

TRACING INDONESIAN EFL TEACHERS' MOTIVATION FROM PRE-SERVICE TO POST-CERTIFICATION: NARRATIVE INQUIRY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the developmental trajectory of Indonesian EFL teachers' motivation, responding to the limited research on how motivation changes across the transition from pre-service education to professional practice. Using a narrative inquiry design, data were collected through narrative frames and in-depth interviews with three certified teachers, then analyzed by tracing their experiences across phases and comparing patterns of motivational change. It resulted in five career phases, namely: Pre-service, Transition, Certification (PPG), Professional, and Reflective phases. The findings show that teacher motivation fluctuated across stages. While they started with varying levels of drive, motivation typically dropped during the stressful transition into the workforce due to job instability and feeling unprepared. However, the PPG certification program was a critical turning point, helping them rebuild their commitment and professional identity through structured training and peer support. Once in professional practice, their motivation stabilized but remained highly dependent on their daily teaching conditions, relationships, and how they redefined success. Ultimately, this research frames motivation as a fluid, ongoing process shaped by real-world context, highlighting the PPG program's vital role in keeping teachers engaged.

Keywords: EFL Teachers, Narrative Inquiry, PPG, Professional Identity, Teacher Motivation

A. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a growing attention on the challenges of preparing teachers who are able to adapt to the evolving demands of education in Indonesia, especially related to the curriculum changes, technological advancements, and the needs of 21st-century learners (Herlinawati et al., 2024). Despite the ongoing adjustments, the transition from pre-service education to professional teaching remains at a critical stage where many teachers experience difficulties. Studies have shown that early career teachers often face declining motivation, which may lead to burnout and even attrition (Dayan & Khan, 2018). Without a deeper understanding of how teachers experience and negotiate this transition, teacher

development policies risk overlooking the psychological and professional processes that shape teachers' long-term engagement and commitment.

One key policy that may address this issue is the Pendidikan Profesi Guru (PPG), an Indonesian national teacher certification program designed to bridge pre-service preparation and in-service professional practice (Pasha et al., 2024). PPG is mandated by national education policy and aims to develop teachers' pedagogical, professional and sociocultural competencies while also supporting reflective practice and strengthening motivation (Attabik & Zainiza, 2025). The program generally integrates teaching practicum, mentoring, and professional training to support teachers' readiness for real classroom situations (Mubarokah, 2024). Accordingly, PPG represents a crucial phase in teachers' professional direction, which marks their transition from educational students to certified educators.

From a theoretical point of view, motivation plays a huge role in understanding teachers' professional development. Motivation is commonly defined as a dynamic process that initiates, directs and sustains goal-oriented behavior (Kubanyiova et al., 2009). In educational settings, it not only influences teachers' engagement and persistence, but also the quality of instructional practices and classroom interaction (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). Motivation is often conceptualized as intrinsic and extrinsic, referring to internally driven interest and externally driven incentives (Urhahne & Wijnia, 2023). In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), teachers' motivation is further shaped by factors such as language proficiency, global positioning of English, and institutional expectation (Rahmawati et al., 2024)

Closely related to motivation is the concept of professional identity, which refers to how teachers understand their roles, values, and commitment in their profession (Wong & Liu, 2025). Previous research suggests that motivation and professional identity are mutually reinforcing: a strong professional identity can sustain teachers' intrinsic motivation, while motivation itself encourages continuous identity development (Luo & Zou, 2025). Moreover, professional identity is not stagnant but continues to evolve through teachers' interaction with students, colleagues, and institutional contexts, as well as through reflective engagement with their own experiences (Wang & Zhang, 2021). This dynamic relationship highlights the importance of analyzing motivations not as a fixed attribute, but as part of an ongoing process of being professional teachers.

Despite the intended benefits of PPG, empirical studies indicate that its impact on teacher motivation is not always consistent. For example, there are challenges such as uneven mentoring quality, limited follow-up support, and unclear long-term effects on teachers' professional development commitment (Siregar et al., 2024). These findings suggest that while PPG holds strong potential, its implementation may produce varied motivational outcomes across individuals. This issue becomes particularly complex in EFL contexts, where teachers must navigate both pedagogical demands and language-related challenges that shape their professional experiences.

