



# "I FEEL LIKE A REAL TEACHER": EMERGENT PROFESSIONALISM OF INDONESIAN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

by

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## Abstract:

*The present study investigated how Indonesian pre-service English teachers' professionalism emerged during their teaching practice. The study employed a qualitative document analysis of secondary data in the form of 26 student teachers' reflections from 13 pre-service teacher participants taking Micro Teaching class in the 6th semester of their study. From Thematic Analysis, the study found several themes in their emerging professionalism. First, they realized the role of teacher-student rapport for instructional success and the need to adjust instructions to suit their students' needs and proficiency levels. They could overcome stereotypes and negative preconceptions about teaching vocational students and students with special needs. They reported their joy of being acknowledged by their students as teachers, and they felt happy and proud when they saw their students' success in learning. These indicated the shift in concerns from self to students, signaling the participants' emergent professionalism. Based on the findings, possible contributions and suggested directions for future studies were mentioned, along with the study's possible limitations.*

**Keywords:** Emerging professionalism, pre-service teachers of English, secondary data, document analysis, Thematic Analysis

## INTRODUCTION

To a certain extent, English pre-service teachers are disadvantaged when embarking on teaching at schools. They generally lack teaching experience, and their primary language skills may need improvement (Subekti, 2018b). They are socially in such a liminal status that they are no longer students but are not full-time teachers, making an assertion of professional authority more difficult (Gao & Benson, 2012). Furthermore, their teaching performances are being assessed by both mentor teachers and their teachers (Kuswandono, 2017), which may instill some students' doubt about their overall capacity to teach them. On the other hand, to facilitate successful instruction, teachers should be emotionally engaged with students' learning process, with their students' successful learning being the goal (Kuswandono, 2017), not their highly-

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graded teaching performance. When pre-service teachers can successfully change their focus from self to students, they experience emergent professionalism as teachers (Burns & Danyluk, 2017). However, such a shift may not be straightforward considering pre-service teachers' various somewhat 'discouraging' backgrounds when they do previously mentioned field teaching practices. Thus, it is worthwhile to study how English pre-service teachers' professionalism emerges through experiencing teaching practices at schools. Furthermore, conducting such a study in the Indonesian context could help pave the way to further related studies in the field, considering that Indonesia has one of the world's largest English as L2 speakers and has more than 750 English education majors (Kemendikbud, 2022). The findings may be beneficial for improving English education majors' curricula to prepare future English teachers better.

Literature has extensively discussed foreign/second language (L2) teacher education (Aisyah & Wicaksono, 2018; Kuswandono, 2017; Siahaan & Subekti, 2021; Zhao & Zhang, 2017). Given that classes in the teacher education curriculum offering pre-service teachers opportunities to experience teaching at schools are considered among the main courses (Basturk, 2016). Through such classes, pre-service teachers received practical information about the profession by directly observing and experiencing it first-hand (Basturk, 2016). Conducted in a primary teacher education context, a study by Basturk (2016) reported that the efficiency of such classes depended on the process experienced by the pre-service teachers in dealing with teaching challenges, their relationships with teacher mentors, administrators, and their teachers. These experiences would likely affect the pre-service teachers transitioning from students to teachers (Gao & Benson, 2012).

Specific in the area of L2 teacher education, due to several factors inherently related to pre-service teachers, such as lack of teaching experiences and confidence in their language ability as well as subject matter knowledge, teaching classes may be seen as a 'specter' by some pre-service teachers (Kourieos & Diakou, 2019). In an Indonesian context, for example, a study found that standing in front of their students' teaching made pre-service teachers feel anxious during teaching practicum (Nugroho, 2017). Furthermore, a study in Hong Kong by found that pre-service teachers were worried that they might not be able to handle unruly students because they were not regular full-time teachers (Gao & Benson, 2012). Their 'marginal' position at schools undercut their professional authority assertion (Gao & Benson, 2012). Moreover, these pre-service teachers could quickly lose their credibility in front of their students due to

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perceived linguistic inadequacy (Gao & Benson, 2012). Moreover, in the Indonesian context, several studies reported that pre-service teachers faced linguistic inadequacy, especially in terms of grammar mastery (Subekti, 2017, 2018c, 2018b). Perhaps to a certain degree, this explains why some pre-service teachers tend to feel anxious when teaching practices at schools.

