"I FEEL AS IF I WERE A REAL TEACHER": AN ANALYSIS OF EFL STUDENT TEACHERS' EVALUATIVE DISCOURSE THROUGH APPRAISAL THEORY

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Abstract

The present paper reports on the results of a study on how future teachers of English as a Foreign Language (henceforth, EFL) at the Universidad Autonomy of Madrid (UAM) linguistically construe themselves and their teaching experiences in their written narratives. Data is obtained from the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the reflective journals that EFL student teachers at the UAM write on a weekly basis during their twelve week practicum in the region of Madrid. Drawing on Appraisal Theory (The Appraisal Web site; Martin; Martin and White) and more specifically, by the study of the ATTITUDE subsystem, this paper shows that attitudinal resources are prevalent and varied in the student teachers' written narratives analysed, that they are expressed explicitly and that they are mainly positive. Findings also show that student teachers' assessments go along with some evaluative parameters that go beyond the evaluation of participants, processes and things as positive or negative. Data is discussed in relation with the writers' emergent professional identity and with the different variables observed.

Key words: Appraisal Theory, student teachers, practicum studies, English as a foreign language teaching (EFL), written narratives, reflective journals, professional identity.

Resumen

Este artículo presenta los resultados del análisis del discurso evaluativo de los profesores en formación de inglés como lengua extranjera de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM), a partir de la aplicación de la Teoría de la Valoración (The Appraisal Web site; Martin; Martin and White) y más concretamente, del análisis del subsistema de ACTITUD. Más concretamente, los datos que se presentan aquí provienen del análisis cuantitativo y cualitativo de los diarios de aula que los alumnos de la UAM escriben semanalmente durante sus doce semanas de prácticas docentes en centros de la Comunidad de Madrid. Entre los resultados obtenidos destacan: 1. que los recursos lingüísticos utilizados por los alumnos de la UAM para expresar actitud son frecuentes y variados; 2. que se expresan de forma explícita; y, 3. que son generalmente positivos, aunque los alumnos de la UAM también utilizan otros parámetros evaluativos que van más allá de la valoración meramente positiva o negativa. Los datos se discuten en relación a la emergente identidad profesional de los autores de los diarios y a las diferentes variables observadas.

Palabras clave: teoría de la valoración, futuros profesores en formación, prácticas de enseñanza, inglés como lengua extranjera, narraciones docentes, diarios de aula, la identidad profesional docente.

> "Speakers make narrative choices
> in order to display a particular portrait of themselves.
> The self that the narrators depict is inevitably constructed
> for that particular context."
> (Keller-Cohen and Dyer 150)

1. INTRODUCTION

The present study is concerned with the analysis of evaluative discourse in a specific genre, that of EFL student teachers' written reflective journals. More specifically, both as an applied linguist and as a teacher trainer, I am particularly interested in the application of Appraisal Theory (Martin; Martin and White) to the analysis of this subgenre of teachers' narratives, and the empirical insights it can provide to describe EFL prospective teachers' emerging professional identity.

A teacher's narrative is any oral or written text in first person singular in which teachers speak about their teaching activities and experiences and express their beliefs and attitudes related to the teaching profession (Cortazzi). Teachers' autobiographies, post observation interviews, diaries or other types of written reflections on teaching experiences belong to this narrative genre. Data presented in this paper comes from the analysis of a set of reflective journals written by four EFL student teachers at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM) during their twelve week practicum studies in different secondary schools at the region of Madrid. During this period, UAM student teachers are expected to keep a weekly written journal in which they make a regular account of their learning or teaching experiences during their school placement. Research shows that these reflective journals not only provide student teachers ongoing cohesive opportunities to reflect, respond, and keep track of field experience, but also allow them to perform other social functions such as highlight and resolve tensions, justify and/or explain one's actions (or those of others) and construct a particular professional identity as teachers (Bailey; Golombek; Gray; Bailey, Curtis, and Nunan).