From a methodological perspective, existing studies do not provide full insights into teachers' motivational development. Quantitative research tends to capture motivation as a static construct measured at a single point in time (Apoko & Cahyono, 2024), while qualitative studies often provide detailed but short-term descriptions that don't follow changes over long careers of the teachers (Attabik & Zainiza, 2025). As a result, the

understanding of how teachers' motivation evolves as they move from pre-service education through certification to ongoing professional practice remains limited.

To address this gap, motivation needs to be understood as something that develops over time. Therefore, this study adopts a narrative inquiry approach to explore how teachers make sense of their motivational experiences across different stages of their professional development (Clandinin et al., 2007). Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the motivational progressions of Indonesian EFL teachers as they transition from pre-service education to post-certification professional practice. By focusing on teachers' lived experiences, this study attempts to understand how motivation changes over time and how these changes are interpreted within their professional journeys. In doing so, this research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of teacher motivation as a dynamic and context-specific process. Based on this purpose, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. How does English teachers' motivation develop from pre-service education to post-certification professional practice?
2. How do English teachers make sense of changes in their motivation across different phases during their professional development?

B. METHOD

This study utilized a qualitative approach using a narrative inquiry design to explore how Indonesian EFL teachers experience and interpret changes in their motivation across different stages of their professional development, especially in teaching. Narrative inquiry was chosen due to its nature of understanding lived experiences through personal stories, which allows motivation to be seen as an evolving and meaning-making process rather than a fixed construct (Clandinin et al., 2007). The study specifically traced teachers' motivational path from their pre-service education, through certification, to their current teaching practice.

The study was conducted in Yogyakarta and involved English teachers working in different school contexts. Data collection took place over approximately one month. A series of in-depth interviews was conducted at times convenient for the participants. Each interview lasted approximately 45-60 minutes and was audio recorded with participants' consent. Reflective field notes were also taken to capture contextual details and non-verbal cues during the interaction. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure relevance to the research focus (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study involved three Indonesian EFL teachers who had completed the PPG program. The selection criteria included: (1) holding a bachelor's degree in English education, (2) having completed PPG certification in 2022, (3) having approximately one year of teaching experience and (4) willingness to participate in the study. The small sample size was intentional, as narrative inquiry prioritizes depth and detailed exploration of individual experiences (Clandinin et al., 2007). The participants, identified using pseudonyms Vivi, Fafa, and Riri, shared similar educational backgrounds but differed in their professional paths, providing a basis for examining how motivation develops across different contexts and experiences, as detailed below.

Table 1. Participants' Profile

Pseudonym	Education Background	PPG Institution	Current Position		Previous Experience
Vivi	B.A. in English Education (UAD)	UAD	English (Vocational School, Bantul)	Teacher	Factory worker; Junior high school teacher; Counselling teacher
Fafa	B.A. in English Education (UAD)	UAD	English (Vocational School, Wates)	Teacher	English teacher (Islamic school)
Riri	B.A. in English Education (UST)	UAD	English (Junior High School, Bantul)	Teacher	Guest teacher (Elementary school)

To gain in-depth understanding of their motivational experiences, two instruments were used: a narrative frame and semi-structured interviews. The narrative frame was used as an initial tool to help participants reflect on and organize their experiences across different phases of their professional journey. It consisted of guided questions adapted from Barkhuizen & Wette (2008). The questions covered stages such as pre-service education, post-graduation transition, certification and current teaching practice.

Following this, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore participants' narratives in greater detail. The interviews aimed to elaborate on the responses, clarify key events, and capture participants' interpretations of their experiences. The interview questions were developed based on the research objectives and informed by previous studies on the motivation (Kelchtermans, 2009). All interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia to allow participants to express their experiences more naturally. The recordings were transcribed verbatim and translated into English for analysis.

Data collection was conducted in several stages, beginning with informed consent, followed by the completion of the narrative frame and an in-depth interview to further understand participants' experiences. The transcript was then returned for member checking to ensure accuracy. After all data were collected and verified through member checking, the analysis was conducted. Data analysis followed a narrative approach, focusing on how participants constructed and interpreted their experiences over time. The process began with familiarization through repeated reading of the transcripts. The narratives were then organized into temporal phases, including pre-service, transition, certification, and professional practice. Each participant's story was reconstructed into a coherent narrative (within-case analysis), followed by cross-case analysis to identify common patterns of motivational change. Throughout the analysis, emphasis was placed on participants' meaning-making processes, highlighting motivation as a dynamic and evolving experience.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings and discussion in two interconnected parts: (1) the trajectory of English teachers' motivation from pre-service to post-certification, and (2) teachers' sense-making of motivational shifts across professional stages. The first part focuses on how motivation develops across different professional phases, while the second part examines how participants interpret and give meaning to those motivational changes through their lived experiences.