Despite (and due to) the challenges above, experiencing teaching first-hand provides pre-service teachers with opportunities to develop their professional identity as teachers (Fajardo & Miranda, 2015; Flórez & Basto, 2017). It also shapes their learning to teach and eventually becoming teachers (Bloomfield, 2010). As they experience teaching, they may eventually overcome their fear, misconceptions, and even stereotypes about teaching and students, which may hamper learning (Matheis et al., 2019). Furthermore, a study in a Colombian context found that the relationship between pre-service teachers' beliefs and classroom practices shaped and transformed their professional identity (Fajardo, 2014). Professional identity involves how they see themselves as teachers, define their professional roles, and their roles as teachers (Zare-ee & Ghasedi, 2014).

Due to pre-service teachers generally lack teaching experience; however, they may see teaching practice as a mere performance to showcase their English-speaking ability or instructional planning (Kuswandono, 2017). They teach based on specific methods they have learned in the majors strictly with little regard for their students' needs or proficiency level. The evaluative nature of teaching practice classes, where both teacher mentors and their teachers assess pre-service teachers' teaching, may make them focus on their performance (Burns & Danyluk, 2017). Kuswandono (2017) argued that such an attitude of self-orientation during school-based practicum may lead pre-service teachers to neglect the importance of good social interactions, including with students, which may be necessary for their professional learning. A relatively old yet still relevant publication asserted that teachers' self-orientation might lead them to cling to attitudes and practices, helping them survive but not serving the needs of their students (Feiman-Nemser, 2003).

That being said, pre-service teachers need to engage in the dynamics of their teaching practices because teaching practices at school could be an opportunity to develop their professional identity as teachers (Burns & Danyluk, 2017). It is when pre-service teachers successfully "move beyond concerns for their success during practicum to concerns for student learning" that they are said to have "emergent professionalism" as teachers (Burns & Danyluk, 2017, p. 2). Such pre-service teachers would be more concerned if their students could learn

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and understand what they teach rather than whether they get good grades from their teacher mentors or university teachers for their teaching performance. They may even feel guilty if they perceive themselves unable to optimally help their students to learn (Yuan & Lee, 2015). One of the participants in the study by Yuan and Lee (2015) reported, "I felt I am a lousy teacher and I am wasting my students' time. I really don't want to be an irresponsible teacher" (p. 481), implying her guilty feeling of being unable to be a "good teacher" for her students. Such feelings could indicate pre-service teachers' professional growth (Yuan & Lee, 2015).

Though not exclusively in L2 teacher education literature, there have been quite many recent studies documenting the dynamics of pre-service teachers' experiences in teaching practices (Fajardo, 2014; Fajardo & Miranda, 2015; Siahaan & Subekti, 2021; Tok, 2010; Turmudi, 2020, Zhao & Zhang, 2017). A mixed-method study involving 98 Chinese pre-service teachers from various majors found that field teaching practices contributed to the increase of intrinsic value identity, mainly focusing on "individual subjective value judgment of the inherent features of the teaching profession" (Zhao & Zhang, 2017, p. 4), such as considering teaching job attractive and valuable. Furthermore, involving 70 special education pre-service teachers, an experimental study reported that a certain degree of teaching experience had significantly more significant progress in their self-efficacy in teaching (Arsal, 2014). In other words, the more experiences they have, the more they perceive themselves as capable teachers. Exposure to the real world of teaching may also instill their motivation and engagement with the profession (Fajardo & Miranda, 2015). In line with that, in an Indonesian context, a case study found that pre-service teachers, albeit rather slowly, were gradually successful in building rapport with their students, leading to more effective instruction (Siahaan & Subekti, 2021). Furthermore, a rather old yet still relevant publication asserted that a teacher should be a warm demander, insisting students show their best effort in learning while establishing a caring relationship with students (Bondy & Ross, 2008).

Regarding this, on the one hand, pre-service teachers may find it challenging to achieve this role as their students may not fully view them as real teachers (Tok, 2010). Their students' acceptance, for example, by behaving, doing the tasks they give, and respecting them as their teachers, may be essential to build their teaching confidence on the other hand (Gao & Benson, 2012). Related to this, calling students by their names and asking questions indicating teachers remember what students have mentioned could be ways to establish an excellent teacher-student relationship (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Putting students in a situation where they are not in the

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spotlight, such as in small groups or individual consultations, may also make students more relaxed. Thus it could create better teacher-student interactions (Subekti, 2018a). Furthermore, connecting the teacher-student rapport issue to emergent professionalism in educational psychology literature, relatedness achieved through teacher-student rapport is seen as a way pre-service teachers try to achieve to build their students' motivational force for learning (Walton et al., 2012).

