**STUDENTS’ APPRAISAL OF THEIR NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE ENGLISH-SPEAKING TEACHERS**

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**Introduction**

In recent years a number of studies have explored attitudes towards and perceptions of non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs). However, most of these studies, not unlike other work on language attitudes, have used surveys (Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005; Moussu, 2006) and/or qualitative data that focussed on emerging themes/content (Mahboob, 2004; Mahboob & Griffin, 2006). While survey data provide a statistical analysis of participants’ attitudes (based on a predetermined set of comments and/or criteria) and the qualitative data document participants’ attitudes in terms of the categories of comments that emerge from the data, the actual language used by students to project their perceptions is left unanalysed. The results of the existing studies that do look at qualitative data are presented in terms of categories of comments that were recorded in favour of or against teachers’ native-speaker status. The actual discourse of evaluation is not analysed. Thus, missing from the current literature is an analysis of the actual language used to comment on NESTs and NNESTs in interview and other qualitative data. It is our contention that an analysis of students’ language of appraisal will add to the richness of our understanding of perceptions. The goal of the present study is therefore to examine students’ perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs by conducting a linguistic analysis of students’ texts.
Background and methodology

Data for this project come from essays written by 19 Japanese high school students attending a 4-month ESL orientation program at the beginning of a year-long study abroad program in the United States. The program was taught by two TESOL professionals: one an NEST and another an NNEST. Program participants were asked to write a diagnostic essay at the beginning (T1) and end (T2) of the program on the topic:

Some students think that only native speakers can be good language teachers. Others think that non-natives can also be efficient teachers. What is your opinion about this issue? Please feel free to provide details and examples.

These essays were collected with two goals in mind: 1) to evaluate students’ writing and grammar, and 2) to explore any shift in students’ perceptions towards native and non-native English speaking TESOL professionals. The essay task was based on Mahboob (2003) in which the essays written by ESL students in an intensive English language program in the United States were studied for their attitudes towards NNESTs. Mahboob (2003) used the grounded approach to study these data and observed that ESL students did not prefer native or non-native speakers but rather found them to bring unique attributes to their classes. Following Mahboob (2003), Griffin and Mahboob (2006) also applied the grounded approach to their study. Corroborating earlier findings, they found that students’ comments could be placed into three broad categories: linguistic factors, teachings styles, and personal factors. The first group, linguistic factors, includes “oral skills”, “literacy skills”, “grammar”, “vocabulary”, and “culture”; the second group, teaching styles, includes “ability to answer questions” and “teaching methodology”; and the third group, personal factors, includes “experience as an ESL learner”,

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“hard-work”, and “affect”. Within each of these categories, they reported both positive and negative comments (examples of these categories are provided in Appendix A.)

The results of the study showed that the trends in student responses did not change over time: e.g., NESTs were still considered strong in teaching oral skills and NNESTs were considered strong teachers of literacy skills. The results also indicated that ESL students in this study found the distinction between NESTs and NNESTs less relevant after being exposed to both in an ESL setting. However, like previous work in this area, students’ language of appraisal was not studied. It is here that the present study adds a fresh perspective to this body of work.

**Theoretical framework**

The Appraisal Framework is an extension of M.A.K. Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory. The model emerged from work by functional linguists on the role of evaluation in narrative in the context of secondary school and workplace literacy. Their concern was to build a comprehensive framework of evaluative meanings that could be used systematically in discourse analysis (Martin, 2000, 2003). As Martin (2000: 144) contends, ‘What ha[d] tended to be elided in SFL approaches [until then] […] is the semantics of evaluation—how the interlocutors are feeling, the judgements they make, and the value they place on the various phenomena of their experience’. Since its inception, the Appraisal Framework has been applied to the analysis of spoken and written texts across a wide range of areas, including conversation (Eggins and Slade, 1997; Precht, 2003), institutional talk (Lipovsky, 2008), spoken academic discourse (Hood & Forey, 2005), academic writing (Hood, 2004a, 2004b, 2005, 2006), literacy (Rothery & Stenglin, 2000), media discourse (e.g. White, 1997, 1998, 2006; Martin, 2004), medical discourse (Jordens, 2002), and so on.
The Appraisal framework describes the linguistic means by which individuals encode their feelings and beliefs (or attitudes), how they grade the strength of these feelings and sharpen or blur their utterances, and how they position themselves with regards to these values and possible respondents, hence the three sub-systems of Attitude, Graduation and Engagement (see Figure 1). The system of Attitude especially is concerned with all types of evaluative assessments, both positive and negative (see Martin, 2000; White, 2002, Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005; or White, 2005 for further description). More specifically, it might entail how individuals share their feelings (e.g. how happy or unhappy, or satisfied or dissatisfied they are), assess people's behaviour (their capacity, their tenacity, and so on) and appraise the value of things and performances (e.g. how significant something is), hence the three categories of Affect for presenting emotional responses, Judgement for evaluating human behaviour, and Appreciation for evaluating products and performances. These three categories are illustrated in the examples below (Attitudes are in bold):

- **Affect:** He *likes* teaching English.

