Appraisal in preservice teachers' reflections on microteaching experience

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Abstract

Adopting Appraisal framework, this study examines the use of evaluative language in junior English Language Teaching (ELT) students' oral comments on their microteaching experiences. Drawing on the National Cultures Model proposed by Hofstede (1991), the study also aims to uncover how the students' use of evaluative language is aligned with their cultural orientation. The results reveal that among all three systems of Appraisal framework, the student-teachers used the Attitude system more frequently than the Engagement and Graduation systems and to a large extent the evaluative language choices of the participants are aligned with their Turkish cultural orientation. It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide directions for teacher educators seeking to reflect on microteaching practices in preservice teacher education programs.

Keywords: Appraisal, Evaluative language, National culture, Preservice teachers, Microteaching experience

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Introduction

Microteaching could be defined as a means of practice that enables students of methodology courses to teach a lesson to other class members so that they can get some experience in lesson planning and putting what is planned into effect. Microteaching has been widely acknowledged to be an influential method of helping teacher candidates learn about and reflect on how to teach effectively. When student-teachers are given an opportunity to evaluate their own performance, these micro lessons become a valuable source of motivation for better learning and better teaching. Even though there is a wide range of research that has considerably broaden our understanding of how microteaching sessions could better foster teaching through reflection (or the interchangeable term of self-evaluation), there is contrarily deficiency in research attention which needs to be given to the medium of this kind of self-evaluation process, namely, the language used to communicate reflection. Considering the interdependence between form and meaning (Halliday, 1994), there is a good reason to examine how language decisions, particularly the organization of evaluative language resources, affect what the preservice teachers' self-evaluation contains. The aim of the first part of this paper is to be one of the steps in filling in this important gap by examining the evaluative choices of preservice teachers in reflection. More specifically, the use of evaluative language in junior English Language Teaching (ELT) students' oral comments on their microteaching experiences will be examined.

Evaluative language deserves attention as a research focus here because it can determine the content of preservice teachers' reflection, influence the way how reflection is communicated among subjects, and the manner how student-teachers' attitudes and judgments are construed. It also bears on what Erez and Earley (1993, p. 30) argue that "Cultural values provide some of the criteria and standards used for self-evaluation. These criteria vary across cultures, along with differences in cultural values, and shape different meanings of self-worth." For this reason, the focus of this study on evaluative language paves the way for conceiving student-teachers' reflections as a social and socializing process which includes values, motivations, attitudes, and beliefs. In the second phase, the study, therefore, aims to investigate whether and how cultural issues may impinge on participants' use of evaluative language in their oral comments on micro lessons. Drawing on Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) and Hofstede's National Cultures Model (1991), this study aims to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the evaluative choices that the third-year ELT students make in their reflections on microteaching experience?

2. How is the third-year ELT students' use of evaluative language aligned with their cultural orientation?

Theoretical Framework

In this section, the Appraisal theory and Hofstede's National Cultures Model with particular reference to their relevant domains to the study under investigation are briefly outlined.

Appraisal Theory

Even though the relevant literature presents a wide range of frameworks that could be utilized to analyse the evaluative meanings in language, Martin and White's Appraisal theory (2005) is acknowledged to be the most comprehensive framework of all (Hunston, 2010).

Appraisal theory originally arose out of systemic functional linguistics. It is accepted as a socially-oriented elucidative framework which functions within the scope of discourse semantics and concentrates on how writers or speakers "approve and disapprove, enthuse and abhor, applaud and criticize, and with how they position their readers/listeners to do likewise" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 1). It identifies the expression of evaluative meanings (as categories of Attitude), the manipulation of the strength of evaluative meanings (as Graduation), and the intersubjective negotiation of commitments to evaluative meanings (as options for Engagement). Each of these sub-categories possesses its own options, and all the options included in the appraisal system embody semantic meanings that go beyond just lexico-grammatical structures (Hood, 2004, p. 13-14).

The sub-systems of Attitude consist of three semantic domains of Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation. Affect concerns the expression of feelings, emotions, and states of mind. It can be classified into the sets of un/happiness, in/security, dis/satisfaction, and dis/inclination. Judgment involves positive and negative normative assessments of human behavior and is further divided into social esteem and social sanction. Social esteem covers aspects of normality, capacity, and tenacity that have to do with moral rules, while social sanction deals with veracity and propriety related to legal implications. As for Appreciation, it involves the positive and negative evaluation of natural or semiotic phenomena, entities, and processes. It is divided into the reaction to things or events, the composition and valuation are sub-categories for grouping different appreciations (Martin & White, 2005).