The explanations above have shown the importance of professionalism among pre-service teachers for instruction success. However, as already explained, these teachers may face challenges in building it due to their disadvantaged position in the early teaching stage at schools. With this in mind, the present study seeks to answer this research question: ***How does professionalism emerge among Indonesian pre-service English teachers during their teaching practice at schools?***

## **METHOD**

### ***Design***

The present study used a qualitative design of analyzing secondary qualitative documents in the form of student reflections on teaching experiences in the Micro Teaching class in the first semester of the 2020/2021 academic year. The use of secondary data was attributed to their authenticity. While these data were not initially intended for the present study's research purposes (Pandey & Pandey, 2015), they could capture the participants' meaning-making of their teaching experiences. Secondary data may offer limited information to answer research questions as they were originally intended for a different purpose (Walliman, 2011). Hence, the reflections were evaluated first in terms of adequacy and suitability before being analyzed further (Kothari, 2014).

### ***Participants***

Thirteen pre-service English teachers in their 7<sup>th</sup> semester participated in the study by allowing their reflections in the Micro Teaching class to be analyzed. The reflections, 26 documents in total, consisted of 13 mid-semester reflections with 300-500 words in length each and 13 final reflections with 700-1,000 words in length each. Of these 13 participants, three were male, and ten were female.

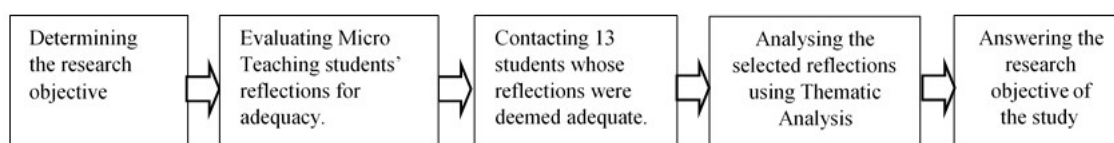
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Micro Teaching class, the class for which the reflections were initially intended, was offered for the 7<sup>th</sup>-semester students of an English Education Department at a university in Java, Indonesia. Unlike its name, however, this class was designed to allow students to do teaching simulations in front of their peers and to teach at several designated High Schools. The school teaching was conducted from several weeks before the mid-semester to the end of the semester. In total, the participants were taught five times during this period. Hence, the reflections used in the study were about the participants' experiences in this five-timed teaching. The opportunity to teach at school in the Micro Teaching class was intended to prepare the students better for their Teaching Practice class, where they would thoroughly teach at school the semester after.

Furthermore, the principles of research ethics were considered in the present study. After I set the research objective, I asked all Micro Teaching students for their consent for their reflections to be evaluated in terms of sufficiency and suitability for the study. From the evaluation, reflections from 13 students were deemed adequate and suitable for the present study's research purpose. Hence, I contacted these 13 students to ask whether they permitted their reflections to be used in the study, thus involving them as participants. From this, it could be seen that the participants' voluntary participation was maintained (Israel & Hay, 2006; Vilma, 2018), and no coercion was involved (Gray, 2014). Throughout the report, the names of the participants were made pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality (Oliver, 2003).

### ***Data collection and analysis***

After the 26 reflections were obtained from the 13 pre-service teacher participants, these reflections were analyzed using Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic Analysis involves getting familiar with the data set by reading and re-reading the reflections, generating initial codes, and formulating the themes (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). The themes should be formulated per the recurring statements and findings across the data set answering the research question. The whole sequence of data collection and analysis can be observed in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. The sequence of data collection and analysis**

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The following codes were used after each reflection excerpt: "MR" for mid-semester reflections and "FR" for final reflections to facilitate reference-tracing in this report in the presentation of findings. Thus, for example, "(Rina/MR)" after a reflection excerpt indicates that the excerpt is from Rina's (pseudonym) mid-semester reflection. Likewise, "(Kiki/FR)" after another reflection excerpt, for example, indicates that the excerpt is from Kiki's (pseudonym) final reflection.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Results*

The present study found four themes related to the emerging professional identity of the pre-service teacher participants. These themes can be observed in Table 1.

