

[doi: 10.15584/sar.2017.14.13](https://doi.org/10.15584/sar.2017.14.13)

Agnieszka TURZAŃSKA

University of Silesia in Katowice
agnieszka.nowak@interia.pl

Aleksandra SZYMAŃSKA-TWOREK

University of Silesia in Katowice
aleksandra.szymanska@us.edu.pl

‘TO TEACH OR NOT TO TEACH’: REASONS MOTIVATING STUDENTS TO EMBARK UPON THE TEACHING PATH

Abstract: The paper presents and analyses factors motivating pre-service teachers to choose to teach. The reasons motivating students to enter the teaching profession are attested to be 'positive, altruistic and professionally sound' (Barnes 2005:349). Ewing and Smith (2003:22) state that young people are attracted to the profession because they perceive teaching as a satisfying career that offers opportunity for professional development, want to help others and contribute to society or wish to work with children. Taking Poland as a case in point, a large-scale study by Duraj-Nowakowa (2011:129) identified three main factors that motivate students to become teachers: fascination with the subject, eagerness to work with children and social status of the profession. This paper presents and discusses our own findings obtained through a questionnaire administered among philology students concerning their reasons for choosing the teaching career. The purpose of this study was to gain insight into why students majoring in English decide to embark upon the teaching path. What is more, the study reports upon factors deterring students from pursuing the teaching career and driving new recruits away from this path.

Key words: pre-service teachers, philology students, motivation to teach

Pre-service teachers' motivations for choosing to teach

A growing body of literature is documenting hardships of the teaching profession (e.g. van Dick and Wagner 2001, Kretschmann 2003, Akhlaq *et al.* 2010). There seems to be a consensus among scholars and classroom practitioners

that teaching is a stressful, demanding and draining job. Nevertheless, there are still young people who are drawn to this profession and willing to devote their entire working life to teaching. This paper provides an overview of research into factors motivating students to choose to teach. Additionally, the paper reports upon factors discouraging pre-service teachers from taking up a teaching post and driving new recruits away from pursuing the profession. In the further part of the article, we present our own small-scale study that was conducted among students of English enrolled in a teacher preparatory training.

The research quoted in the present paper comes from the UK, Australia, Greece and Poland. We are aware that our decision to include findings coming from different countries is controversial because the position of teachers in each of these countries is different. Osborn and Broadfoot (1993:105) challenge the common practice of researchers to refer to 'teachers' when what they really mean is teachers in a particular country. This way Osborn and Broadfoot point out the vast differences that exist between national contexts. However, our decision to adduce research coming from four different contexts was driven by two reasons. First, our intention was to show that topics under discussion are universal and observed in different communities. Secondly, we consider it worth noticing that despite sociocultural differences that exist between these four countries, research findings have revealed a considerable number of common threads, thus, again emphasising the universal nature of the phenomenon in question.

The reasons motivating students to enter the teaching profession are attested to be 'positive, altruistic and professionally sound' (Barnes 2005:349). Alexander, Chant and Cox (1994:40) point out that the most compelling answer that emerges from the studies on factors motivating people to become teachers is 'altruism'. A large-scale study conducted by Thornton, Bricheno and Reid (2002:35) among pre-service primary school teachers indicates that the respondents 'always wanted to teach, really enjoyed working with children and felt that teaching would bring high job satisfaction, would be a good career and would be a challenge'. A large-scale study by Sinclair (2008:94) shows that student teachers have multiple motivations to enter the profession. They are likely to choose teaching as their career as a result of intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivations. High on their priority list is an opportunity for working with children and intellectual stimulation they believe teaching provides. Sinclair's study also points to altruism as a factor that attracts young people into teaching. Teaching is also believed to offer possibilities of personal and professional development. A study by Poulou (2007) has revealed that prospective teachers perceive the teaching profession as a mission. This attitude is manifested by a teacher trainee in the following statement:

Being a teacher means that you are not an ordinary person, you become a model. The way you talk, get dressed, behave must always be decent. This is both pressing and challenging, since you have a unique chance to 'create' the new generation of people (found in Poulou 2007:102).

This comment shows that pre-service teachers understand that the teaching job requires responsibility and maturity. The respondent approaches her professional duties seriously. She knows her decisions shape the future of pupils and she finds it both 'pressing and challenging'.

