curriculum developers, translators and interpreters, and tour guides, among other professions. Consequently, despite the primary focus of ELE departments on preparing schoolteachers, enrolling in ELE does not necessarily imply a desire to become English

teachers. For instance, some students choose ELE simply because they enjoy English or believe that studying the language will broaden their career opportunities in their desired professions. This scenario significantly relates to the issue of language attitude, indicating that positive attitudes towards the English language can motivate individuals to pursue ELE programs without the intention of entering the teaching field. These attitudes reflect the recognition of English as a valuable skill that opens doors to diverse career paths, thus shaping the motivations and career aspirations of ELE students. Understanding this dynamic is crucial for appreciating how language attitudes influence educational choices and career planning within the context of ELE programs.

The third explanation concerns the transformation in the social status conferred by the teaching profession. Traditionally, society has perceived teaching as a profession capable of providing individuals with a very high social status. This was particularly true until the 1990s, a period during which access to education remained limited, and the teaching profession bestowed upon educators a considerable level of prestige. Moreover, the profession of teaching has been regarded as 'noble' and respected, where students demonstrated a high degree of obedience to their teachers. This change in perception directly influences language attitudes, especially within the context of ELE. As the prestige associated with the teaching profession evolves, so too do the motivations of individuals entering ELE programs. For some, the historical prestige of teaching and the respect accorded to educators may enhance the appeal of teaching English as a career, reflecting a positive attitude towards the language and its potential to maintain or elevate social status. Conversely, shifts in the perceived status of teaching could lead individuals to reassess their career aspirations, potentially affecting their engagement with the English language and their motivation to pursue teaching as a profession.

Changes in preservice teachers' motivation: Microteaching and Teaching Practicum as autonomy support and structure

The observation that motivation among participants evolved over the course of their studies aligns with the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) perspective, which posits that individuals are inherently inclined towards psychological growth and integration (Davis, 2023; Raymond & Gabriel, 2023; Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018). Motivation, as an element of participants' psychology, develops in conjunction with learning and the support provided. Within the framework of SDT, this form of support is referred to as autonomy support (Burić et al., 2019; Conesa et al., 2023; Patall & Zambrano, 2019; Subaşı et al., 2023). For the participants in this study, autonomy

support and structure were manifested through Microteaching and Teaching Practicum courses. Well-designed Microteaching and Teaching Practicum classes offer students a range of options and choices, thereby enhancing their sense of autonomy. Additionally, these courses provide students with hands-on practical experiences. When paired with feedback, these experiences bolster students' sense of mastery and efficacy, thereby increasing their confidence. Engaging with schools, teachers, and students also augments their knowledge and understanding of the teaching profession. Such engagement fosters a sense of ownership over the teaching profession, which, in turn, boosts their motivation. This connection between motivational change and autonomy support has implications for language attitudes. As students experience increased autonomy and efficacy through practical teaching experiences, their attitudes towards the language and the profession of teaching English may become more positive. This enhanced sense of ownership and confidence in their abilities can lead to a deeper commitment to teaching English, reflecting the crucial role of educational design and support in shaping language attitudes and teaching motivations.

The findings of this study indicate changes in the regulatory processes of participants, particularly transitioning from a fallback career to more autonomously regulated extrinsic types of regulation—namely, identified regulation. This transition aligns with the learning experiences encountered by participants throughout their eight-semester tenure in the department. The enhancement of professional awareness and teaching efficacy, facilitated by the curriculum, fosters internalization, which, in turn, bolsters motivation (Raymond & Gabriel, 2023; Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018). Specifically, well-structured and effectively delivered Microteaching and Teaching Practicum courses serve as excellent forms of autonomy support for preservice teachers (Bergey & Ranellucci, 2020; Conesa et al., 2023). Comprehensive guidelines, syllabi, and class contracts can provide an autonomy structure that guides participants and delineates criteria for success. These courses, by emphasizing the importance of offering individuals choice, control, and self-direction, enable students to function optimally and support their autonomy (Deci, 2017; Reeve, 2016; Ryan & Deci, 2022; Ryan, 2020; Subaşı et al., 2023).