**Table 1. Pre-service Teacher Participants' Emergent Professional Identity**

Theme 1.	Realizing several aspects of the teaching profession
Sub-theme 1.1	Realizing the importance of maintaining teacher-student rapport
Sub-theme 1.2	Realizing the need to adjust instruction to suit students' needs and level of proficiency
Theme 2.	Overcoming stereotypes about teaching and students
Theme 3.	Feeling the joy of getting acknowledged as teachers
Theme 4.	Feeling the joy of seeing students' success in learning

### *Theme 1. Realizing several aspects of the teaching profession*

The study found that the participants realized several aspects of the teaching profession through their teaching practice experiences. The two most prominent in the data set were their realization of the importance of maintaining teacher-student rapport and adjusting their instruction to suit their students' needs and level of proficiency.

#### *Sub-theme 1.1. Realizing the importance of maintaining teacher-student rapport*

Through experiencing teaching first-hand in Micro Teaching class, several participants realized they needed to maintain a good rapport with students. Rina, for instance, felt that she needed to 'touch' her students' hearts to help them learn better. She commented:

*I need to be able to touch their (students') hearts before getting to their minds.  
(Rina/MR).*

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In a similar vein. Edo and Kiki realized that online learning required more effort from teachers to maintain rapport with their students. Regarding this, they stated:

*In the Zoom meeting, I learned that I need to be more interactive with students and make engaging activities. So, my teaching will not just be like a presentation in front of the students. (Edo, FR).*

*I learned that interactive communication is needed to teach online so that all students can be more active because the dynamics of online and offline classes cannot be equated. (Kiki, FR).*

Joni found that calling students by their names could help engage them more in class. He stated:

*I learned to build a bond with the students by calling their names to involve them in the activities... they started to be more active in responding to me and my instruction (since then). (Joni, TR)*

Similarly, through individual consultation activities in her class, Rina felt that she had a closer relationship with her students, allowing them to be more open to learning. She commented:

*I think that 'bonding' with students is essential... I have already experienced it myself (through individual consultation with my students). (Rina, FR).*

## ***Sub-theme 1.2. Realizing the need to adjust instruction to suit students' needs and level of proficiency***

Nine participants asserted that they realized the need to modify instructions in such a way as to adjust them to their students' needs and proficiency levels. For example, Miranda, whose class had several students with special needs, designed instructions to suit their needs. She stated:

*They (students) have different intellectual levels... In giving the materials and task, I need to make it simple... that all the students can understand or do it. ... I had never learned about teaching students with special needs (before). It was new for me... I made more than one lesson plan for one meeting... because (of) the different conditions of my students... the activities were also different. Those situations enable me to be more creative in choosing class activities. (Miranda, TR).*

Another participant teaching students with special needs was Nania. Recalling her extra efforts in teaching these students, Nania realized that, being a teacher, she should prepare several scenarios in case the original plan did not work out. She said:



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*It is challenging to teach students with special needs. Nevertheless, I try to do my best... I should... search for as many references as possible and prepare some examples ... we need to prepare carefully... and it should be appropriate to their level... be ready with possibilities... and prepare a second plan. (Nania, TR).*

Another participant, Kiki, seemed to regret giving confusing lessons to her students. She recalled:

*The material I gave was... too long, and... I forgot to attach an example... I should have attached it so the students would not feel confused when working on assignments later. (Next time) I must list what I have to attach (so my students can understand). (Kiki, FR).*

### **Theme 2. Overcoming stereotypes about teaching and students**

This study found that the participants overcame stereotypes about teaching and the students they were about to teach. When they finally experienced teaching these students, they realized their stereotypes did not happen.