Research by Younger *et al.* (2004) has identified students' fascination with the subject (English, mathematics, physics, etc.) as the main factor in their decision to embark upon a teacher training programme. Here, two trends have become visible. Firstly, some students decide to teach because of their desire to stay close to the subject of their study. Secondly, a number of students want to pursue a teaching career because they love the subject they study and want to share their passion/enthusiasm with their students. Both attitudes are exemplified in the following statements expressed by trainee teachers:

I love the subject (mathematics). I think it's fascinating... I also think it's such a beautiful subject. There is so much symmetry and pattern and everything else that a lot of people miss because they see it as copying out of textbooks and doing boring questions. But there is so much to it and I just love it and find it a really fascinating subject (found in Younger *et al.* 2004:250).

I've just always loved reading... and if I can foster that same sort of love in other people, children, that will be great (found in Younger *et al.* 2004:250).

I think that so many people find chemistry extremely difficult... I go on thinking, yes, it is difficult, but look at this, this is really interesting, you can learn this little bit and it all makes sense suddenly and I just thought that if I can get other people to see that, it would be so much easier for them (found in Younger *et al.* 2004:250).

Embedded in these statements is love of the subject area exhibited by pre-service teachers. The desire to use subject knowledge and, more specifically, the love of languages is also found to be the major motivation of philology students to become language teachers in a study by Barnes (2005). The author of the study repeatedly emphasises the passion and enthusiasm for languages displayed by the participants of her research project. However, it is speculated that a decision to teach based solely on the willingness to stay close to the subject knowledge may prove an insufficient motivator to enter teaching or remain in the profession. First experiences with classroom reality may effectively discourage newly-employed teachers, who often realise pupils show no interest in their beloved subject.

Taking Poland as a case in point, Duraj-Nowakowa (2011:129) identified three main factors that motivate students to become teachers:

- fascination with the subject of their study;
- eagerness to work with children;
- high social status of the profession.

Interestingly, the study has shown a link between the type of motivation and respondents' education: for students of philology, physics and biology it is the interest in the subject of their study that motivates them into teaching. On the contrary, students of pedagogy and pre-school education decide to become teachers, firstly, because they like children and want to work with them and secondly, because they perceive the social status of teaching as high.

The investigation by Younger *et al.* (2004:248) reports on two further factors contributing to students' decision to train as a teacher: students' own positive schooling experiences and treating teaching as a fallback career. That students get attracted to the profession because of their own positive schooling experiences is confirmed by Malderez *et al.* (2007:232), who also point out that trainee teachers wish to offer other children learning experience that they had enjoyed themselves as pupils. Contrastingly, a number of students embark upon the teaching path with a desire to teach better than their own teachers did. Gabryś-Barker (2012:28) adds that the prior perception of teachers is actually one of the most powerful factors that contribute to students' motivation to teach.

For nearly 35% of the respondents who took part in a study among pre-service primary school teachers (Thornton, Bricheno and Reid 2002:41), teaching was a second or third-choice career option, after they had become disillusioned or dissatisfied with their previous career path. Richardson and Watt (2006:29) observe that these career changers are an under-researched population as studies to date have focused on small and opportune groups. More scholarly attention is needed to address motivations and expectations of career switchers for whom teaching is a second/third career preference.

Two in five respondents in the study by Thornton, Bricheno and Reid (2002:36) undertaken among pre-service primary school teachers considered it relevant that 'primary teaching as a career would fit better with parenthood'. Teaching seems to be perceived as a career compatible with being a parent through its flexible working hours and winter and summer holidays. This perception of teaching is linked to the gender imbalance in the profession as teaching has in recent times attracted more women than men. Another observation made by Malderez *et al.* (2007:234) is that teaching is a family profession and students whose family members are teachers are more likely to enter this profession.

Concluding this part of the paper, Ewing and Smith (2003:22) enumerate the following reasons for choosing to teach:

- teaching is perceived as a satisfying career;
- teaching offers opportunity for professional growth;
- to promote student learning;
- to contribute to society;
- to help others;

- to work with young people;
- to share knowledge;
- to work in a community.

Once again, what is striking in these results is how idealistically the teaching profession is approached. Young people trust to find this career satisfying and rewarding. They also seem to attach great value to their own professional development. Students care about their own professional growth, but also they want to make a social contribution and help others.