As Crane (2007) states, the Engagement category involves different ways by which language users position their views to those of others. The first distinction in the category is that of monoglossic vs. heteroglossic utterances. Monoglossic utterances refer to undialogized bare assertions whereas heteroglossic utterances refer to propositions that reference alternative voices or viewpoints. Dialogue can be contracted through two fundamental ways. First, individuals can deny or counter positions via opposition in order to alternate them, which refers to the Engagement category of Disclaim. Second, individuals can concur, assert, or endorse other viewpoints in order to demonstrate agreement toward other views, which refers to the Engagement category of Proclaim. On the contrary, the dialogically expansive resources initiate discussions to include other viewpoints. Dialogue can be expanded in two ways: First, individuals can entertain other viewpoints by positioning the one proposition propounded as one of many acceptable propositions. A second dialogically expansive resource is Attribution, which can be further divided into those attributed viewpoints that are accepted by the language user, and those where a distance to viewpoints is given.

Graduation consists of the sub-systems of Force and Focus. Within the system of Force, the strength of values can be scaled up or down in accordance with their amount or intensity. Contrary to Force, Focus does not refer to scalable categories, but rather involves sharpening or softening the confines of meaning.

This study applies Appraisal theory mainly because it is advantageous in two major aspects. First, it is located at the discourse-semantic stratum of language and this perspective

enables researchers to identify not only the linguistic realizations of evaluation at the lexico-grammatical level, but also the implicitly expressed evaluative meanings embedded in the text. Second, appraisal theory provides a comprehensive, thorough, and systematic typology for studying evaluation (Xie, 2016). Actually, as Hyland (2005, p. 174) claimed, appraisal theory is "the most systematic analyzing tool that offers a typology of evaluative resources." It is all these merits that make Appraisal theory the most relevant to the present study.

National Cultures Model (NCM)

The work of Hofstede is regarded as the best-known research study that the relevant literature presents on the issue of natural culture (Hatipoğlu, 2006, 2007). Even though Hofstede's (1991) NCM is exposed to many criticisms, it was determined as a convenient theoretical framework for this paper because of the fact that the findings Hofstede presented have been utilized in a good variety of social science areas and have been confirmed in different degrees by similar studies. Additionally, all social interactions, including those in higher education learning settings, are culturally mediated (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) and Hofstede's cultural constructs have significant influence in both academes and amongst executives (Bing, 2004).

NCM proposes that cultural values have an effect on individual values, and the behaviors displayed by individuals are based on the cultural values they are subjected to. In his impressive work, Hofstede (1991) suggested five cultural dimensions with respect to relationships with authority, the understanding of self and ways of attending to dilemmas. He claims that power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term versus short-term orientation have particular relevance for issues in the field of management, business including education which is of particular concern to this paper. This study focuses on all the dimensions of the model except long-term versus short-term orientation. Since Turkey's intermediate score of 46 is in the middle of the scale, no dominant cultural preference is claimed to be inferred about this dimension.

Power distance deals with issue of human inequality. Hofstede's model supposes that every organization or society differs from one another in terms of the degree of power distance in which the existing tensions between more powerful and less powerful people redress the balance. The idea of self and to what extent this self is considered as being a part of, or independent from the larger group are crucial issues that highlight the individualism-collectivism dimension. The fundamental theme for the masculinity-femininity dimension is that the biological differences between the genders have implications for the social roles that individuals learn and adopt for themselves or assume for others. Uncertainty about the future deals with existence and Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance index reflects how comfortable a given society is with various kinds of ambiguity (Medd, 2010).

According to the findings of Hofstede's cross-cultural study, collectivism, high power distance, strong uncertainty avoidance and femininity are dominant in Turkey. In other words, Turkey is a moderately feminine collectivist culture since its masculinity and individualism indices are 45 and 37, respectively. What's more, Turkey possesses a hierarchical and uncertainty avoiding culture with a power distance score of 66 and uncertainty avoidance score of 85.