Edo, who used to consider teaching scary, started to love it because of experiencing it first-hand. He stated:

*One thing that I realize is that teaching is not as scary as I imagine. However, I started to love teaching and taking it as a fun thing to do. (Edo, FR)*

In line with Edo's experience, Sylvia had a more specific stereotype that teaching at an inclusive school where she had to teach students with special needs would be very hard. Later, she acknowledged that it was getting easier by the day despite the challenges. She recalled:

*I was not really sure that I could do teaching practice at an inclusive school, although I was inquisitive. I thought it would be hard to teach special needs students, and the students would find it hard to understand what I was delivering. Nevertheless, my paradigm shifted when I did the teaching practice. The students welcomed me, and they said my teaching was fun. I felt so relieved, and it boosted my confidence. I felt more capable of teaching. (Sylvia, TR)*

Another participant, Joni, stated that he used to underestimate vocational school students. After he taught them, he realized that this belief did not happen in practice. He commented:

*Before I taught in this (vocational) school, I had a personal perspective about the students, who would be like ignorant students. However, after I experienced teaching Vocational School XXX\*, I found that (this belief) was simply*

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*unproven. As long as I build trust between the students and me, the students will feel comfortable in the teaching process. (Joni, TR)*

*\*) Formerly identifying information changed into a pseudonym*

### **Theme 3. Feeling the joy of getting acknowledged as teachers**

The study also found that through experiencing teaching, six participants reported that they felt happy when they obtained acknowledgment from their students as 'real teachers.' For example, Dessy seemed to believe that her being a real teacher' still felt somewhat surreal. She reported:

*I feel like a real teacher. I had never felt like this before... However, this time I feel like 'I am the real teacher' who teaches in front of the class and prepares teaching materials, and (I) feel how a teacher assesses the assignment given. Also, I started to like how the students called me "Miss" whenever they wanted to ask me about a task or during class. (Dessy, FR).*

In line with Dessy's experiences, Kiki also felt the joy of being acknowledged as her students' 'real teacher' through her students' activeness in consulting their works to her despite her only teaching them for several meetings. Regarding this, she said:

*I felt like a real teacher in that class... I was a bit pessimistic at first because I thought maybe there were no students who wanted to consult with me. Still, it turned out that many students contacted me privately to consult (their works), and it turned out that their results were excellent and according to what I expected. Honestly... I felt that the students paid attention to what I taught. (Kiki, FR).*

### **Theme 4. Feeling the joy of seeing students' success in learning**

The present study further found that five participants shared that they felt joy when they saw their students' success in learning. Miranda, for example, reported that her joy came from seeing her students enjoy the lesson. She said:

*I was very happy in the second meeting since I could see my students understand the materials faster. Though I explained it more than three times, I did not feel tired. It was because I saw their smile when they could work on the post-task. (Miranda, FR).*

Somewhat different in experience from that of Miranda, assessing students' good works seemed to instill several other participants' joyful feelings. Dessy, for example, could not hide her delight when checking her students' assignments and finding out they did a good job. She reported:

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*I will never forget the feeling of checking their assignment and finding out they were doing a good job and obtained good results. The most memorable moments... when I submitted their scores, gave feedback on their works one by one, and gave different comments to each student. It was fun, significantly (when) they immediately responded. (Dessy, FR).*

Edo also reported a similar joyful feeling upon checking his students' works. He said:

*This (checking students' work) also made me realize the real feeling of being a teacher. When correcting students' work, I realized that I was already successful in teaching them because I saw what they had made, their progress, and to what extent they had mastered what I had taught. The only feeling that I had at that time was 'proud'... I had successfully taught them and was proud of seeing their excellent work. When scoring, I also felt like being a real teacher because I had to be able to make real scores, meaning that I had to score them based on what they had done. (Edo, TR).*

## **Discussion**

### **Theme 1. Realizing several aspects of the teaching profession**

#### **Sub-theme 1.1. Realizing the importance of maintaining teacher-student rapport**

The finding on the participants' realizations of the positive role of teacher-student rapport was in line with the findings of a study in an Indonesian assistantship context at the university level (Siahaan & Subekti, 2021). The lecturer assistant participants in the study (Siahaan & Subekti, 2021) reported that as they built rapport with their students, they enjoyed teaching more, and their students enjoyed their classes more. Specific to the present study's finding on the role of calling students by their names in building rapport, Bondy and Ross (2008) asserted that teachers calling students by their names along with smiles or asking questions indicating that they remember something students have mentioned could positively affect the teacher-student relationship. For students, in educational psychology literature, it is mentioned that the need for relatedness or the feeling of being connected to others could be a motivational force for learning (Walton et al., 2012). Another finding on better teacher-student relationships through individual consultations may be attributed to another psychological factor, students' reduced anxiety when speaking to fewer interlocutors (Subekti, 2018a). The pre-service teacher participants' realizations of these psychological aspects of students became 'entry points' through which pre-service teachers could understand their students better.