1. Trajectory of English Teachers' Motivation from Pre-Service to Post-Certification

The findings show that teachers' motivation is best understood as an evolving narrative process defined by the lived realities rather than a static characteristic. Motivation typically emerges during the pre-service stage. It is tentative and shaped by personal interest, family expectations, and other external influences, gradually shifting between internal and external orientations. During the transition phase, motivation becomes unstable as the unfulfilled gaps of identities cause reality to shift from confidence to identity doubt. In the PPG phase, motivation was once again reconstructed through structured learning experience, teaching practice, and peer interaction, confidence, and the renewed professional direction. At the professional phase, motivation is once again stabilized, but is held contextually dependent. It is sustained through the school environment, unfulfilled students' needs and the realities of daily teacher lives.

While the individual courses may differ, there were three dominant emerging patterns: disrupted–reconstructed–adaptive, emergent–stabilizing, and continuously evolving. In all of this PPG cases, the motivation shifts from the disrupted to the reconstructed and from the weakened professional identity to the redefined. In the final phase of the professional teacher, motivation is defined as the reflection of the transactions as it evolves from linear to an expanding construct.

Individual Narrative Transition of Teachers' Motivation

The participants' motivation developed gradually through lived experiences rather than forming as a fixed professional identity, and it shifted across five phases: (1) Pre-service Phase, (2) Transition/Graduation Phase, (3) Certification Phase, (4) Professional Phase, and (5) Reflective Meaning-Making.

Table 1. Narrative Trajectories of Teachers' Motivation Across Phases

Phase	Vivi	Fafa	Riri
1.Pre-service	Redirected from Biology; initial shock; motivation shaped by family influence.	Accidental entry; low confidence; driven by obligation, not clear purpose.	Early aspiration, inspired by a role model, strengthened through a peer environment.
2. Transition	Career disruption; worked outside the field; concerned about losing English competence.	Avoided teaching; entered under pressure; faced an unsupportive, demanding workplace.	Reality shock, limited opportunities, and tutoring led to reduced confidence.

3. Certification (PPG)	Re-entry phase; rebuilt skills; gained confidence through structured practice.	Turning point, peer support reduced anxiety; confidence and readiness increased.	Growth phase; overcame insecurity; developed through intensive practice and research.
4. Professional	Adapts to limited resources; uses alternative strategies to sustain engagement.	Works with low motivation; values small gains and incremental student progress.	Faces high expectations; improves continuously; supports students beyond class.
5. Reflective	Accepts fluctuating motivation; grounded in empathetic, purpose-driven teaching.	From doubt to certainty; fully embraces teaching as core identity.	Sees growth as ongoing; motivation fluctuates but trends upward over time.

Pre-service Phase

The pre-service phase showed contrasting formations of motivation and professional identity among participants. Motivation ranges from internally derived to externally directed and tentative. Riri demonstrated a stable intrinsic orientation from the outset. She was also supported by meaningful role models and a positive academic environment that affected her early commitment, she admitted:

"I've actually always had the dream of becoming a teacher."

In contrast, Vivi's motivation was there, but wasn't linear; it was redirected through contextual influences after an initial aspiration in another field. Her experience reflected a gradual alignment with teaching rather than immediate certainty, she explained:

"My dream was to become a teacher, but a Biology or Science teacher. I tried several times, but I never passed the selection."

On the other hand, Fafa showed the most fragile starting point. She entered without a clear intention, with decisions shaped by external prompts and accompanied by low confidence, she shared:

"At first, I had no intention of going to college at all. After vocational school, I just wanted to work. When my cousin asked me to join English Education, I thought, 'Why not?'"

These excerpts indicate that motivation in the pre-service phase remained emergent and variably constructed, ranging from internally driven commitment to externally shaped participation. This reflects (Kubanyiova et al., 2009) view of motivation as dynamic and shaped through interaction with personal histories and contextual influences, rather than as a fixed internal trait.

Transition / Graduation Phase

Following the pre-service period, the transition phase became a period of disruption for all participants. Among all of them, their initial expectations met with limited job opportunities and unpreparedness for the real teaching context. Vivi experienced role discontinuity and late entry, she even took the opportunity outside teaching, which created tension between intended and actual identity, she shared:

“Job vacancies for English teachers were hard to find. I worked in a factory while looking for teaching jobs.”