Teacher's profesional identity is defined in educational literature as "a process of practical knowledge building characterized by an ongoing integration of what is individually and collectively seen as relevant to teaching" (Beijard, Meijer and Verloop 123). The construction of a teacher's professional identity involves a complex interplay between continuous personal experiences and different cultural, social, institutional and environmental contexts. That is why it is continually informed, formed and reformed over time and with experience. The notion that the teachers' verbalizations of their teaching experiences provide a window onto their professional identities is well attested in educational research literature.[1] However,

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[1] Some interesting studies about the professional identity of experienced language teachers are: Clarke; Dyer and Keller-Cohen; Cortazzi; Cortazzi and Jin; Holmes; Holmes and Marra; Duff and Uchida; Tsui.

with some interesting exceptions, the bulk of research on this issue does not rely on linguistic or sociolinguistic models. Prospective teachers' narratives have not been the focus of much linguistic research either (except for Vásquez; Urzúa; Vásquez). The existing body of research of their narratives focuses on describing their unstable identity as teachers (see Antonek, McCormick, Donato.; Brinton and Holten; Holten and Brinton; Schepens, Aelterman, Vlerick; Lamote and Engels). Indeed, their nascent professional identity starts to be built during the school practicum studies. During this period, trainees live new teaching experiences and challenges which usually bring changes to the way they understand the teacher profession. The impact of those experiences is usually verbalized in their narratives. Thus the research questions that guide my analysis are: What are EFL student teachers' main attitudes, values and feelings during their practicum studies? How do they assess their own teaching performance during this period? Which evaluative parameters do they use? Do these feelings, attitudes and judgment values evolve during their practicum studies? What professional image do they project? I hypothesize here that prospective teachers make a conscious selection of the linguistic resources they use in their narratives to build and project a professional identity they feel comfortable with and that they want to share with other participants in their training process.

To describe UAM EFL student teachers' emotional, moral and aesthetic opinions on their first teaching experiences and how they evolved through time, I used the system of ATTITUDE, as described within Appraisal Theory. To my knowledge, Appraisal Theory has not been extensively applied to the analysis of EFL pre service or trainees' evaluative discourse.[2] In the EFL context, Appraisal theory has been used to describe attitudinal resources in EFL textbooks (Chen), in student writing (Coffin and Hewings; Coffin and O'Halloran) and in narratives written by young adults (Kupferberg). It has also been used as a tool to unveil students' appraisal of their English teachers (Lipovsky and Mahboob). As I will show in the following pages, the application of Appraisal theory to the description of EFL student teachers' evaluative discourse in their narratives can help analysts unveil the ongoing process of construction of a nascent professional persona during the practicum studies and scrutinize the problems that may arise during this period to address them pedagogically and/or academically.

2. DATA DESCRIPTION AND METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this paper, I carried out a quantitative and a qualitative analysis of 103 reflective journals (22.928 words in total), written from January to May 2011. For each week of teacher training at school, UAM student teachers were expected to fulfill a maximum of three "reflective moments" (average length of 300

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[2] With the exception of Mackay and Parkinson, who applied Appraisal Theory to the analysis of 88 student teacher reflections on a design and technology project.

words each), that is, situations/thoughts/feelings that arise during the week and that the teacher student wishes to remember and to reflect on. At the end of every week, this journal was e-mailed to the student teacher's University mentor, who could ask to review it with the candidate at any time.

The diary entries under analysis were written by four different EFL student teachers: three females and a male. One of them was a Spanish citizen, the other two were EU bilingual (Spanish-English) citizens, and the fourth one was an US citizen, that is, a native speaker of English. All of them were in their mid twenties. In spite of their high pedagogical training, they were very inexperienced. They carried out their practicum studies in three different secondary public schools and in an Official Language School at the region of Madrid, at the same time they receive formal education at the UAM Faculty of Teacher Training and Education.

