

Investigating the Needs of Pre-Service EFL Teachers Regarding Teaching as a Career: The Case at a Turkish State University

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Abstract

As part of a larger project focusing on the career trajectories of prospective teachers, this qualitative study aims to investigate the career needs of pre-service EFL teachers studying at a state university in Türkiye. Thirty pre-service teachers determined through purposeful sampling from different grades of a four-year programme participated in the study. The data were collected through an interview protocol in the spring semester of 2022-2023 academic year and participants were interviewed through online meetings to get in-depth data regarding their needs. At the end of the interviews, the data were analyzed based on a qualitative content analysis scheme which included the transcription of data, code-labelling the familiar chunks and identification of the emergent themes based on those codes. The findings revealed that participant pre-service EFL teachers had four main needs regarding teaching as a career; a) procedural information on the process of being appointed as a teacher in Türkiye, b) familiarity with potential experiences in the first year of the profession, c) procedural information on academic career in teaching/ELT, d) information on working/studying abroad. It was also found that participants were negatively influenced with the absence of a mechanism that would inform them about the potential career opportunities. In the light of these findings, the study offers several suggestions for the improvement of career awareness among pre-service EFL teachers in teacher education programs.

Keywords: pre-service EFL teachers, career, teacher education, Türkiye, ELT