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### ***Sub-theme 1.2. Realizing the need to adjust instruction to suit students' needs and level of proficiency***

The findings in this theme highlighted the pre-service teacher participants' realizations of the need to adjust their instructional practices to their students' levels and differing levels of understanding. Miranda and Nania, for example, reported their extra effort in facilitating the needs of students with special needs in their class despite their limited knowledge in the field. This finding suggested that the participants began to demonstrate emergent professionalism as seen from their focus on students' learning rather than on concerns about their teaching performance associated with the evaluative nature of the Micro Teaching class. This finding was in line with a study by Burns and Danyluk (2017) involving six pre-service language teachers. They found that through a teaching practicum experience, their participants realized the elements of learning most valued by their students, such as whether the lesson was engaging, relevant, or authentic (Burns & Danyluk, 2017). Moreover, as seen in Kiki's excerpts, she expressed a certain degree of guilt when she perceived herself as unable to facilitate students optimally. As Yuan and Lee (2015) mentioned, this guilt may demonstrate her growth as a teacher, where she tried to fulfil her responsibility in optimizing students' learning.

### ***Theme 2. Overcoming stereotypes about teaching and students***

The findings in Theme 2 highlighted the participants' shifts of perspectives about some students and teaching. For example, Edo believed that vocational school students had low motivation to learn English. While teaching at an inclusive school, Sylvia and Joni were unsure whether they could teach students with special needs. However, it turned out that vocational students could be engaged in English lessons, and teaching special needs students, despite the challenges, was not as difficult as they had imagined. These findings indicated that these participants had successfully overcome their stereotypes and preconceptions. The present study's findings corresponded with the finding of a study in China involving 98 pre-service teachers from various departments (Zhao & Zhang, 2017). They also found that pre-service teachers obtained a new understanding of the characteristics and contents of teaching work. Such features as communicating with students and teaching creativity to make things work in the field despite the challenges were attractive to them (Zhao & Zhang, 2017), contributing positively to changing their stereotypes about the teaching profession.

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Furthermore, in the general education field, Matheis et al. (2019) asserted that stereotypes could influence teachers' perceptions and behaviors toward their students. In turn, these stereotypes may indirectly negatively influence students' learning opportunities. Stereotypes are considered one fundamental aspect of teachers' beliefs, and as such, they become a (harmful) component of their professional competencies (Matheis et al., 2019). For this reason, the present study's participants successfully overcoming their stereotypes may be the entry point towards the emergence of their professional identity as teachers.

### ***Theme 3. Feeling the joy of getting acknowledged as a teacher***

The findings on this theme captured the pre-service teacher participants' transformation experience from being anxious student teachers. Worrying about whether they could show 'good teaching performance' to happy, contented teachers experiencing first-hand what teaching was like, including preparing for materials, assessing students' works, giving students feedback, and answering questions. Even as seen in Dessy's excerpt, being called "Miss" by her students made her feel so happy. Generally, the findings in Theme 3 may suggest that the psychological recognition from their students made the pre-service teacher participants enjoy their teaching process. Regarding this finding, Gao and Benson (2012) asserted that students' acceptance is vital for pre-service teachers doing teaching practicum due to their 'liminal' position and lack of experience.

Though their Micro Teaching teachers and mentor teachers assess their teaching performance, pre-service teachers may also see their students as the 'third' parties assessing their teaching. Hence, students' recognition may be seen as evidence of successful teaching. However, in the present study, as seen in the excerpts, the message that the participants felt happy teaching was more profound than that they could show good teaching performances. It was in line with the idea of Markos (2012) positing that pre-service teachers should be given opportunities to "acknowledge what they believe" and "recognize why they believe what they do" (p. 55). In this case, experiencing teaching may have facilitated the participants to experience the positive emotions that resulted from teaching. As Bloomfield (2010) put it, complex and diverse teaching experiences shape pre-service teachers' learning to teach and to becoming teachers, experiencing positive emotions of being recognized by students being one of them.