Review of Literature

As a teacher education pedagogy, microteaching was developed at Stanford University and since then it has been acknowledged to help student-teachers learn how to apply research-based practices in the course of their teacher education programs (Shermis & Barth, 1971). Within the scope of second language teacher education microteaching enables teacher candidates to practice such language skills as listening, speaking, reading or writing under optimum circumstances (Brent & Thomson, 1996). That's why, it could be used as a means of establishing a link between student-teachers' university and preliminary teaching experiences.

While displaying microteaching performances, student-teachers typically teach curtailed lessons to a small number of students as a requirement of their school practice course or peers at their university (Wilson & I'Anson, 2006). This mini teaching session could be possibly videotaped and at the end of the microteaching performance the preservice teacher may be given feedback by peers or instructors (Subramaniam, 2006). Self-reflection is also a fundamental element of microteaching models. As Amobi (2005) underscored, reflection could be used in these models as an instructional and/or an evaluation tool. He further emphasized that microteaching is regarded positively by pre-service teachers.

The professional literature offers a wide range of studies that approach the issue of microteaching from different perspectives. For instance, Amobi (2005) investigated the concept of reflectivity in 31 pre-service teachers' sequencing of their teaching actions before and after microteaching and their patterns of confronting reflectivity as they responded to peer evaluations of their microteaching. He examined reconstructive reflectivity, or how participants would enact alternative actions after viewing their videos and hearing peer feedback. The researcher carried out a discourse analysis method to make the analysis of participant reflections and a conceptual framework developed by the author. He came up with three conclusions: student-teachers view microteaching as a meaningful experience; there is a probability that preservice teachers may not always want their teaching to be criticised; when their microteaching is probed in the microteaching enviroment, there is a high possibility that they could self-correct themselves.

Bell (2007) gathered microteaching videos of 22 pre-service teachers as data and grounding on sociolinguistic framework she attempted to provide insight into the meanings of the interactions portrayed in the videos. Using discourse analysis, she reached the conclusion that pre-service teachers viewed microteaching in various ways: performance, a course requirement, or teaching. The researcher revealed that pre-service teachers had a greater tendency in viewing microteaching as performance rather than as teaching.

Based on the research studies given above, it could be possibly proposed that even though the relevant literature includes studies conducted on microteaching on the basis of discourse analysis, it lacks investigations carried out on the same issue, microteaching, but using appraisal analysis which functions within the scope of discourse semantics. In fact, our extensive literature search has not detected any study of preservice teachers' language use in reflection, let alone investigations into the effect of cultural orientation on language use in student-teachers' reflections on their microteaching performance.

In general, a wide range of research on the use of evaluative language were carried out in the past two decades, which focused on various genres such as news articles and editorials (Le, 2009), online discussion forum (Gallardo & Ferrari, 2010), academic articles (Hyland,

2005), political interviews (Partington, 2007), and narratives (Page, 2003). These studies analyzed, argued and revealed the ways the speakers or writers evaluated their own emotions, their own or other people's attitude, and objects and situations by means of lexico-grammatical resources. In line with this, a further gap in the relevant literature is identified as the paucity of research on the use of evaluative language resources in teacher education-related issues. In response to these detected research gaps, this study aims to investigate linguistic preferences of reflection, particularly the use of evaluative language in junior ELT students' oral comments on their microteaching experience.

Methodology

This research adopts a descriptive case study design in concordance with the exploratory nature of the research. The data consist of the audio-recorded and transcribed reflection sessions of randomly selected 12 third-year ELT students (male = 3; female = 9) from a large public university in Turkey.

As a requirement of the course Teaching of Language Skills I given during the fall semester of the 2011-2012 academic year, the student-teachers were expected to do microteaching and thereby try out micro-techniques on groups of fellow students. After they had done with their microteaching, they were given feedback in the classroom by the course instructor. When the class time was over, the student-teachers were invited to the office of the instructor and they were not only provided a detailed account of their performance but also asked to self-evaluate or reflect on their own in-class performance. The corpus of this study was drawn from these self-evaluation sessions. A total of randomly chosen 12 student-teachers' reflection sessions were audio-recorded by the instructor and then transcribed by the researcher of the study under investigation. Each reflection session was conducted in Turkish and lasted about 9-10 minutes.