Gabryś-Barker (2012:26) observes that for most students the decision to enter the teaching profession is not immediate. The decision-making process is influenced by a number of factors, such as students' attitude to the subject of their study, their learning and teaching experiences and, to a lesser extent, material benefits. Participants of study by Richardson and Watt (2006:46) perceive teaching as a career which is 'high in demand' and 'low in return' in terms of social status and salary. At the same time, these same respondents claim to choose this profession because of the high intrinsic value of teaching. This means that trainee teachers enter the profession despite their full awareness of its demands.

Pre-service and novice teachers' decisions to leave the profession

That pre-service teachers often perceive teaching as a rewarding career does not mean that there are no factors deterring them from taking up a teaching post. Thornton, Bricheno and Reid (2002:38) enumerate the following factors that are said to discourage people from embarking upon the teaching path: salary, workload, image of teaching within the media, low social status, long working hours, paperwork and stress/pressure. Other studies suggest that salary is not an important factor in the initial decision to teach, but may become a factor deterring newly-qualified teachers from entering the profession (Manuel and Hughes 2006:11). It is also interesting to note that different studies report on the social status of teachers to be perceived as either high or low. This phenomenon may be partly explained by what Joseph and Green (1986:30) observed in the mid 1980s and what still seems to be valid nowadays, namely that teaching career has a higher status for women than for men.

The factors discussed by Thornton, Bricheno and Reid (2002) contribute to the fact that a number of graduates after obtaining teacher certification decide not to take up a teaching post. Even more problematically, a considerable number of newly-qualified teachers walk away from teaching within the first years of their career. The highly positive findings of the studies adduced so far in the present paper, pointing to multi-motivations exhibited by pre-service teachers

to enter teaching, are in contrast with alarmingly high attrition rates observed among novice practitioners in some countries. The US, the UK, Australia and a number of European countries are currently facing difficulties in maintaining quality teachers in the profession (Richardson and Watt 2006:28). In England, 40% of students who embark on a training course never become teachers; of those who become teachers, further 40% leave profession within 5 years (Kyriacou and Kunc 2007:1246). Teacher retention is negatively affected by a number of factors, most notably negative practicum experiences, low pay, work intensification, misbehaviour in the classroom and subordinate status of the profession (Sinclair 2008:79). It is reported that leavers are usually young, better qualified, working in difficult conditions and during times of economic growth (Macdonald 1999:836). Teacher loss and attrition are attributable to attractive vacancies in other occupations, especially when these are compared with the poor working conditions in the teaching profession (Macdonald 1999:835).

Despite initial enthusiasm and genuine passion exhibited by aspiring teachers, the practice shock of the first year in the profession makes them question their decision to teach. Werbińska (2011:182) describes the first year of teaching as 'survival time', 'reality shock', 'private ordeal' and 'transition'. Newly-qualified teachers have one basic goal in mind – survival (Mandel 2006:66). New recruits frequently need to face unmanageable workloads, tedious administrative tasks, unsupportive principals and other complications. Newly-employed teachers fall victim to stress and emotional strain. The commencement of teaching practice is also frequently tarnished by disciplinary events and difficulties with establishing good relationships with pupils. Teachers' desire to teach and make a social contribution becomes replaced by a growing dissatisfaction and disappointment. These factors lead to early career teacher drop-out.

Being thrown into deep water is not the only factor responsible for new entrants' dissatisfaction with teaching. A further factor attributable to novices' disillusionment with the profession can be traced back to their initial attitude towards teaching. Passion for teaching has been reported (e.g. Younger *et al.* 2004:249) to be frequently accompanied by strongly idealistic vision of what teaching constitutes. Novice teachers tend to have idealistic perception of the teaching profession (Miszczuk 2007:130). They enter the classroom determined to make a serious contribution and improve the whole educational system. However, their expectations and assumptions often turn out to be incongruous with the school reality. It is reported that at least some novices feel pressure to sacrifice their ideals and conform to the *status quo* (Ewing and Smith 2003:20). When faced with classroom reality, new entrants quickly realize that the ideals they formed during their education may prove inappropriate (Farrell 2006:211). This painful realization fuels teachers' dissatisfaction and contributes to work-related stress.

