

EXPLORING PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' MOTIVATION IN THE FRONTIER REGION: HIGHLIGHT OF TEACHING PRACTICUM PROGRAM

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Abstract

The importance of English as one of the compulsory subjects in high school remains a serious issue in English language teaching and it affects to the needs of English teachers, especially in a frontier region. The need of English teachers in the frontier region is very urgent since the educational background of some former English teachers there is not English. Then, pre-service teachers are being prepared in order to provide qualified English teachers through teaching practicum program in which it is a pivotal event for them in having experience of being a teacher. This study deals with the pre-service teachers' motivations to become English teachers and their experience in their motivations during the teaching practicum program. Data were collected via personal reflection and focus group interview from ten participants. They had their teaching experience in three months. This study reveals how the participants' motivations raise through their experience to a positive side in terms of their motivation as an English teacher and impact on other aspects of their teaching. This study concludes with some implication for the government as a policy maker and English teachers to promote pre-service teachers' motivations towards teaching English.

Keywords: *teacher's motivation, English language teaching, frontier region*

INTRODUCTION

The issue of English Language Teaching in different paradigms emerges a certain subject of research. Another issue of preparing qualified and motivated English teachers equipped with all competencies also becomes a priority in many regions. In frontier regions, English is still considered as an important subject within the lack of resources and support. One of issues rises that the teachers in the frontier regions are still lack support both in quantity and quality. In line with quantity and quality, most teachers still believe that English is important although it is hard for students to master. Therefore, pre-service English teachers should prepare their self as a qualified English teacher.

Drawing on current motivation research, Gao & Xu (2014) shows that language teachers usually enter the teaching profession with mixed motivations, which can be altruistic (e.g., a desire to teach children and make a difference in their lives), intrinsic (e.g. an interest in English or in teaching itself) and extrinsic (e.g., salary and job security). Another study also looks into how pre-service teachers' motivation shift in relation to various personal (e.g. their previous learning experiences) and contextual (e.g. their teaching practicum) factors. Lee & Yuan (2014) has addressed student teachers' motivation changes from a multiple, integrated perspective focusing on their self-efficacy, outcome expectation, professional autonomy and social support.

Dealing with how pre-service teachers could promote their motivation, they have to be able to take responsibilities for their own professional learning towards teaching. In addition, they have to master four competencies of teaching, namely pedagogic, professional, personality and social. A previous study from Pahrudin et al (2016) finds that pedagogical, personal, professional and social competencies of teachers have a positive influence directly and indirectly to the learning outcomes. Also, according to Nyam & William-west (2014) teachers' motivation affects students' achievement and thereby, plays a significant role in the learning outcome.

It is believed that "teaching practicum becomes one of the essential stages in which they have a chance to apply what they have learned during the academic program in the real teaching situation" (Riesky, 2013, p. 251). It can be regarded as a realization of the important experience in the process of teaching and learning. A study conducted by Ismail & Jarrah (2019) reveals that prospective teachers view teaching practice experience to have an impact on their pedagogical preferences, teaching competence and motivation. Thus, this study investigates pre-service English teachers' motivation after joining teaching practicum program in some schools where they could engage to the teaching process directly.

METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative approach. It was conducted by inviting ten participants of English students of Pamane Talino College of Education. They had finished a teaching practicum program in three months. As they did the program, they did not teach in the classroom directly since it was divided into three stages:

- 1) Observation: they concentrated on process by observing the field schools and teacher education classes.
- 2) Teaching practicum: they were attached to field schools and conducted teaching program.
- 3) Evaluation: they were assessed by the teacher and lecturer during the teaching practicum.

This research used participants' personal reflections and focus group interview. In order to gather the participants' personal background, they wrote a personal reflection about "Who am I". They wrote a brief introduction about themselves and shared their experience during the program. In the focus group interview, they were asked about their motivation to teach and how the motivation changed, how they engage the teacher competencies, how they perceived

language teaching and themselves as future language teachers and their interest in language teaching as a long life career.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study was done after the pre-service teachers finished their teaching practicum program in several schools around Landak Regency, West Kalimantan, as follows:

Participants	Gender	Schools
P1	Female	SMA Harapan Pahauman
P2	Female	SMA Harapan Pahauman
P3	Female	SMAN 2 Sengah Temila
P4	Male	SMA Daya Pelita 3 Sidas
P5	Male	SMA Santo Thomas Ngabang
P6	Female	SMAN 2 Ngabang
P7	Female	SMAN 1 Kuala Behe
P8	Female	SMAN 2 Kuala Behe
P9	Male	SMAN 1 Air Besar
P10	Male	SMAN 1 Air Besar

Table 1 deals with where those pre-service teachers conduct the program. Each school can be classified as a public or private senior high school in a town, district and remote area. As the qualitative approach is used, this study reviews the participants' personal reflection about their self and impression when they join the program for the first time.

All of participants state that English is very useful for their life. They like English and want to communicate with others freely in English. Unfortunately, they still use native language or Indonesian for the daily communication. They only communicate in English at campus. It drives to the result of personal reflection that most of female participants feel shy when they have to speak English in front of others. Yet, P6 states that she has learned more about English and then she would like to show her English ability to others. On the other hand, male participants show that they do not hesitate to speak English although they think that their English is not good. This personal reflection also asks their first impression of joining the program. Three pre-service teachers feel worry, while seven pre-service teachers feel excited when they meet teachers and students at school for the first time. Those who feel excited say that they like meeting, interacting and adapting new people. They have to introduce their self and listen to a brief explanation from the school administrators. Finally, the personal reflection deals with how the pre-service teachers show their willingness in joining the program.

The result of focus group interview emphasizes the participants' motivation to teach. They answer that they have up and down motivation in the process of learning to teach, which ultimately lead to their enhanced intrinsic motivations towards teaching. They apply what they have prepared, learn the students'

characteristics, and adapt to the environment. Unfortunately, not all their planning runs well and solves the problem. P1, P2, P4, P8, P9 and P10 have difficulties in ensuring the students to learn English, while P3, P5, P6 and P7 have to change their planning in order to achieve their goals.

In accordance with their willingness, they have to encourage their teacher competencies. All of them have the same answers that they apply those competencies. The ability in the management of students shows that they have pedagogical competence. Being a role model for students indicates their personal competence and regarding to the relationship between teachers, students and the environment or the public has raised them to be social. However, they think that professional competence is too broad and deep. It affects to their essential indicators in teaching.

The following question draws how they perceive language teaching and themselves as future language teachers. Eight participants answer that they are certain to be English teachers. Those answers relate to the next question whether they are interested in language teaching as a long life career. They find that they like teaching English and the experience during the program teaches them how to be a qualified English teacher, while two participants have another opinion of their long life career for they like working in a company.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study sheds light on ten pre-service English teachers' motivation after joining teaching practicum program. Yet, this study is difficult to be generalized since it only focuses on pre-service teachers in the frontier region and due to the lack of observational data, it is difficult to account the actual practice and interaction.

Despite the limitations, this study concludes that the pre-service English teachers rise through their experience to a positive side in terms of their motivation as an English teacher and impact on other aspects of their teaching. It is also suggested with some implications for the government as a policy maker and English teachers to promote pre-service teachers' motivations towards teaching English by building up their understanding of language teaching, constructing their practical knowledge in relation to the realities, and supporting the professional learning with a sense of belonging.

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