The approach adopted to analyze evaluative language use of the participants was the analysis of Appraisal developed primarily in the work of Martin and White (2005). Linguistic expressions of Appraisal were coded manually by the researcher counting occurrences of Attitude (Affect, Judgment and Appreciation), Engagement and Graduation. In the course of coding the data, it is attempted to reflect the existing perspective of the participants as closely as possible. What's more, the analysis was also based on the feelings that the participants stated they really experienced instead of what they may actually have felt. This could offer some implications for the validity of the study.

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this section is twofold: In the first place, it aims to present findings concerning each sub-category of Attitude, Engagement and Graduation domains of Appraisal Theory. Secondly, it aims to provide a deep insight into to what extent this evaluative language analysis results are aligned with the cultural orientation of the participants grounding on Hofstede's National Cultures Model.

Appraisal Analysis
The Analysis of Attitude

Table 1 shows the numbers and percentages of coded sub-categories that belong to Attitude system and it also allows to see the general picture of positive and negative comments. Taken the results identified for the three sub-systems of Attitude into consideration, Appreciation is the most frequently made attitudinal choice by the student-teachers which is followed by Affect as the second frequently coded sub-category. As for Judgment, it is found to be the least frequently made attitudinal choice by the participants. Additionally, it could be easily understood from the results that the number of positive comments is moderately higher than that of negative comments.

Table 1
The Results of Attitude System

Attitude system			Positive comments		Negative comments	
			Number	%	Number	%
Affect		*Un/happiness*	8	3.94	5	3.24
		Dis/satisfaction	14	6.89	7	4.54
		In/security	16	7.88	19	12.33
		Dis/inclination	23	11.33	11	7.14
		TOTAL	**61**	**30.04**	**52**	**29.16**
Judgment	**Social esteem**	*Normality*	7	3.44	9	5.84
		Capacity	19	9.35	17	11.03
		Tenacity	3	1.47	5	3.24
	Social sanction	*Veracity*	1	0.49	4	2.59
		Propriety	16	7.88	12	7.79
		TOTAL	**46**	**22.66**	**47**	**32.63**
Appreciation	**Reaction**	*Impact*	28	13.79	13	8.44
		Quality	35	17.24	17	11.03
	Composition	*Balance*	6	2.95	9	5.84
		Complexity	8	3.94	8	5.19
	Valuation	*Value*	19	9.35	8	5.19
		TOTAL	**96**	**47.29**	**55**	**38.19**

More specifically, reaction is the most frequently used Appreciation sub-category, occupying 31.03% of the total appreciation domain, followed by valuation and composition. In particular, quality takes the highest percentage rate in comparison to other sub-categories. The reason why it is highly encoded could be that while reflecting on microteaching performance, student-teachers mostly either underscore its strengths and weaknesses or

explains what kind of experience it is. It should be also noted that when evaluating their experience, student-teachers mainly encode positive evaluations, favoring the attitudinal lexis such as *ilginç (interesting), muhteşem (wonderful),* and *iyi (fine)* as it could be understood from the following excerpts:

Excerpt 1: Microteaching benim için çok ***ilginç*** [+APPRECIATION: reaction: quality] bir deneyimdi gerçekten. Özellikle de İngilizce'nin çeviri yapmadan öğretilebileeğini görmek ***muhteşemdi*** [+APPRECIATION: reaction: quality].

*Microteaching was a really **interesting** [+APPRECIATION: reaction: quality] experience for me. Especially, realizing that English could be taught without any translation was **wonderful**.[+APPRECIATION: reaction: quality]*

Excerpt 2: Konuyu sunuş aşamamın ***iyi*** [+APPRECIATION: reaction: quality] olduğunu düşünüyorum. Ama arkadaşlarıma handout'ları dağıttıktan sonra onların sohbet etmeye başladıklarını görünce aktivitelerimin ***sıkıcı*** [-APPRECIATION: reaction: impact] olduğunu düşündüm.