- **Judgement:** He is a *brilliant* teacher.

- **Appreciation:** His classes are *exciting.*
Each category of Attitude in turn includes a variety of subcategories. They are summarised in Figure 2. These categories will be drawn upon hereafter as required in the course of our analysis.
Is the person secure?

Confidence / Trust

(Dis)satisfaction

Is the person satisfied?

Ennui / Displeasure

Interest / Admiration

Normality

Is the person special?

Capacity

Is the person capable?

Tenacity

Is the person committed?

Veracity

Is the person honest?

Propriety

Is the person beyond reproach?

Reaction

Impact

Did it grab me?
(evaluating texts, processes, and natural phenomena)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Did I like it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>Did it hang together?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>Was it hard to follow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Subcategories of Attitude (adapted from Martin, 2000)

The system further distinguishes feelings that involve reactions to a ‘realis’ stimulus (e.g. ‘she liked English’) from intentions towards an ‘irrealis’ stimulus (e.g. ‘she wanted to learn English’). It also differentiates ‘inscribed’ Attitudes that are made explicitly, using attitudinal lexis (e.g. ‘a knowledgeable teacher’), from ‘invoked’ Attitudes or ‘tokens’ that are evoked through descriptions of one’s experience (e.g. ‘a teacher who could answer all the questions that I asked’).

Performance and capacity of the performer are of course strongly connected. So a positive or negative Appreciation of a performance may imply a positive or negative Judgement of the performer, as in the following example:

Her pronunciation is **good** [+APPRECIATION: Valuation] [t, +JUDGEMENT: Capacity].
In this statement, ‘good’ realises the student’s Valuation of her NNEST’s pronunciation. In doing so though, the student also provides a positive Judgement of her teacher’s oral skills.

Lastly, Attitudes are gradable, so they can be amplified (as in ‘a very good teacher’) or downgraded (as in ‘a teacher a bit boring’). Utterances can also be sharpened (e.g. ‘a real teacher’) or blurred (e.g. ‘some kind of teacher’). In the Appraisal system, this is referred to as Graduation (see Figure 3). Hood 2004a, Martin and White 2005, or Hood and Martin 2006 provide detailed descriptions of Graduation.

Figure 3: System of Graduation (adapted from Martin & Rose, 2003)
The system thus provides an effective tool for analysing attitudinal meanings. In the context of the present study, it is effectively used to investigate students’ attitudes towards their NESTs and NNESTs.

Results

The T1 and T2 essays were coded, counting every instance of Attitude (Affect, Judgement and Appreciation) and Graduation (Force and Focus). Some students included in their essays narratives on non-native speakers who were not teachers, or related their own experience of teaching Japanese to foreigners. These examples were not included in the analysis and only evaluations pertaining to teachers and ALTs ('Assistant Language Teachers', that is, native speakers of English who teach conversation classes in Japanese schools) were accounted for. Then, to give a better representation of the students’ evaluations of their teachers, we found it necessary to differentiate instances of Judgement (Capacity). Thus, we distinguish in our discussion teachers’ linguistic competence (in both Japanese and English) from their teaching ability.

The Appraisal analysis gave a detailed representation of the students’ attitudes towards their NESTs and NNESTs. In the students’ essays, emotional responses were infrequent and most evaluations were applied to either the N/NESTs themselves (i.e. Judgements), or their performance (i.e. Appreciations). In the next section, we discuss their linguistic competences and teaching ability, as well as some personal factors, presenting various examples taken from the students’ essays in doing so.
Linguistic competences

In their Judgements and Appreciations of NESTs’ and NNESTs’ linguistic competences, the students commented on their teachers’ oral skills (i.e. listening and speaking/pronunciation), literacy skills (reading and writing), grammar, vocabulary and knowledge of culture. Some students also commented on their N/NESTs’ competence (or lack of competence) in the native language of their students.