Kyriacou and Kunc (2007:1253) identified four factors that have a major influence on teachers' decision whether to leave or stay in the profession: the management of the school, pupil behaviour, having a happy private life and having sufficient time. Put differently, when a teacher works in a friendly, supportive environment with students who achieve success and when he/she has a happy private life and enough time to shoulder duties, he/she is far more likely to stay in teaching for the entire working life. Two of these factors (school management, discipline) are strictly connected with school life. Another factor, having sufficient time, is highly dependent on it. It is crucial that these three factors identified by Kyriacou and Kunc (2007) are given attention of teacher educators, school principals and local and national authorities. Addressing these problems is likely to exert a positive impact on novice teachers' plans to remain or resign.

In sum, there is evidence to believe that students enrolled in teacher preparatory trainings have strong initial commitment to teaching. They show love of the subject they study and want to share this love with pupils. Pre-service teachers expect teaching to be a challenging but rewarding career. They frequently display an idealistic vision of teaching and set high standards for themselves. However, a number of factors discussed in this paper make students abandon their plans to become teachers. Even more worryingly, a considerable number of novices in some countries decide to leave teaching within the first years of their career. New recruits often need to face severe complications, e.g. a heavy teaching load and nerve-racking classroom incidents and fall victim to work-related stress and pressure. The following is our own small-scale study conducted among Polish pre-service teachers of English.

The Study

Method

The results discussed in this article constitute a part of data obtained in a small-scale study conducted by the present authors. The researchers used a qualitative method which was a questionnaire composed of five questions referring to teaching preferences and professional career plans of the subjects. Here, one question has been analysed and will be discussed in detail, namely: *Do you plan to work as a teacher in the future? Why/why not?*

Subjects

The subjects who took part in the present study were students of English studying at the Philology Department of the University of Silesia in Katowice.

The study was conducted among 175 students, all enrolled in the teacher education module. For the sake of this study, the students were divided into two groups:

- group one consisting of 66 full-time students in the first and second year of BA studies;
- group two including 109 full-time and part-time students in the first and second year of MA studies.

The subjects who belong to the former group had attended courses of pedagogy and foreign language methodology. They had not taken part in student practicum up to the stage when the research was conducted. Students from the latter group had completed a large number of TEFL courses, such as: pedagogy, foreign language methodology, didactics, applied linguistics and psychology. Apart from theoretical classes, they had spent many hours in the classroom doing both: observing lessons and teaching. At the point of conducting the questionnaire, the subjects acknowledged to have observed on average 65 hours of classes and to have conducted on average 95 hours of classes. The table below summarizes information presented so far:

	Number of respondents	Number of observed lessons	Number of conducted lessons
Group 1 (1 st and 2 nd year BA students)	66	0	0
Group 2 (1 st and 2 nd year MA students)	109	65	95

Table 1. The respondents.

Results

This section is divided into two parts. The first focuses on the results delivered by all participants, that is 175 students; the second investigates the divergence and similarity in attitudes and opinions expressed in the questionnaire by BA and MA students. All the citations provided in this part of the article had not been modified in any way, and are original responses delivered by the study participants.

The following question became the main point of focus in our investigation: *Do you plan to work as a teacher in the future? Why?/ Why not?* Of 175 answers given, 71% were affirmative, 7% were negative and 21% of informants expressed uncertainty about their future profession. The results show that almost

every third respondent felt either hesitant or reluctant to devote their professional career to teaching.

In the second part of the question, the respondents were asked to motivate their answer. As far as the affirmative responses are concerned, the most common motivation for embarking upon the teaching path constituted intrinsic factors. The most frequently indicated one was having contact with people, which was given by 21% of respondents. One of the first-year students explained the answer in the following way:

I'm going to be an English teacher in the future because I like teaching different people and I reckon that this profession is really what I want to do. It gives me satisfaction and enables me to have contact with different people.

The second most frequently mentioned reason, given by 17% of the subjects, was the opportunity of working with children. In this case, one of the students provided the following motivation for the career choice:

I want to be a teacher because I like teaching children. I am a patient person. I can deal with teenagers and I think I can give them my knowledge.

The results presented above are consistent with studies by Sinclair (2008) and Duraj-Nowakowa (2011), in which working with children was highly evaluated by prospect teachers. Predicted job satisfaction, as well as sharing one's knowledge and/or passion, are next intrinsic factors enumerated by the participants of our study. 17% of respondents claimed that it was job satisfaction which had motivated their choice of the future occupation. One of the second-year BA students justified her choice of the future career in the following way:

I want to share my knowledge with my future students. To teach them everything I know. It will make me proud of them and of myself.