*I think that my presentation stage was **fine**.[+APPRECIATION: reaction: quality]. But when I saw that my peers started chatting after I delivered them the handouts, I thought that my activities were **boring**.[-APPRECIATION: reaction: impact]*

Within the Appreciation category, valuation is the second most frequently used sub-type which refers to the assessment of the value of an entity as good or bad in terms of its quality, or as useful or important in terms of its social significance. In their reflections, student-teachers generally do valuation of what it means to be a teacher or the possible effects of microteaching experience on them. Similar to reaction, the majority of comments included in valuation are encoded as positive. The participants typically use the attitudinal lexis like *temel* (*basic), esas (main), önemli (important)* and *kalıcı (lasting)* as follows:

Excerpt 3: Bizler eğer iyi öğretmenler olmak istiyorsak bunun için en ***temel*** [+APPRECIATION: valuation] şeyin sabırlı olmak olduğunu öğrendim. Yoksa sınıfta olan her şey ***sorun*** [-APPRECIATION: valuation] haline geliyor öğretmen için.

*I learnt that if we want to be good teachers, the most **basic** [+APPRECIATION: valuation] thing for this is to be very patient. Otherwise, everything occuring in classroom becomes a **problem** [-APPRECIATION: valuation] for the teacher.*

Excerpt 4: Tabi ki microteaching beni harika bir öğretmen yapmadı. Ama zannediyorum ki bizim üzerimizde ***kalıcı*** [+APPRECIATION: valuation] bir etkisi var. Hala kendi aramızda microteaching performanslarımızı tartışıyoruz.

*Microteaching, of course, didn't make me a perfect teacher. But I believe that it has a **lasting** [+APPRECIATION: valuation] effect on us. We are still discussing our own microteaching performances among ourselves.*

Within Affect, there are categories that range from happiness to security. The most frequently coded positive emotions include increased confidence and relieved anxiety after

microteaching sessions as well as motivational inclination to become a language teacher and general satisfaction with micro lesson performance. In fact, reflection helps us understand the nature of feelings, our patterns of thoughts, and our emotional reactions, therefore the high essence of Affect in student-teachers' reflections on their microteaching performance is compliant with the nature of personal reflection.

By far the highest percentage of negative emotions referred to how anxious they felt at the very beginning of microteaching sessions accounting for 12.33% of all negative coded items in the dataset. Some of the attitudinal lexis identified for this category consist of *endişeli (anxious), memnun (pleased), korkmuş (afraid)* and *–istemek (want)* as follows:

Excerpt 5: Başta materyallerimi hazırlarken bile çok ***endişeliydim*** [-AFFECT: insecurity]. Yolunda gitmeyecek diye ***korkuyordum*** [-AFFECT: insecurity]. Bitince ***rahatladım*** [+AFFECT: security] . Şimdiyse microteaching'imden ***memnunum*** [+AFFECT: satisfaction] diyebilirim.

I was very **anxious** *[-AFFECT: insecurity] at the beginning even while I was preparing my materials. I was* **afraid** *[-AFFECT: insecurity] that it wouldn't go well. When it was over, I got* **relaxed** *[+AFFECT: security]. Now I can say that I am* **pleased** *[+AFFECT: satisfaction] with my microteaching.*

Excerpt 6: Çocukluğumdan beri İngilizce Öğretmeni olmayı ***istiyorum*** [+AFFECT: inclination]. Ama emin değildim gerçekten öğretmenliği becerebilir miyim diye. Kürsüye arkadaşlarımın karşısına çıkıp onlara bir şey öğrettikten sonra şimdi kendi kendime "Evet, ben gerçekten öğretmen olmak ***istiyorum*** [+AFFECT: inclination]" diyorum.

Since my childhood, I **want** *[+AFFECT: inclination] to be an English language teacher. But I was not sure if I could really manage to teach. After being on the stage in front of my classmates and teaching something to them, now I am saying to myself "Yes, I really* **want** *[+AFFECT: inclination] to be a teacher."*

As for the results concerning Judgment, student-teachers judged either themselves or their peers by mostly using the capacity (20.38%) and propriety (15.67%) sub-categories of the system. In terms of capacity, the participants evaluated what they were able to strikingly achieve or were unable to manage. The instantiations of propriety were mainly coded to evaluate their performance in ensuring the appropriateness of presentation, practice and production stages of microteaching. In other words, they judged whether or not they performed as it was expected or they did something wrong or unusual. It could be suggested that the participants used almost an equal number of positive and negative judgments. However, it should be here emphasized that while negatively judging their peers, they made their evaluative preferences by using inclusive "we" as could be understood from the excerpts below:

Excerpt 7: Sanırım biz bazen presentation bölümünü ***çok uzun tutuyoruz*** [-JUDGMENT: propriety]. Bu da insanları çok sıkıyor. Ben onları sıkmadan anlamı ***verebildiğimi*** [+JUGMENT: capacity] düşünüyorum. En azından nasıl kullanılması gerektiğini açık bir şekilde ***gösterebildim*** [+JUGMENT: capacity] diye düşünüyorum.