As for the methodology, once the 103 diary entries had been gathered, data was saved and given a numeric code to identify the author and his/her diary entry (e.g. S_RJ9a). Besides, each text was classified according to other variables, such as: the student teachers' gender (male or female), their command of English (native, non native, bilingual), the type of school where they carried out their practicum (public, private, bilingual or an Official Language School), and, finally, the main topics dealt with in each entry (whether they speak about themselves, about their students, their colleagues, their school or university mentor, or about any other topic). Then diary entries were annotated and analysed by O'Donnell's UAM Corpus Tool (2.7.2.) following the system of ATTITUDE, as described within Appraisal Theory (Table 1):

TABLE 1. APPRAISAL: SYSTEM OF ATTITUDE. (FROM THE APPRAISAL WEB SITE).	
SUBSYTEM	Explanation
AFFECT	indicates how some phenomenon affected the speaker emotionally.
JUDGEMENT	shows an evaluation of human behavior with respect to social norms.
APPRECIATION	shows an evaluation of objects and products (rather than human behavior) with respect to aesthetic principles and other systems of social value.

Each of these attitudinal categories was further analyzed in terms of attributed positive or negative valence. Valence finds its expression through language in several ways: it can be inscribed through the language itself, or evoked:

(1) "Students are nice people and they treat me as If I were a real teacher" (J_RJ2a).

To verify the stability of the coding, 50 randomly chosen texts were re-coded independently by a graduate student. After comparison of the results, some of the codes for these sample texts were revised. Then the coding of the entire corpus was checked for any discrepancy between the original and revised coding. The resulting coding of the corpus is considered stable enough for reliable results.

3. APPRAISAL THEORY AT WORK:
SOME QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

For presentation purposes, findings are reported under the following sub-sections:

3.1. An Overview

Results show that most reflective journals are mainly concerned with the description of the school students, their capacities and their behaviour during the lessons taught by EFL student teachers. Less frequently, EFL prospective teachers speak about themselves, about their personal expectations and feelings concerning the school students and the school where they are placed, and about the teaching profession in general. Curiously, as Table 2 shows, trainees do not devote much time to reflect on the role of other participants in the teaching training process (i.e. the school mentor, the university mentor and/or other colleagues at school):

TABLE 2. MAIN TOPICS IN EFL STUDENT TEACHERS' REFLECTIVE JOURNALS.		
Aboutness	Number	%
About their students	52	50.4
Personal	30	29.1
About the school mentor	9	8.7
About their colleagues	5	4.8
Other	7	6.8

As for the appraisal resources, 742 instances of AFFECT, JUDGEMENT and APPRECIATION were described in the sample. Cases of JUDGEMENT are the most frequent ones, closely followed closely by APPRECIATION and AFFECT. Table 3 provides the numbers for each type:

TABLE 3. APPRAISAL RESOURCES IN EFL STUDENT TEACHERS' REFLECTIVE JOURNALS.		
Attitude Type	N=742	
	Nº	%
Judgement	299	40.3
Appreciation	243	32.7
Affect	200	26.9

Coherently with the topics above described, results show that student teachers' evaluations mainly judge their own students' capacities, skills and behaviour, and to a lesser extent, their own pedagogical actions and behaviour. As for APPRECIATION, student teachers mainly focus on the evaluation of the EFL materials and activities they use in their lessons and on their own teaching performance during the practicum. Finally, regarding AFFECT, student teachers are basically concerned with the expression of the feelings and emotions generated by their teaching experiences and by their personal relationship with students at school.

Findings also show that student teachers feel comfortable with the explicit expression of emotions, attitudes and values in this genre: 88.33% of evaluations appraised are inscribed, in contrast with just a 11.67% of evoked evaluations. And as regards polarity, it is mainly positive (58.2% vs. 41.8% of negative assessments), so we can derive that the teaching experience provided by the practicum is generally evaluated as good by EFL trainees. However, as it will be illustrated, findings show that trainees not only evaluate participants, objects and events related to the teaching training process as good or bad, but also assess them along with other evaluative parameters. The most frequent ones in the sample are the ones of expectedness and importance, already described as core evaluative parameters by Bednarek, followed by two other dimensions which, I believe, are genre determined: these are the parameters of (pedagogically) easiness/difficulty and the one of (un)usefulness.