The following is an opinion of a first-year MA student in this matter:

[...] sharing the knowledge is important. I think that it is quite nice to know that you have done sth good and changed someone's life (just by teaching and taking part in upbringing).

Seeing learners' progress was a motivating factors enumerated by every fifth informant:

It's an amazing feeling when sb understands the way you teach and likes it. What is more, when you see visible effects of your teaching, it's wonderful.

19% of respondents appreciated the feeling of mission connected with ensuring learners' development. A similar point was expressed in the study by Poulou (2007), who also found that this kind of experience constituted one of the

priorities for the prospective teachers. Some respondents focused on their own abilities and stated that it was their skills and knowledge of English that motivated them to pursue the career in the discipline they know so well. 10% of the subjects indicated the possession of adequate skills in their answers and 6% claimed that their choice was determined by an advanced knowledge of English. A further group of students indicated that it was the nature of the teaching profession that became the strongest argument in choosing a career path. 7% of respondents appreciated the fact that the job was not monotonous and 5% described teaching as creative:

[...] I've always dreamed about it; teaching is not monotonous and the most important for me is that you can "inject" the love for languages in your students – maybe not all but even just one will be personal success.

Malderez et al. (2007:234) made an observation that students whose family members were teachers were more likely to opt for the same profession. This kind of consideration was shared by 7% of our study participants. These are the opinions shared by some students:

When I was a child, I used to play that I'm a teacher (probably because I was copying my mother, who is a teacher). I like children and found it easy to work with them, so I decided being a teacher is the perfect occupation for me.

My mother is a teacher, she works with teenagers and I know what to expect.

[...] I'm keen on working with children. I think it runs in the family because my mother is a teacher and she likes this job.

Gabryś-Barker (2012:28) stated that students' motivation to become teachers was influenced to a great extent by the perception of other teachers. However, in our study only 2% admitted that prominent teachers from their own school days inspired them to turn to teaching:

[...] when I was in high school, I had a perfect teacher, who encouraged me to learn English and I decided that I'd like to learn English in the future and be like her.

The same number of respondents indicated two other factors: a lot of free time and belief that teaching is a good job for a woman:

In my opinion, this job is very comfortable for women because of the working hours and more free days during holidays. It's convenient when you're a working mother.

I think that working as a teacher is a perfect solution for a future mom. You get to spend more time with your child and it's easier for you to control his/her progress in learning school stuff.

The table presented below summarizes the arguments motivating our participants to embark upon the teaching path:

Students' motivations for choosing to teach	Percentage of answers
Having contact with people	21%
Seeing learners' progress	20%
Feeling of mission	19%
Opportunity for working with children	17%
Job satisfaction	17%
Sharing knowledge	13%
Always wanted to teach	10%
Possession of adequate skills	10%
The job is not monotonous	7%
Family members are teachers	7%
Knowing English well	6%
Teaching is creative	5%
Sharing passion for languages	5%
Admiration for other teachers	2%
Good job for women	2%
A lot of free time	2%

Table 2. Students' motivations for choosing to teach.

The data referred to in the theoretical part of this article display certain tendencies among trainee teachers: approximately 40% of them decide not to enter the profession after graduating from universities. Thornton, Bricheno and Reid (2002), analysing the situation in the UK, enumerate a number of factors which stand behind their decision: salary, workload, image of teaching, low social status, long working hours, paperwork, stress and pressure. In our research, the group of respondents who declared to be unwilling to undertake the post of a teacher constitute 7% of all the study participants. Although the group is not numerous, the results are worth presenting. There were two main motifs given by the students for leaving the profession: too low salary pointed at by 7 students. The same number of respondents stated that they were unwilling to perform the work of a teacher as there were not enough posts on the Polish

employment market. The following citations constitute adequate examples of opinions of these respondents:

[speaking of working as a teacher:]

Probably as an additional job because salaries for teachers in Poland are too low to maintain a family.

If I am able to find a better paid job, I will not hesitate to resign from teaching.

Although teaching is appealing to me in many aspects, the labor market is against us, schools don't have any vacancies. I don't expect to find employment as a teacher any time soon, which means that I'll look for it somewhere else. What's more, Poland is currently facing baby bust and teaching posts are rather being closed down than created. I don't think I want a job that is unstable, that I can lose at any moment.