Fafa underwent the most severe decline; she initially avoided teaching, and when she entered the profession, it was under pressure due to her strong unpreparedness an unsupportive environment:

“I didn’t immediately apply to become a teacher at that time. I even tried applying to a bank... When I first started teaching, I was so nervous. It felt like immediately jumping in without experience.”

Riri, despite her strong initial motivation, also experiences reality shock, with declining motivation due to structural constraints and temporary work:

“After graduating, I was really optimistic because there were no jobs for two months. The reality wasn’t that smooth. It was hard to find a school that was hiring. At that time, my motivation dropped. Because the reality was tough.”

These findings suggest that the transition phase was characterized by instability, where motivation weakened as expectations collided with professional realities, although the intensity differed across participants. This aligns with research identifying the transition as emotionally demanding and identity-challenging, while also showing how employment conditions and non-linear pathways intensify motivational vulnerability (Togatorop & Aulia, 2025).

Certification Phase (PPG)

After experiencing disruption during the transition phase, the certification phase (PPG) became a turning point for all participants. It was when motivation was reconstructed through structured learning and peer-support. Across cases, previous disruption was addressed through competence building and renewed engagement. Vivi experienced this phase as a return to her professional path, regaining confidence through active involvement in teaching preparation. She recounted:

“During PPG, we had to prepare all teaching materials from scratch. That process made me feel more confident.”

Fafa underwent the most significant transformation. She shifted from avoidance to readiness and confidence, she shared:

“By joining the PPG Program, I started to dare to speak in public, and there was a lot of knowledge I didn’t get in my bachelor’s program. I really felt changed. From

someone who was afraid to speak into someone who could stand in front of the class more confidently."

Riri, was initially experiencing insecurity, yet felt the benefits from strong peer support and intensive learning. It helped her to increase her competence and motivation. She stated:

"During PPG, it was even more impressive... I felt quite insecure at that time. What made me more confident during PPG was that I was trained in many things. I felt that my knowledge grew a lot, and that increased my confidence."

These narratives indicate that PPG functioned as a reconstruction phase that transformed disrupted trajectories into renewed professional confidence, although in different ways: restoration for Vivi, transformation for Fafa, and reinforcement for Riri. Motivation is context-sensitive and responsive to institutional recognition. Studies also highlight professional programs as spaces for confidence-building and identity reconstruction (Wahyudin & Aripin, 2025)

Professional Phase (PPG)

Once participants entered professional teaching practice, motivation became contextual, adaptive, and rooted in everyday teaching practice. Across narratives, participants managed institutional constraints, students' characteristics, and available resources. Vivi adapted to limited facilities and challenging classroom conditions by sustaining motivation through flexibility, she stated:

"The facilities were limited, so we had to take turns using what was available. But as teachers, we need alternatives so lessons are not monotonous."

Fafa was teaching students with low motivation. She redefined success through little incremental progress and acknowledged even the micro-level impacts, she shared:

"In my current school, many students lack motivation. Sometimes, only one or two students want to participate. But that alone makes me happy. It means there's a chance."

Riri taught in a more demanding place, where there were higher expectations and more pressure. But it was also pushing growth and strengthening her professional engagement. She explained:

"They're junior high students now, and they already know the basics. So sometimes I'm afraid of making mistakes in class. But I enjoy teaching here because it motivates me to improve my skills even more."

At this stage, motivation appeared more stable, yet it continued to be shaped by contextual realities, adaptation, resilience, and changing definitions of success. Vivi stated:

"Teaching is a calling. We need to understand our students. I want to be a teacher they look forward to, not one they fear."

Fafa experienced a clear identity shift from insecurity to ownership and embraced teaching as crucial to her self-concept. She shared

“Before, I felt that I wasn’t ready to teach. But after the PPG, I felt more shaped as a teacher. From there, I started to enjoy being in the classroom,”

Riri described her journey as a steady upward path, where teaching is both a professional career and a moral commitment.

“Motivation is like a graph that goes up and down, but it tends to move upward... from idealism, then falling into reality, and rising again.... Teaching is a profession that contributes to a nation’s progress... it is a calling and a life purpose.”

Taken together, these accounts show that professional motivation was sustained through adaptation and meaning-making within specific teaching contexts, where earlier disruptions are incorporated into a more stable and meaningful sense of professional identity. This consistently shows that contextual challenges can strengthen professional purpose rather than diminish it (Sahito et al., 2025).