The parameter of expectedness as used in the sample texts involves the student teachers' evaluations as more or less expected or unexpected and includes the values of contrast, comparison and negation:

(2) "They surprised me" (....) "it really struck me" (Em_RJ15).
(3) "I think that the first session of my teaching unit did not go wrong" (Em_RJ19b).
(4) "They are getting more and more comfortable with the language" (Em_RJ6b).
(5) "This week I think I have not made so many errors as in previous weeks" (J_RJ3b).

These examples evoke positive and negative evaluations depending on the context they are situated.

EFL student teachers also place their assessments on evaluative scales which range from what it is considered (pedagogically) important to (pedagogically) unimportant:

(6) "Obviously, reading and writing are also very fundamental" (S_RJ5b).
(7) "I think it is very important to know each other well and keep good manners with other teachers" (J_RJ4a).

Or from what trainees evaluate as (pedagogically) easy to what they consider difficult:

(8) "This kind atmosphere makes the work with them very easy" (J_RJ3a).
(9) "The *diversificación* class is trickier" (Em_RJ1b).

(10) "It is really hard to remember the details of the game" (L_RJ9b).
(11) "It is like pulling teeth" (L_RJ13).

Or, finally, from what they believe it is pedagogically useful to what they assess as completely useless:

(12) "Overall it was very useful for me to be able to receive some feedback and teaching tips" (J_RJ11).
(13) "I think (going to school only two days per week) it is not useful because I have not seen how my mentor structures and teaches a whole teaching unit" (J_RJ7b).
(14) "I really thought it was a waste of time" (Em_RJ4b).

As previous examples show, writers can place their evaluations next to any of the two extreme poles, or in intermediate stages between them.

3.2. Judgement

There are 299 uses of Judgement which appraise human behaviour in the sample texts. Most instances express social esteem in terms of capacity, tenacity and normality, in that precise order. Tables 4 and 5 show the numbers for each type:

TABLE 4. TYPES OF JUDGEMENT.		
Judgement Type	N=299	
	Nº	%
Social esteem	255	85.2
Social sanction	44	14.7

TABLE 5. TYPES OF SOCIAL ESTEEM.		
Social Esteem Type	N=255	
	Nº	%
Capacity	164	64.3
Tenacity	86	33.7
Normality	5	1.9

As mentioned before, data shows that student teachers' narratives are basically concerned with the evaluation of their own students' capacities, skills and competences:

(15) "These students have a very good command of English" (J_RJ10b).
(16) "The majority of the students worked really hard to complete the task" (L_RJ4b).
(17) "(...) the real effort they put into the exams is not reflected in their marks" (S_RJ3b).

Less frequently, writers assess their own capacities and skills related to teaching:

(18) "I am not really tech savvy" (L_RJ9a).

Among these cases of JUDGEMENT, there are more instances of negative capacity (71) than of positive ones (88). This is probably because student teachers feel that what they are able to achieve pedagogically is not worth commenting on in their narratives. However, when writers feel, for example, that their own teaching performance is not at the highest level, or that their students' behavior, competences or skills are not as good as expected, they put it on paper to trigger a reflection on the why:

(19) "2ºA behaved and participated more than the week before" (Em_RJ10b).
(20) "I have to improve my oral skills, not only being more fluent in English, but also I have to speak a bit louder " (J_RJ2b).
(21) "The students are having trouble remembering how to form the 2nd conditional" (L_RJ11b).