The next group of reasons motivating students to leave the teaching profession was each indicated by three respondents. Although they remain a minority, they are still interesting, as they signal certain problematic aspects. These are:

- too much paper work,
- too much preparation needed,
- poor quality of teaching,
- not giving satisfaction,
- being perceived as generally difficult.

I do not plan to be a teacher in the future. I can say so after working in a vocational school for a year. Nobody appreciated my work, I felt no job satisfaction whatsoever.

I perceive Polish state schools as low-quality institutions, where people are taught in bad way, without any motivation, where the only focus is on how to pass "matura", not how to speak languages. I don't want to be a part of this system.

The data presented up to this point were provided by all the study participants. However, when the data obtained from BA and MA students are analysed separately, several differences and similarities can be observed. The first difference is in the answer to the question asking the informants if they plan to become teachers. The group of first- and second-year BA students, who were at the beginning of the higher education experience and did not participate in the practicum yet, exhibited much more uncertainty in comparison to the MA students. 62% of them claimed that they would like to become teachers, 30% were not certain about their future occupation and 8% gave a negative answer. The figures for MA respondents are as follows: 77% of them declared their willingness to teach, 15% expressed uncertainty and 7% provided a negative answer. The following table summarizes students' answers to this question and shows the differences between the two age groups:

Study participants	Affirmative answers	Uncertain answers	Negative answers
All respondents	71%	21%	7%
BA students	62%	30%	8%
MA students	77%	15%	7%

Table 3. The differences between BA and MA students concerning their willingness to work as teachers.

Further differences may be observed in the reasons for choosing teaching profession. The responses provided by the younger participants were more concise and limited in comparison to the ones provided by the MA students. Moreover, their arguments were much more scattered. The most numerous group of respondents (15%) stated that they had always dreamt about performing this job. The same number predicted that it would give them satisfaction. 11% of BA students noticed that they had adequate skills for this job. Similar group of informants expressed their eagerness to have contact with people. Remaining reasons for embarking upon the teaching path were indicated by every tenth study participant in this age group or less frequently. The answers provided by the MA students were much more complex and usually based on several arguments. The motivation chosen by the largest number of respondents in this group was eagerness to have contact with people (28%). The wish to see learners' progress was indicated by 25% of informants. 20% of the participants were motivated by willingness to work with children. Arguments which received appreciation in the eyes of more than every tenth subject were: the feeling of satisfaction (17%), willingness to share knowledge (15%), possession of adequate skills (10%). 7% of older students admitted that they had always dreamt about becoming teachers. Table 3 summarizes the reasons directing both groups onto the teaching path:

BA students	MA students
Always dreamt about being a teacher (15%)	Contact with people (28%)
Gives satisfaction (15%)	Seeing progress (25%)
Possessing necessary skills (11%)	Working with children (20%)
Contact with people (11%)	Satisfaction (17%)
	Sharing knowledge (15%)
	Possessing necessary skills (10%)
	Always dreamt about being a teacher (7%)

Table 4. The differences between BA and MA students.

The outcomes of this part of the study show that MA students exhibit greater willingness to undertake the job of a teacher. This group also contains fewer subjects who are uncertain about their choice. Yet, the same number of students in both groups declared their negative attitude towards becoming teachers in the future.

Conclusion

The results of this small-scale study exhibited general tendencies which direct students at the Polish university onto the path of teaching. They also displayed several discrepancies between students who begin their studies and those who are close to graduation; discrepancies mostly stemming from differences in priority given to particular motifs. The complexity of answers and greater number of reasons provided by the MA students suggest that they are more aware of the benefits this profession may bring. It is speculated that such an attitude may be influenced by a greater teaching experience that had been gained by these respondents during their practicum. Although the reasons for choosing this profession vary between the two groups, they do not distort the general picture emerging from the data. Both groups indicated intrinsic factors which motivated them to choose the teacher education module. All the participants indicated altruism and sense of mission in their choices.

Although the teaching profession abounds in hardships and difficulties of various kinds, as evidenced in the ever-growing body of literature (e.g. van Dick and Wagner 2001, Kretschmann 2003, Akhlaq *et al.* 2010), many students enrolled in teacher education module display very positive feelings about teaching. Their decision to enter the profession is dictated mainly by the intrinsic factors which were shown in the results of this study. These data fit into the main stream of studies in the field. Although the group of trainee teachers willing to continue this path of career constitutes the majority of respondents, the remaining part of study, participants who declared their unwillingness to remain in the profession, shed an interesting light on the reasons behind their decision. The motifs which they give are, among others low salary and not enough work places for the new candidates, which reflects the economic situation and employment opportunities in Poland. That said, we are aware, however, that money- and employment-related problems affect different philologists to a different extent. One of the limitations of our study is that we focused exclusively on students of English philology, that is, those who can still be financially advantaged vis-à-vis their colleagues from less 'lucrative' faculties, like Russian or Polish philology. To present a more composite picture of the topic, further research could investigate motivations of a much wider and more variegated population, including teacher trainees studying English, French, German, Russian, Polish and other languages.