Oral skills

We included in this category the teaching of listening and speaking/pronunciation, as well as conversational skills. All the evaluations of the NESTs were positive, e.g.:

(1) Native speaker has good [+APP Valuation] sound of language [t, +JUD Capacity]. Student #9 / T1

(2) Of course her [NEST’s] pronunciation was much [GRA: Force: intensity] better [GRA: Force: intensity / +APP Valuation] than Japanese teachers [t, +JUD Capacity]. Student #18 / T2

(3) Their conversations [NNESTs’] are so [GRA: Force: intensity] cool [+APP Valuation] ! [GRA: Force: intensity] Student #19 / T1

NESTs’ oral skills were viewed as ‘good’, ‘natural’, ‘real’—even ‘cool’! This view is supported by comment (2), which seems to imply that native speakers possess ideal skills (see ‘of course’). Note, however, how NESTs are evaluated through a comparative (‘her

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3 The extracts from the essays are shown as written by the students. Numbers refer to students. ‘T1’ refers to the first set of essays, ‘T2’ to the second set. The coding for Attitudes is indicated in the brackets. ‘AFF’ stands for ‘AFFECT’, ‘JUD’ for ‘JUDGEMENT’, ‘APP’ for ‘APPRECIATION’ and ‘GRA’ for ‘GRADUATION’.’+’ indicates a positive Attitude whereas ‘-’ indicates a negative Attitude. The letter ‘t’ for ‘token’ indicates an evoked or non-explicit Attitude. Attitudes are marked in bold; Graduations are underlined.
pronunciation was much better), which does not preclude NNESTs’ good pronunciation (see Mahboob & Lipovsky (2007) for further discussion).

NNESTs on the other hand received both positive and negative evaluations, e.g.:

(4) Her pronunciation is really [GRA: Force: intensity] good [+APP Valuation] [t, +JUD Capacity].

Student #15 / T1

This student valued her NNEST’s pronunciation highly, as shown by the intensifier ‘really’. A number of students however viewed their NNESTs’ oral skills negatively, e.g.:

(5) They [NNESTs] sometimes speak like Japanese pronunciation [t, -JUD Incapacity]. Student #6 / T2

(6) In Japanese school, we are taught English by non-natives teachers. Their pronunciation is so [GRA: Force: intensity] bad [-APP Reaction / t, -JUD Incapacity]. And we can’t learn [t, -JUD Incapacity] listening, we are not used to listen from natives teachers [t, -JUD Incapacity]. so it is hard [-APP Reaction / t, -AFF Unhappiness] for us. When I came to U.S, I couldn’t listen a lot of [GRA: Force: quantity: amount] words [t, -JUD Incapacity]. Student #4 / T2

Example (6) highlights the connection between performance and ability, as the student’s negative Appreciation of NNESTs’ pronunciation of English (‘their pronunciation is so bad’) entails a negative Judgement of their speaking skills. This in turn resulted in a series of negative Judgements of the student’s listening skills (‘we can’t learn listening’, ‘we are not used to listen from natives teachers’ and ‘when I came to U.S, I couldn’t listen a lot of words’). This also occasioned negative feelings on the part of the student (‘it is hard for us’). This exemplifies how an Appraisal analysis provides more fine-tuned information than a Thematic analysis, such as
bringing to light the impact of N/NESTs’ competences onto their students’ competences, even highlighting students’ feelings over the process.

**Competence in the learners’ native language**

A number of comments dealt with N/NESTs’ competence (or lack of competence) in their students’ native tongue. Some students viewed this as an incentive for practising their conversation skills in English, e.g.:

(7) This teacher [NEST] doesn’t speak our language and understand what I say [t, -JUD Incapacity] so I must speak teacher’s language and I’ll become a **good** [+APP Valuation] speaker! [GRA: Force: intensity] Student #6 / T1

This aspect did not emerge in Mahboob’s study (2003) since the essays that discussed the learners’ experience in their own country were discarded. What is of particular interest to us within the scope of the present study though is that what would have been picked up as a deficiency in the Thematic analysis (NESTs do not speak Japanese and therefore cannot communicate in this language with their students) turns out to be an advantage since it obliges learners to communicate exclusively in English, thus contributing to their progress. Note how the negative Judgement on the NEST (‘this teacher doesn’t speak our language and understand what I say’) is explicitly linked to a positive Appreciation of the learner’s skills (‘so I must speak teacher’s language and I’ll become a good speaker!’).