In the data set there are also many examples of Tenacity (33% of the JUDGEMENT cases) in which writers appraise their own students' psychological disposition towards learning:

(22) "Students were very much engaged and participative" (Em_RJ5a).
(23) "The students have a slack attitude towards homework and studying outside of school" (S_RJ5c).
(24) "The attitude of the students towards exams seems to be very relaxed" (S_RJ3b).

Finally, writers evaluate their school mentor's and other colleagues' tenacity, but much less frequently:

(25) "She is always ready to answer me any question about the school and its organization, about teaching" (J_RJ1a).
(26) "My colleague was very receptive to my ideas"(S_RJ8b).

3.3. APPRECIATION

APPRECIATION refers to resources for valuing products, performances and natural phenomena (Martin 159). There are 243 instances of APPRECIATION in our

data set, the majority of which express reaction and social valuation. Tables 6 and 7 show the numbers for each type:

TABLE 6. TYPES OF APPRECIATION.		
Appreciation Type	N= 243	
	Nº	%
Reaction	100	41.1
Valuation	86	35.3
Composition	57	23.4

TABLE 7. TYPES OF REACTION.		
Reation Type	N= 100	
	Nº	%
Impact	24	24
Quality	76	76

As Table 7 shows, the most frequent cases of reaction are those which assess the quality, that is, the likeability of certain specific EFL activities, techniques and practices when implemented in their teaching contexts:

(27) "The advanced class did a really fun activity on Thursday." (L_RJ9b).
(28) "She created a really interesting vocabulary list" (L_RJ14).

Some other cases of APPRECIATION assess the quality of specific EFL materials and teaching units:

(29) "Lessons that do not follow an established book are more interesting to students because it is something new to them" (J_RJ6a).
(30) "It is a good book if teacher wants to reinforce and / or implement expand basic grammatical knowledge, but it is not very useful in order to show other English speaking countries' cultures" (J_RJ9a).

Examples of composition—balance and complexity—are just a few and assess EFL textbooks and all sorts of materials, as well as the learning process in general:

(31) "Everything is jammed into the book" (S_RJ8a).
(32) "I found that filling out the grid was a really complicated task" (L_RJ7).
(33) "Homework and studying at home is an important part of the learning process" (S_RJ5c).

And finally, there are some interesting examples of valuation which assess the success or failure of their teaching units, or even of their practicum studies:

(34) "The result was disastrous" (Em_RJ6a).
(35) "(...) the visit (university mentor) turned out be a very useful and valuable experience for me" (S_RJ11).

As the previous examples show, the evaluative dimensions of expectedness (34), importance (33), (pedagogical) difficulty (32) and (un)usefulness (31, 35) underlie most APPRECIATION instances which in any case, evoke more positive values than negative ones. This interpretation is reinforced by some of the most common keywords present in the subset, according to the UAM Corpus Tool: Interesting (35.5), Important (14.98), Useful (11.04), Good (8.23), Idea (6.13), and Positive (6.07).[3]

3.4. AFFECT

Finally, as regards the expression of the trainees' emotions, 200 cases of AFFECT were described in the sample texts. As Table 8 shows, the largest number appears in reflective journals which speak about personal issues and about their students at school, in very similar proportions:

TABLE 8. AFFECT BY REFLECTIVE JOURNAL TYPE.		
AFFECT by reflective journal type	N= 200	
	Nº	%
Personal	83	41.5
About students	80	40
About mentors	24	12
About colleagues	8	4
Other	5	2.5

Among the three main different groups of emotions that AFFECT covers— (un)happiness, in/security and dis/satisfaction—, findings show that in general, student teachers feel happy during their practicum. Indeed, the most frequently used adjective in the instances of AFFECT analysed is precisely, Happy (75.0). However, there are also an important number of instances of insecurity and dissatisfaction

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[3] The number in brackets indicates the relative frequency of these words in a given subset when compared to its relative frequency in the general corpus of reflective journals.

which outnumber the satisfaction and security cases described in the data set, as Table 9 shows:

TABLE 9. TYPE OF AFFECT CASES.			
TYPE OF FEELINGS and EMOTIONS		N=200	Examples
Happiness (51 cases)	Cheer	29	(36) "All in all, it was great to have a first contact with them since they were eager to talk" (Em_RJ1a). (37) "Preparing the lesson so thoroughly makes me excited" (L_RJ9a).
	Affection	22	(38) "Teaching is that something that I enjoy" (S_RJ9b). (39) "I really like most of the activities that my mentor brings to class" (L_RJ3b).
Unhappiness (17 cases)	Misery	11	(40) "I felt really bad" (Em_RJ4b).
	Antipathy	6	(41) "What I don't like is that she (mentor) doesn't want to interfere or mediate between the head master and me" (J_RJ1a).
Satisfaction (28 cases)	Interest	23	(42) "Students were very engaged" (Em_RJ13a).
	Admiration	5	(43) "I'm quite satisfied with the 2nd session of the teaching unit" (Em_RJ10b). (44) "I am pleased with the progress I am making in terms of the tasks I am completing and what I am contributing to the students in my classes" (S_RJ2a).
Dissatisfaction (36 cases)	Displeasure	26	(45) "I felt frustrated" (J_RJ6b).
	Ennui	10	(46) "(....) other (student) couldn't care less about the activities" (Em_RJ9a).
Security (19 cases)	Confidence	19	(47) "I feel a bit more confident about having someone observing me" (L_RJ2b).
Insecurity (40 cases)	Disquiet	25	(48) "My main concern was timing" (S_RJ8b). (49) "I was completely helpless" (Em_RJ13b).
	Surprise	15	(50) "I was quite shocked by this" (S_RJ5b). (51) "I could not believe my own eyes" (Em_RJ13b).
Irrealis AFFECT	Fear	5	(52) "I dread to put into practice my teaching unit" (Em_RJ6a).
Irrealis AFFECT	Desire	4	(53) "I would like some feedback from here during this time"(S_ RJ 8b).

Interestingly, AFFECT cases are highly concentrated in the diary entries written by particular student teachers. For example, in the entries produced by student number 1, a male UK student teacher in his late twenties, only 27 cases of AFFECT were described, which contrast with the 82 instances found in the reflective journals

written by student teacher number 3, a female Spanish student teacher in her early twenties. Besides, the type of feelings and emotions expressed by student number 3 are varied: cheer (12) and affection (7), misery (8), confidence (11), interest (8), displeasure (8), ennui (8), etc. whereas student number 1's emotions are less assorted and apparently, more restrained: mainly, affection (5), interest (5), confidence (3) and displeasure (5).

3.5. A More Qualitative Approach: Affect Cases in Student Teacher Number 3's Reflective Journals

Let's analyse more in detail the expression of feelings and emotions in the diary entries produced by student teacher number 3. In her first diary entries, she combines numerous cases of positive affect (happiness) about herself with cases of positive social esteem (judgement) regarding her students and her school mentor:

(54) "I am so happy having this teacher as my mentor!" (1a).
(55) (Mentor) "She wants me to learn a lot about teaching" (...) "She is very polite" (1b).
(56) "This group is very participative" (2b).
(57) "The 4th ESO students collaborated very well" (2b).

However, these positive instances of evaluation are intertwined with others in which she judges herself as lacking in capacity:

(58) "I did not know how to guide them (students)" (2a).
(59) "I have to improve my speaking" (2b).
(60) (Worried about a student's behaviour) "I do not know what to do with him" (3a).

Progressively, cases of positive affect about her own teaching experiences start to proliferate, as she gains confidence in herself:

(61) "I am very happy of achieving this little progress" (4a).
(62) "I feel more and more comfortable with the groups I am allowed to teach... I felt good and more motivated to teach... Students made me feel good and useful during the week..."(4b).
(63) "I have felt confident teaching in all my classes..." (5a).
(64) "I felt great" (5a).