References

- Akhlaq, M. et al.** 2010. "An evaluation of the effects of stress on the job performance of secondary school teachers", [in:] *Journal of Law and Psychology*. 1/1, pp. 43-54.
- Alexander, D., D. Chant and B. Cox.** 1994. "What motivates people to become teachers", [in:] *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*. 19/2, pp. 40-9.
- Barnes, A.** 2005. "A passion for languages: motivation and preparation to teach modern foreign languages in eight cohorts of beginning teachers", [in:] *Research Papers in Education*. 20/4, pp. 349-69.
- Duraj-Nowakowa, K.** 2011. *Kształtowanie profesjonalnej gotowości pedagogów*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM.
- Ewing, R. A. and D. L. Smith.** 2003. "Retaining quality beginning teachers in the profession", [in:] *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*. 2/1, pp. 15-32.
- Gabryś-Barker, D.** 2012. *Reflectivity in pre-service teacher education. A survey of theory and practice*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.
- Joseph, P. B. and N. Green.** 1986. "Perspectives on reasons for becoming teachers", [in:] *Journal of Teacher Education*. 37/6, pp. 28-33.
- Kretschmann, R.** 2003. *Stres w zawodzie nauczyciela*. Gdańsk: Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne.
- Kyriacou, C. and R. Kunc.** 2007. "Beginning teachers' expectations of teaching", [in:] *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 23, pp. 1246-1257.
- Macdonald, D.** 1999. "Teacher attrition: a review of literature", [in:] *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 15, pp. 834-848.
- Malderez, A. et al.** 2007. "Becoming a student teacher: core features of the experience", [in:] *European Journal of Teacher Education*. 30/3, pp. 225-48.
- Mandel, S.** 2006. "What new teachers really need", [in:] *Educational Leadership*. 63/6, pp. 66-69.
- Manuel, J. and J. Hughes.** 2006. "'It has always been my dream': exploring pre-service teachers' motivations for choosing to teach", [in:] *Teacher Development*. 10/1, pp. 5-24.
- Miszczyk, R.** 2007. "Start zawodowy początkujących nauczycieli – analiza badań własnych", [in:] E. Sałata, and S. Ośko (eds.) *Współczesne problemy pedagogologii i edukacji*. Radom: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Technologii Eksploatacji, pp. 130-133.
- Osborn, M. and P. Broadfoot.** 1993. "Becoming and being a teacher: the influence of the national context", [in:] *European Journal of Education*. 28/1, pp. 105-116.
- Poulou, M.** 2007. "Student-teachers' concerns about teaching practice", [in:] *European Journal of Teacher Education*. 30/1, pp. 91-110.
- Richardson, P. W. and H. M. G. Watt.** 2006. "Who chooses teaching and why? Profiling characteristics and motivations across three Australian universities", [in:] *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*. 34/1, pp. 27-56.
- Sinclair, C.** 2008. "Initial and changing student teacher motivation and commitment to teaching", [in:] *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*. 36/2, pp. 79-104.
- Thornton, M., P. Bricheno and I. Reid.** 2002. "Students' reasons for wanting to teach in primary school", [in:] *Research in Education*. 67, pp. 33-43.
- Van Dick, R. and U. Wagner.** 2001. "Stress and strain in teaching: a structural equation approach", [in:] *British Journal of Educational Psychology*. 71, pp. 243-259.
- Werbińska, D.** 2011. "The first year in the classroom: crossing the 'borderland' from being a student to being a teacher", [in:] M. Pawlak (ed.) *Extending the boundaries of research on second language learning and teaching*. Berlin: Springer, pp. 181-195.
- Younger, M. et al.** 2004. "Starting points: student teachers' reasons for becoming teachers and their preconceptions of what this will mean", [in:] *European Journal of Teacher Education*. 27/3, pp. 245-64.