*I think we sometimes **keep** presentation stage **too long**.* [-JUDGMENT: propriety] *So, this makes people very bored. I believe that I **could give the meaning*** [+JUGMENT: capacity] *without boring them. At least I believe I **could clearly showed*** [+JUGMENT: capacity] *how it should be used.*

Excerpt 8: Microteaching'den önce hem zamanı hem de materyalleri etkili bir şekilde kullanmayı kafama koymuştum. Ve bunu ***yapabildim*** [+JUGMENT: capacity] . Zamanı iyi ***kullanabildim*** [+JUGMENT: capacity]. Bazen ***çok iyi materyaller getiriyoruz*** [+JUDGMENT: propriety] ama onları uygun bir şekilde ***kullanamıyoruz*** [-JUDGMENT: capacity]. Neyseki ben hem işitsel hem de görsel materyallerimi etkili bir şekilde ***kullanabildim*** [+JUGMENT: capacity].

*Before microteaching, I had already put my mind to use both time and materials effectively. And I **could do it**.* [+JUDGMENT: capacity] *I **could manage** time.* [+JUDGMENT: capacity] *At times, we **brought very good materials*** [+JUDGMENT: propriety] *but we **couldn't use*** [-JUGMENT: capacity] *them properly. Fortunately, I **could use*** [+JUGMENT: capacity] *both my audial and visual effectively.*

The Analysis of Engagement

Engagement is organized with respect to the identification of the particular dialogistic positioning related to given meanings and the criteria for choosing one meaning over another. According to dialogistic perspective, utterances can be categorized as monoglossic and heteroglossic. That is, when utterances are monoglossic they do not refer to other voices and opinions. On the other hand, some utterances are named as heteroglossic since they bring or allow for dialogistic alternatives.

Table 2
The Results of Engagement System

Engagement system			Positive comments		Negative comments	
			Number	%	Number	%
Heterogloss	**Contract**	*Disclaim*	-		42	35.29
		Proclaim	5	5.15	4	3.36
	Expand	*Entertain*	36	37.11	24	20.16
		Attribute	14	14.43	12	10.08
		TOTAL	**55**	**56.70**	**82**	**68.90**
Monogloss		*Bare assertion*	42	43.29	37	31.09
		TOTAL	**42**	**43.29**	**37**	**31.09**

It is visible from Table 2 that Engagement is the second most frequently used appraisal category in the dataset. This system investigates how student-teachers use language to direct their interpersonal positions while making their evaluative preferences in the context of the microteaching performance. According to Martin and Rose (2003), this tactic implies heteroglossia in that it opens up or closes down potential alternative voices/negotiations. There are more heteroglossic formulations than monoglossic formulations as displayed in Table 2 above. A good number of coded phrases are presented explicitly as personal thought or accepting that other opinions might be there. With respect to this finding, appraisal theory suggests that because of the existing tension the student-teacher may be in need of positioning his claims by means of different grammatical devices. As Table 2 shows, most of the cases are expansive; the views are stated as personal opinion and a room is left for alternative viewpoints. The most recurring devices for managing this are projection clauses (e.g. I think that, In my opinion), followed by evidentials (e.g. seems, apparently), then softer modal auxiliary verbs (e.g. could, may).

Excerpt 9: ***Bence*** [ENGAGEMENT: heteroglossia: entertain], öğretmenlik kolay bir meslek değil. Microteaching'den sonra ***bana*** gerçekten meşakatli ***geliyor*** [ENGAGEMENT: heteroglossia: entertain].