Relating these findings to the issue of language attitude, it becomes evident that the process of transitioning to more autonomous regulation through educational interventions not only enhances motivation towards the teaching profession but also potentially shifts language attitudes. As preservice teachers develop a stronger sense of professional identity and efficacy, their attitudes toward the

language they are being trained to teach may also become more positive. This improved language attitude, fostered through autonomy-supportive learning experiences, underscores the interconnectedness of language education practices, motivation, and attitudes towards language learning and teaching.

Microteaching offers preservice teachers invaluable opportunities to apply their theoretical knowledge and skills in a practical setting, effectively bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world application. This enhancement of practical knowledge awareness significantly increases motivation (Backfisch et al., 2020). Furthermore, microteaching instills in preservice teachers a sense of capability, thereby addressing their need for competence (Deci & Ryan, 2017; Guo, 2018; León & Núñez, 2013). The engagement with peers, the design and implementation of lesson plans, and the management of classroom dynamics not only fulfill the need for competence but also cater to the need for relatedness. Participants come to see themselves as integral members of a specific group, fostering a sense of connection, belonging, and meaningful relationships with others.

Microteaching enhances preservice teachers' motivation and teaching efficacy by offering authentic teaching experiences (Berg et al., 2023; Eren & Yeşilbursa, 2019). It fosters autonomy, encouraging innovative and student-centered strategies, thereby positively impacting classroom climate and teaching methods adaptation (Patall & Zambrano, 2019). Similarly, teaching practicums bridge theoretical knowledge and practical application, enabling preservice teachers to assess their teaching skills and classroom management in real settings (Crowe & McGarr, 2022). These hands-on experiences not only affirm their instructional efficacy but also highlight the practical relevance of their education, boosting motivation especially for those initially less committed (Kim & Cho, 2013).

Moreover, mentoring during practicums significantly raises efficacy and self-esteem, influencing motivation positively. Feedback and support from experienced educators enhance preservice teachers' professional outlook and motivation towards teaching (Ingersoll & Strong, 2018; Kuhn et al., 2024). Positive interactions with mentors and peers, along with supportive school environments, cultivate a sense of belonging, persuading preservice teachers to commit to the profession (Santana-Monagas et al., 2022).

These experiences not only shape preservice teachers' professional competencies and motivations but also influence their attitudes towards language teaching. Engaging with teaching practices and receiving supportive mentorship can lead to a more positive language attitude, affirming the choice of

teaching as a profession and fostering a deeper commitment to language education.

This study faces certain limitations. Primarily, it relies solely on qualitative data, which constrains the generalizability of its findings to other preservice teacher groups. Thus, the results are specific to the sampled preservice teachers. Future study could enhance generalizability by integrating both qualitative and quantitative data from randomly selected samples. Additionally, the study predominantly focuses on the psychological aspects of teacher motivation, omitting the subject matter, English, that preservice teachers will teach upon graduation. Expanding future study to include language aspects, such as language attitudes, could yield more comprehensive insights.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study underscores the substantial number of preservice teachers initially viewing teaching as a fallback career. While this reflects the complex dynamics of the teaching profession in Indonesia, it merits attention. In contrast to those with amotivation, individuals with a fallback career possess a clear awareness of alternative career options, not initially seeing teaching as a preferred choice. Notably, by their eighth semester, 85.6% of individuals with a fallback career reported specific motivations for entering the teaching profession, indicating a positive shift. This suggests the department's programs effectively meet competence needs by equipping students with relevant knowledge and skills and fostering autonomy through offering choices. Additionally, these programs facilitate relatedness, allowing students to collaborate with peers and teachers in schools. The findings emphasize the need for well-designed programs that heighten preservice teachers' professional awareness and confidence, contributing significantly to performance outcomes.

Therefore, English language education departments are advised to implement programs that not only fulfill preservice teachers' needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness but also positively influence their attitudes towards the English language. Enhancing competence involves courses that not only improve students' self-efficacy but also deepen their understanding of English and its teaching methodologies. By integrating content that reflects the dynamic and culturally rich aspects of the English language, these programs can foster a more positive language attitude. Offering autonomy through meaningful choices and trust can further encourage preservice teachers to explore diverse linguistic perspectives and teaching approaches, thereby enriching their engagement with the language. Moreover, fostering relatedness by enabling collaborative experiences with peers and teachers in school settings can strengthen their

identification with the language teaching community. Such comprehensive program designs are pivotal in nurturing a positive attitude towards English, which is essential for inspiring a committed and motivated approach to language teaching.

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