On the other hand, some students viewed NESTs’ lack of knowledge in their students’ native language as an obstacle to learners’ comprehension, e.g.:
(8) It is a problem [-APP Valuation] that we sometimes cannot figure it out only with explaining from native speakers [t, -JUD Incapacity]. [...] So we need our mother tongue, Japanese to understand the meaning of words more clearly. Also, if we asked some questions to native speakers, they didn’t answer them clearly [t, -JUD Incapacity]. Student #5 / T2

This student appreciated negatively the fact that NESTs cannot provide explanations in the learners’ native language, especially as far as the learning of vocabulary is concerned. NESTs’ answers to their students’ questions were also considered unclear, possibly because of the language factor. In effect, NESTs’ inability to speak their students’ tongue and answer their questions in that language puts more onus on the students. Mahboob (2003) does not discuss this aspect, since the participants in his study are intermediate and advanced students. Examples 7 and 8 also show the advantage of an Appraisal analysis over a Thematic analysis, as they highlight how some students can view a factor as an advantage, while some others view the very same factor as a disadvantage.

Likewise, NNESTs’ ability in their students’ tongue was viewed as either impeding their speaking skills, or, on the contrary, as facilitating their learning and understanding of English, as the two examples below illustrate:

(9) The best [GRA: Force: intensity] of good [+APP Valuation] things [about NNESTs] is to be able to speak same language with students [t, +JUD Capacity]. If we have a question, we can ask English or first language [t, +JUD Capacity]. If we cannot speak [t, -JUD Incapacity], first language is better [+APP Valuation / GRA: Force: intensity] than English. Student #6 / T2
(10) When I talked to non-natives in no our language, and I found the language, I spokeed our language and teacher may help [JUD Capacity] us. but this help is far [GRA: Force: intensity] from good [-APP Valuation] speakers, I think. Student #6 / T1

In example (9), NNESTs’ ability in the students’ native language is viewed as an advantage for language learning. However in example (10), this ability is viewed as a disadvantage since it might hinder learners’ progress. Examples 9 and 10 highlight another instance when the Appraisal analysis proves more fine-tuned than the Thematic analysis, as it shows how the same factor can generate either a positive or a negative Appreciation.

Literacy skills

Students evaluated NNESTs’ literacy skills (reading and writing) positively, e.g.;

(11) He [NNEST] has mastered [JUD Cap / GRA: Force: Intensity] speaking, writing, and listening [t, +JUD Capacity]. Student #12 / T1

(12) My high school’s English teacher can’t speak English well [t, -JUD Incapacity]. But, I can learn good [+APP Valuation] writing at his class [t, +JUD Capacity]. Student #7 / T1

This latter comment suggests that NNESTs can have good literacy teaching skills, independently of their ability in other skills. On the other hand, another student wrote:

(13) Some Americans cannot write in English in formal style or are confused between expressions for speaking and for writing [t, -JUD Incapacity]. Student #5 / T2

These comments illustrate students’ awareness that literacy skills are learned, and thus independent of other skills.
Grammar

Students valued NNESTs’ knowledge and teaching of grammar positively, e.g.:

(14) His [NNEST’s] grammar is **better** [GRA: Force: intensity / +APP Valuation] than native speaker in his university [t, +JUD Capacity]. Student #12 / T1

(15) I think it [NNEST’s class]’s **good** [+APP Valuation] for us to teach grammar. Student #6 / T2

Example (14) highlights how NNESTs’ linguistic competences can even surpass the NESTs’.
Grammar is also the category in which NNESTs received the strongest comments in Mahboob’s study (2003).

In the following extract, a student reflects about her NESTs’ teaching skills for grammar:

(16) Someday I asked her [ALT] to teach grammar. But she said “I don’t know what should I teach you [t, -JUD Incapacity]”. I was **very** [GRA: Force: intensity] **surprised** [-AFF Insecurity] because I was thinking that people from English spoken country, they all can teach us perfectly [t, +JUD Capacity]. Student #18 / T2

This comment illustrates how native speakers actually may not know about grammar until they learn how to teach it.

Vocabulary

Students stated that NESTs were good for learning vocabulary, e.g.:

(17) If native speakers teacher teaches English to students, they can learn English slang [t, +APP Valuation]. Student #17 / T2
Example (8) above however highlighted how students may find it difficult to learn vocabulary from their NESTs because of their inability to explain the words in the students’ native language. This of course is specific to an EFL context.

Evaluations of NNESTs on the other hand were mixed, e.g.;

(18) She [NEST] knows many [GRA: Force: quantity: amount] words which are very [GRA: Force: intensity] difficult [-APP Composition] [t, +JUD Capacity] therefore even natives don’t know.
Student #15 / T2

(19) Certainly, if we want [AFF Desire] to be a good [+JUD Capacity] English speaker, it is effective [+APP Valuation] that we learn speaking English with native speakers. That is because there are a lot of [GRA: Force: quantity: amount] idioms or expressions that non-natives don’t know in their English [t, -JUD Incapacity]. Student #5 / T2

These comments exemplify how the knowledge of slang and idioms distinguished NESTs from NNESTs.