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### ***Theme 4. Feeling the joy of seeing students' success in learning***

The findings on this theme suggested that the participants could not hide their excitement upon realizing that their students showed an understanding of the materials and did an excellent job on the assignment. As seen in Miranda's and Edo's testimonies, assessing students' work and finding out they did a good job made the participants realize one joyful moment of being teachers. This finding may indicate one of their emergent professionalism moments where they shifted concerns from self to others (students) (Burns & Danyluk, 2017). It seemed that the participants took off their cloaks of being pre-service teachers. They were being evaluated for their teaching performance. They had become 'real' teachers who cared about whether their students understood what they taught rather than their teaching performance during the practicum per se. Related to this, Fajardo and Miranda (2015) asserted that teaching practicum allows pre-service teachers to know the real world of teaching and thus contribute to pre-service teachers' motivation and engagement with the profession. Similarly, some mentor teachers involved in a study by Kuswandono (2017) asserted that the more pre-service teachers are emotionally involved in their teaching, the more likely they can relate with students, facilitating learning.

In comparison, the more they focus on themselves, on how they could get better grades from lecturers or mentor teachers, the less likely they could attend to students' needs (Kuswandono, 2017). In the present study, the participants may have involved themselves emotionally and thus could facilitate their students to learn, hence their understanding and good assignment results. In turn, the participants felt satisfied with their students' learning with teaching as performance in such practicum situations was left unmentioned, indicating their emergent professionalism as teachers.

## **CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION**

### ***Conclusion***

The present study, overall, highlighted the pre-service teacher participants' journey through experiencing teaching first-hand, realizing several aspects of the teaching profession, overcoming their previous misconceptions about teaching, and students to finally feeling the joy of being acknowledged by their students and seeing their students' success in learning. The study captured the pre-service teachers' shift from concern for themselves to concern for their students during their teaching practice, indicating the participants' emergent professionalism as

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teachers. The study's findings encouraged stakeholders at various English Education Departments to design the curricula so that pre-service teachers could get access to actual teaching situations in more opportunities earlier during their study. For example, pre-service teachers can watch movies about teaching or role-model teachers in content classes or can teach actual classes several times in the later part of the semester of Micro Teaching classes just like the participants of the present study. This way, pre-service teachers can have more opportunities to develop their professionalism and their love of the teaching profession even before their extensive teaching practicum at schools.

### ***Limitation***

The limitation of the study may mainly be associated with the use of secondary data as the only source of information. A combination of student reflections and interviews may provide room for confirmation of what happened. For example, the reflection on the joyful moments when seeing students' success in learning could be further confirmed through interviews. To what extent they shifted focus from self (their teaching performance) to students may also be obtained from interview data.

### ***Implication***

Furthermore, the study provides at least two implications. First, on the finding of the participants' realization of the need to adjust instructions based on students' proficiency level, English education majors could facilitate pre-service teachers to realize that teaching practice is not about "looking smart" in front of students and teacher mentors. It is how these pre-service teachers can facilitate their students to learn one way or another, despite still being in 'practice.' It can be achieved through instructions in English education majors. For example, university teachers can design a task requiring pre-service teachers to design materials, instructional videos, and the like based on the intended students' various proficiency levels, including that of students with special needs. Hence, these pre-service teachers may be less concerned about how 'fast' or 'fluent' they speak and more about whether what they teach can be understood by the intended students. The other implication is the response to the present study's findings on the teacher-student rapport and the acknowledgment or respect given by students to the pre-service teacher participants. University teachers can discuss individual differences and affective factors within students before teaching classes, such as Micro Teaching and Teaching Practice. Such

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discussions may better equip pre-service teachers to interact with their students more effectively.

Last but not least, several suggestions for future studies in the field exist. First, the moments of assessing students were reported as a 'turning point' where the pre-service teachers seemed to 'enjoy' the teaching practice the most, where they seemed to 'forget' the evaluative nature of their teaching practice, and to focus on their students' learning success. Hence, it may be worthwhile to investigate the dynamics of pre-service teachers' assessing their students' work more in-depth. Secondly, on the finding of the participants' initial anxiety in teaching students with special needs, it could be essential to conduct survey studies investigating the readiness of English Education majors' curricula to prepare pre-service teachers of English in teaching English to students with special needs. Furthermore, investigating pre-service teachers' professionalism during teaching practice from the viewpoints of their students may also provide a different perspective enriching literature on teacher education generally and teachers' emergent professionalism more specifically.

### **BIO-PROFILE**

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