



ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AMONG STUDENT TEACHERS: EXPERIENCE AND DEMANDS

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The English Language Learning of student teachers has been studied less frequently by researchers. There is reason to believe that the language learning experience of student teachers is different from the language learning experience of other learners as they are influenced by the professional demands that will be placed on them in the future. As Braine (2010) explains, the non-native speaker English teachers' professional confidence and "self-perceptions" depend on their competence in the language. If so, the future professional image of a student teacher should have an impact on his/her present language learning. This leads to the belief that student teachers should invest time and effort in improving their language skills. In such a backdrop, the current study was conducted to investigate the English language learning experience of a group of student teachers reading for the Bachelor of Education in English Language Teaching in the first year at a state university. The focus-group discussion method was used to collect data from a purposive sample of 5 undergraduates and the results were organized thematically. The participants stated that continuous language assistance is essential for them, and that the lessons should focus on grammar. The participants also expressed displeasure in the assumptions made regarding their language competence, and stated that irrespective of their proficiency level, they need to be provided with language assistance. It was also clear from the discussion that the responsibility of becoming teachers in the future highly affected their urge to develop good language skills.

Keywords: Language assistance, Language learning experience, Professional demands, Student teachers

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