Reflective Meaning-Making Phase

In the final phase, participants reinterpreted their experiences and consolidated their professional identities through reflection. Across narratives, motivation is understood as dynamic rather than fixed. Vivi saw teaching as a personal calling, even though there was still fluctuation in motivation. Fafa reflects a clear identity shift from insecurity to ownership:

“Now I can stand in front of the class... If I weren’t a teacher, I honestly wouldn’t know what else I would be”

These reflections suggest that motivation became integrated into participants’ broader understanding of themselves as teachers. This aligns with the view that identity develops through tension and negotiation and is maintained through narrative sense-making processes rather than as a fixed or stable construct (Clandinin et al., 2007). Across the five phases, motivation begins unevenly, starting from different and often weak beginnings, disrupted by ongoing transition challenges, and then rebuilt through PPG as a crucial pivot. In the phases that are more professional and reflective, motivation becomes more stable but context-dependent, ultimately forming a significant and developing professional identity. Overall, these findings show that teacher motivation is closely connected to how teachers gradually build their professional identity over time. Instead of staying fixed, motivation shifts through experience, challenges, and reflection, influencing how teachers stay committed to their work. This suggests that supporting teachers should go beyond technical skills, and also focus on their long-term professional growth and sense of identity.

2. Teachers’ Sense-Making of Motivational Shifts Across Professional Stages

This subsection focuses on how the three teachers make sense of changes in their motivation across their professional journey. Rather than describing phases, it looks at how they interpret their experiences and give meaning to those changes, addressing the second research question. The analysis is organized into (1) cross-narrative motivational patterns, followed by (2) motivation as a non-linear career pathway, (3) the PPG program as a pivotal point of reconstruction, (4) contextual factors shaping professional motivation, (5) teachers’ normalization of challenges as part of identity development, and (6) the rebuilding of motivation through adaptation and relational support.

Cross-Narrative Motivational Patterns

Building on the initial characterization of motivational shifts, the cross-narrative analysis reveals that teachers' motivation follows a dynamic trajectory moving through four interconnected phases: Formation, disruption, reconstruction, and adaptation. During the pre-service phases, formation is started, motivation begins at different levels, from very strong personal aspirations to choices made from an externally driven approach or made pragmatically. In this phase, they become aware of an identity that is still developing. This finding supports Kubanyiova et al. (2009), who argue that teacher motivation develops alongside teachers' imagined professional selves and continues to evolve through experience and context.

During the disruption phase, they become aware of instability. They face reality shock, limited job opportunities, role discontinuity, and feelings of unpreparedness. These conditions often lead to decreased motivation, identity tension, and temporary disengagement from the teaching path. Rather than functioning only as practical difficulties, these experiences also challenge participants' developing sense of professional identity. This aligns with Abramson and Schachter (2024), who emphasize that early-career teachers often negotiate tensions between expectations and professional realities.

The PPG phase becomes a key turning point for motivational reconstruction, through structured training, peer support, and teaching practice. The participants rebuild competence, restore confidence, and realign their professional identity. This suggests that PPG functions not only as a certification pathway, but also as a space for rebuilding professional commitment and self-confidence. Similar findings were reported by Apoko and Cahyono (2024), who found that participation in PPG strengthened teachers' motivation and professional engagement.

In the professional phase, the adaptation happens, and motivation becomes more stable. It is highly contextual and sustained through adaptation to instructional constraints, student needs, and available resources. Rather than being driven by initial idealism, motivation is maintained through practical engagement. Overall, these patterns show that teachers' motivation develops non-linearly, continuously shaped by experience, identity shifts, and contextual demands. The findings indicate that teachers sustain their motivation by redefining success, adapting to contextual realities, and maintaining meaningful relationships with students. It is important to mind contextual and relational factors in sustaining teacher motivation (Sahito et al., 2025).

Motivational Trajectories as Non-Linear Career Pathways

The trajectories of the three participants clearly show that motivation does not follow a fixed path but moves through redirection, disruption and recovery. Riri's stable intrinsic start contrasts with Vivi's gradual redirection and Fafa's externally driven and uncertain entry. These differences become more visible in the transition phase: Vivi experiences role misalignment, Fafa shows avoidance, while Riri faces reality shock despite her strong starting foundation. This pattern supports a previous study on the emotional difficulty of early career transition and non-linear employment pathways intensify instability (Abramson & Schachter, 2024). On the other hand, these disruptions later act as reflective turning points,

previous study shows that identity develops through tension and negotiation rather than smooth progression (Ma et al., 2023).