In my opinion [ENGAGEMENT: heteroglossia: entertain], *teaching is not an easy job. After microteaching, now it **seems to me** [ENGAGEMENT: heteroglossia: entertain] that it is really demanding.*

Excerpt 10: Fen Bilgisi Öğretmenliği bölümünde okuyan ev arkadaşlarımdan birisi bana eğer iyi hazırlanmış bir planın olursa geri her şey tamamdır ***demişti*** [ENGAGEMENT: heteroglossia: attribute]. ***Ama*** bunun yeterli olmadığını anladım. Bazen daha fazlasını yapmak ***gerekiyor*** [ENGAGEMENT: heteroglossia: entertain].

One of my housemates studying in science teaching department **said to me that** *if you had a well-prepared lesson plan, everything would be OK.* **But** [ENGAGEMENT: heteroglossia: disclaim] *I understood that this is not enough. Sometimes you* **need to** [ENGAGEMENT: heteroglossia: entertain] *go beyond that.*

The Analysis of Graduation

Graduation, the third of the appraisal's interacting domains, is related to the semantics of grading or scaling. Within the semantic space, two possible parameters of values that scale other meanings are considered: force and focus. Focus is considered with respect to the scales of intensity for ungraded categories. Force, the second sub-category of graduation, involves evaluation as to a degree of intensity and amount.

Table 3

The Results of Graduation System

Graduation system			Positive comments		Negative comments	
			Number	%	Number	%
Force	Intensification	*Upscale*	38	41.75	17	19.10
		Downscale	20	21.97	26	29.21
	Quantification	*Upscale*	13	14.28	10	21.23
		Downscale	6	6.59	18	20.22
		TOTAL	77	84.61	71	79.77
Focus	Sharpen		6	6.59	3	3.37
	Soften		8	8.79	15	16.85
		TOTAL	14	15.38	18	20.22

Table 3 shows the distribution of markers of language strength. Positive comments are dominated by higher intensity language. Particularly, *çok* (*very*) and *gerçekten* (*really)* are the most common intensifying adverbs used by the student-teachers. Down-scaling is mostly used to undermine negative comments, hence making the negative evaluation less face-threatening. The student-teachers sometimes grade down the construed positive evaluations, making them less imposing to the hearer, that is, their instructor. In terms of focus, there are very few instances of softening and vagueness in negative comments. Alhija and Fresko (2009) argue that in general when students are asked to evaluate teaching-related issues, they mostly make positive comments. The researchers' argument supports what is found here in that in so far as student-teachers increase the intensity of their evaluative language when they make positive comments on microteaching performance. In other words, they turn up the volume of their appraisal. There are a number of negative comments many of which are softened, downscaled or blurred.

Excerpt 11: Presentation aşamam ***oldukça*** [GRADUATION: force↓] iyiydi. Practice bölümü de ***idare ederdi*** [GRADUATION: force↓]. Ama bir süre sonra bana hiç bitmeyecek ***bir tür film gibi*** [GRADUATION: focus↓] geldi. Sanırım ***bazı*** [GRADUATION: force↓] aktivitelerim ***birazcık*** [GRADUATION: force↓] sıkıcıydı.

*My presentation stage was **quite** well.* [GRADUATION: force↓] *The practice stage was also **okay**.* [GRADUATION: force↓] *But after a while, it seemed to me **a kind of** never-ending movie.* [GRADUATION: focus↓] *I think **some*** [GRADUATION: force↓] *of the activities were **a bit*** [GRADUATION: force↓] *boring*.

Excerpt 12: Mezun olmadan önce bunun gibi (microteaching) bir şans yakaladığımız için ***gerçekten*** [GRADUATION: force↑] şanslı öğrencileriz.

*We are **really*** [GRADUATION: force↑] *lucky students as we got such an opportunity as this (microteaching) before we graduate.*

Linking Appraisal Analysis to Cultural Orientation

The results of appraisal analysis reveal a number of patterns in the way the student-teachers have made evaluative choices. The percentages show that the participants most frequently made attitudinal choices. The sequence of the attitudinal choices from the most frequently encoded to the least encoded was as Appreciation, Affect, and Judgment. As a matter of fact, when the teacher candidates are given an opportunity to reflect on their in-class performance, judgment could be typically expected to be the main business of appraisal in this self-evaluation process since self-evaluation refers, as Hughes, Ruhl, and Misra (1989) define, to the process where students compare their behavior to a self- or externally determined standard and render a judgment regarding the quality and acceptability of the behavior. However, the instances of Appreciation and Affect are comparatively more frequent in student-teachers' comments. Particularly, under Appreciation category, they make persistent use of evaluative language to refer to the quality of their microteaching.