Unfortunately, on week 5, during one of her lessons, student teacher number 3 experienced a conflict with one of her students who corrected her pronunciation in English. As a result, her self esteem was greatly affected. From that moment on, cases of negative affect expressing fear and misery start to appear in her diaries, in combination with negative valuations of some of the decisions she made during her lessons:

(65) "I felt afraid of teaching this group because they have a very good level of English, and I think that I am not better than them" (6b).
(66) (if students do not pay attention) "It makes me feel bad, because I think I am not explaining well, that what I am teaching is not interesting" (7a).
(67) "I tried to engage them in the activity by... (...) but it was a mistake on my part" (8a).

These negative cases of AFFECT and APPRECIATION project an image of insecurity and disappointment, which unfortunately, evolves into alienation, as the following example shows:

(68) "I am bored of attending my *prácticas* hours or days (...) I feel that I am a strange person that appears every week and that they have to put up with because they do not have any other option" (7b).

From week 8 to week 12, the number of AFFECT cases drop dramatically. The sudden absence of feelings of any kind in the entries written by student teacher number 3 during the last weeks of her practicum is particularly indicative of her emotional detachment from the negative experiences undergone at school. During these last five weeks, she just seems to focus on the apparently neutral evaluation of events and things, leaving aside any reference to her feelings and emotions:

(69) "It is a good book if teacher wants to reinforce and / or implement expand basic grammatical knowledge" (9a).
(70) "The class in itself went fairly smoothly" (11a).

This interpretation was corroborated and addressed pedagogically by the author after an in-depth interview held with student teacher number 3 during this period.

In sum, a qualitative analysis of the AFFECT cases in context, in combination with other appraisal resources, allows us to describe this student teacher's profile as the one of a very emotional young writer who projects a very unstable professional persona in her narratives. The evolution from enthusiasm to deception and alienation in just twelve weeks alerts the university mentor about the need to work on the student teacher's self esteem and teaching confidence before her university education finishes.

4. SOME FINAL REMARKS

As stated in the introduction, this paper's main aim was to contribute to enlarge the scarce existing research into the evaluative discourse of EFL prospective teachers by exploring the empirical insights that Appraisal Theory could provide to describe UAM student teachers' emerging professional identity.

For this purpose, a sample of 103 reflective journals written by both English native and non native student teachers was analysed. Among the most interesting quantitative findings, this paper shows that the three subcategories of Attitude- AFFECT, JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION are found in similar numbers, with JUDGMENT the most frequently used, followed closely by APPRECIATION and AFFECT. It is also discovered that most Appraisal resources are expressed explicitly and are positive, although in my view, the negative cases are far more interesting, since they are the ones which allow scrutinizing problems affecting EFL student teachers or other participants in the practicum. I refer, more specifically, to the important number of JUDGEMENT instances found in the sample texts evaluating the student teachers' negative capacities, skills and competences, or those of secondary school students, or the significant number of AFFECT cases in which student teachers show their dissatisfaction during their practicum. Although they are not majority in the sample texts, they should be further researched and if possible, addressed pedagogically and/or academically.

As for the AFFECT cases in the narratives analysed, they hint at different degrees of self-esteem and confidence, basic characteristics of a solid professional teaching identity. Their number, type and distribution in the sample texts is determined by many different factors: the kind of teaching experiences writers live at school, the student teachers' own personality and age, their writing style, etc. According to some scholars (Mackay and Parkinson), gender could be another variable. In fact, student number 1 is a male and student number 3, a female, but a wider corpus of written narratives would be needed to make generalizations on this point.

Finally, data also show that student teachers evaluate their teaching experiences not only as positive or negative, but also along with other evaluative parameters. An interesting point for further research would be to study the lexico-grammatical realization of the parameters of expectedness, importance, (pedagogically) easiness/ difficulty and usefulness on a more extended corpus of EFL student teachers' reflective writing, a genre which is still far from being fully portrayed.

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