PPG as a Turning Point in Motivational Trajectories

Participants perceive PPG differently; the most notable similarity is the boost in confidence. For Vivi it's the confidence boost, Fafa changes from being avoidant to being ready, and Riri it is strengthening and renewing already existing drive.

Before entering PPG, all participants show fragile motivation shaped by ongoing uncertainty. With motivation through structured learning and peer interaction, they all align and focus their paths. Confidence from teaching preparation is restored for Vivi, Fafa is able to move past her fear and build readiness, and Riri strengthens competence despite initial insecurity. These behaviors fall in line with the literature on identity and confidence rebuilding in professional programs (Wahyudin & Aripin, 2025). PPG is a space where participants learn to view setbacks in their professional journey differently and reframe obstacles that they previously faced as opportunities for growth.

Contextual Influences on Professional Motivation

Professional motivation is strongly shaped by teaching context, but participants face it in different ways for each participant. Vivi and Fafa work in under-resourced settings; they have to sustain motivation through adaptation. In contrast, Riri teaches in a more demanding environment with higher pressure, which later leads to continuous improvement. It is in line with research that views motivation as shaped by environmental condition (Hornýák, 2025).

However, the comparisons show that difficulties do not automatically reduce motivation. For Vivi and Fafa, challenges strengthen their sense of purpose, it aligns with findings that difficult contexts can build moral commitment (Huu Nghia & Tai, 2019). Riri's case, however, shows that supportive environments also create a sense of pressure and self-doubt, although they are conducive to growth (Sahito et al., 2025). All these speak to the fact that teaching is a complex phenomenon. In this case, motivation arguably depends less on the context and more on the response and interpretation the teachers have towards the context, and in particular, the focus of the response to a purpose drawn from the context.

Making Sense of Professional Challenges as Normal and Inevitable

All of the participants acknowledge that challenges are normal and unavoidable in teaching. Vivi accepts fluctuating motivation, Fafa reframes past insecurities as growth, and Riri views challenges as part of a continuous developmental process. This shows how teachers use narrative to maintain consistency in their professional identity (Clandinin et al., 2007). By normalizing difficulties, they reduce the emotional burden of challenges and maintain commitment as teachers despite external pressure. It supports the idea that resilience involves resistance rather than the absence of difficulty (Lu et al., 2024).

Rebuilding Motivation through Adaptation and Relational Support

All of the participants also experience the recovery of motivation during their journey. Vivi rebuilds motivation through adaptive teaching strategies, Fafa through redefining success in small student engagement, and Riri through relational validation and professional challenge. These differences show how motivation is rebuilt through practice and interactions, which aligns with research on context-responsive motivation, where individuals sustain motivation by adjusting expectations to situational realities (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021). Rather than

returning to an earlier state, motivation is rebuilt as a more grounded and context-sensitive form, shaped by adaptation, relationships, and ongoing meaning-making.

D. CONCLUSION

This study examined how Indonesian EFL teachers' motivation develops across professional phases and how these changes are understood through their lived experiences. These findings show that motivation follows a non-linear trajectory marked by emergence, disruption, reconstruction, and adaptation. Even though motivation forms during the pre-service phase, it often weakens during the transition due to uncertainty and limited opportunities, before being rebuilt during the PPG program and gradually stabilized in professional practice. Rather than a simple increase or decline, motivation fluctuates throughout their teaching journey and is closely tied to their ongoing construction of professional identity. One of the key findings in this study is the role of PPG as a turning point. It serves more than a mere certification; it provides a space for rebuilding confidence, strengthening competence, and redirecting professional paths. All the participants acknowledge that challenges are not eliminated, but rather reinterpreted as meaningful experiences that contribute to their development. In professional practice as teachers, motivation is sustained through adaptation to constraints, redefinition of success, support from both students and peers, and personal reflection. However, this study has some limitations. It involved only a small number of participants within a specific context, so the findings cannot be easily generalized. In addition, the data were based on retrospective narratives, which may reflect how participants currently interpret their past experiences. Building on this, future research could examine teacher motivation across wider contexts, different subject areas, and larger groups of participants. Longitudinal studies would be especially useful to capture how motivation develops over time and responds to changing professional conditions.

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