One possible explanation for the frequent occurrence of comments on quality and emotions could be provided by suggesting that Turkish culture is a feminine culture. Nations with high femininity scores are more concerned with quality rather than quantity or success and have a higher tendency to express feelings. Additionally, within Affect, the attitudinal lexis student-teachers mostly use include anxiety, anxious or confidence. This result could be attributed to the fact that since Turkish culture is a high uncertainty avoidance culture, people in this culture tend to feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations. Therefore, it might be inevitable for student-teachers to feel anxious on the eve of their micro but most probably the first teaching experience that they are unfamiliar with.

The student-teachers in their reflections use proportionally more expressions of heteroglossia and these expressions are mostly expanded, that is, the participants open space to alternative perspectives by grounding in either their own or others' view. As stated above, in this way the language is used to manage interpersonal positions by the speaker. The reason why student-teachers engage the voice of others could be attributed to the high index that Turkish culture possesses in collectivism dimension of Hofstede's NCM. In collectivist cultures, interpersonal relationships are acknowledged to be quite important and loyalty to the group is emphasized which looks after the interest of its members. The model also suggests that collectivist cultures have "we" consciousness. Therefore, the frequent use of "we" in the speech of teacher candidates could be explained via this argument (e.g. If we want to be good teachers..., we are really lucky students..., we sometimes keep presentation stage too long).

As for the findings with respect to Graduation, it is found that student-teachers intend to grade down both their negative and positive evaluations. This could be explained by means of the high femininity score of Turkish culture on Hofstede's scale. As it is stated in the model, feminine cultures tend to possess a preference for relationships, modesty, caring for the weak, and the quality of life. For this reason, the participants may abstain from harshly criticizing both themselves and their peers. Furthermore, since feminine cultures do not support assertiveness unlike masculine cultures, the participants could therefore possibly decrease the intensity of their positive comments.

According to NCM, Turkish culture is a large power distance culture. One implication of this identification is that in such cultures teachers are treated with respect and their teaching methods are never questioned, which means hierarchical structures in educational

institutions are preserved. When the large proportion of positive evaluation is taken into consideration, it might be therefore suggested that student-teachers avoid making negative comments with respect to microteaching sessions, which are carried out as a fundamental course requirement.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was twofold: Firstly, it aimed to investigate the evaluative language choices of the third-year ELT students that they made while they were reflecting on their microteaching performance. Secondly, it aimed to find out whether the cultural orientation of the participants had any effect on their evaluative language preferences. Among all three systems of Appraisal framework, the student-teachers used the Attitude system more frequently than the Engagement and Graduation systems. Within the Attitude system, their more frequent coded evaluative choices were made using the options included in Appreciation sub-category. The student-teachers mostly appreciated the quality of their microteaching performance. Additionally, they frequently evaluated how they felt before and after their teaching experience. On the whole, the participants made more positive comments than negative comments within the Attitude system. As for the Engagement, the student-teachers used heteroglossic formulations more frequently than monoglossic formulations. This means that they did not make bare assertions, instead, they left open space to other voices or alternative views. With respect to Graduation, it could be concluded that the student-teachers abstained from exaggeration. They graded down both their positive and negative evaluations.

Lastly, the study found that the evaluative language choices of participants are aligned with their Turkish cultural orientation. The fact that Turkey is a moderately feminine collectivist culture could be linked to the findings in that the student-teachers make a frequent use of affective terms in their evaluations, avoid from bare assertions, and frequently use inclusive "we". The other findings that the proportion of positive comments is higher than that of negative comments and the sub-category insecurity is the most frequently coded affective term could be attributed to Turkey's high index in power distance and uncertainty avoidance.

This is the first study (to the best knowledge of the researcher) that examines the evaluative choices of ELT preservice teachers that they make while they are reflecting on their microteaching performance. For this reason, it may possibly include some limitations. Firstly, this study is based only on qualitative data, therefore, it could be better to use both qualitative and quantitative data in further studies to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how cultural issues influence evaluative language choice. Secondly, this data were collected before the participants got to know their achievement score in their microteaching performance. Therefore, a further study could be conducted to make comparisons in evaluative choices of participants before and after getting to know the achievement score.

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