Culture

A few comments dealt with the teaching of culture. Both NESTs and NNESTs received positive evaluations in this category, e.g.:

(20) They [NESTs] know any them history and country very [GRA: Force: intensity] good [+APP Valuation] [t, +JUD Capacity]. so [GRA: Force: intensity] good [+APP Valuation]. Student #13 / T1
(21) They [NNESTs] know about other country’s cultures or their country’s culture [t, +JUD Capacity]. Student #7 / T2

Interestingly, two students viewed NNESTs’ classes as an opportunity to learn about a third culture.

Teaching methodology

Some students also commented on their teachers’ teaching methodology. Only NNESTs were appraised in this category, always positively, e.g.:

(22) They [NNESTs] know which word we learned fast [t, +JUD Capacity]. Student #2 / T2

(23) Non-natives teachers teach me how to learn second language, how to make friend in the country I don’t know anything, and many other things [GRA: Force: quantity: amount] [t, +JUD Capacity]. Student #4 / T2

(24) Non-natives have some great [GRA: Force: Intensity / +APP Valuation] necks [knacks] they prooted because they became the language teachers by doing their own necks, not learned when they were babies like native speakers do [t, +JUD Capacity]. And then, they can tell their students about that [t, +JUD Capacity]! [GRA: Force: intensity]. Student #19 / T2

These comments highlight how NNESTs were attributed specific skills that stem from their own experience as language learners, and how students perceive that they can benefit from these skills.
Personal factors

Students also commented on personal factors related to their teachers. Interestingly, all these comments are in support of NNESTs. Factors include NNESTs’ empathy with their students, and their tenacity in learning English.

Empathy with the students

Students perceived their NNESTs as having empathy with them, since they experienced the same difficulties in learning English. The following comments illustrate this point:

(25) I think that non-natives teachers is better [+JUD: Capacity / GRA: Force: intensity] than natives teachers. Because non-natives teachers are knowing that we can not understand language which we are learning easy [t, +JUD Capacity]. Student #4 / T1

(26) Non-native speakers [...] know which word we learned fast [+JUD Capacity]. They know what kind of words we can use [t, +JUD Capacity]. They understand [+JUD Capacity] us. Student #2 / T2

(27) I also think someone who study language very [GRA: Force: intensity] hard [+JUD Tenacity], they can teach [t, +JUD Capacity] it very [GRA: Force: intensity] well [+APP Valuation]. Because, they know how to learn it is the best [+JUD Capacity / GRA: Force: intensity]. And they also know students feeling [t, +JUD Capacity]. #20T1

These comments highlight students’ perception that NNESTs’ empathy vis-à-vis their students impacts onto their teaching. However, students also seemed to value the feeling of empathy itself (see ‘they also know students feeling’, ‘they understand us’).
Tenacity

A number of students commented on their teachers’ hard work. Some recognised that proficiency in the language is not sufficient to make a good teacher. In the following example, the student states that tenacity is a characteristic of both NESTs and NNESTs who are good teachers:

(28) The most [GRA: Force: intensity] important [+APP Valuation] thing is not native or non-native. If you want [AFF Desire] to be a good [+JUD Capacity] language teacher, you have to spent a lot of time [GRA: Force: Extent: Scope: Time] on studying [t, +JUD Tenacity] language. What you need is efforts [+JUD Tenacity]. Student #15 / T1

Students recognised though that greater effort and tenacity were necessary on the part of NNESTs, as shown in the following comment:

(29) I think that if we [NNESTs] effort [+JUD Tenacity] to learn English, we can teach [t, +JUD Capacity]. It may be so [GRA: Force: intensity] hard [-APP Reaction] [t, -AFF Unhappiness] but I think it is important [+APP Valuation] for non-natives speaker to try [GRA: Focus: Fulfilment] their best [+JUD Tenacity / GRA: Force: intensity]. Student #12 /T1

This evaluation not only underlines the need for tenacity, but also highlights the emotional impact on NNESTs through a token of Affect, stressed by an intensifier (‘It may be so hard’)—but again, this is additional information gained from an Appraisal analysis over a Thematic analysis.

A number of students wrote in their essays narratives highlighting their NNESTs’ tenacity to exemplify how they had become proficient in English, hence good teachers. The extract below presents an example of text where Tenacity is strongly represented. In this extract, the
student provides a particular example of a NNEST whom she is familiar with to illustrate how non-natives can achieve proficiency in their non-native language (exemplified by the NNEST receiving a scholarship to study abroad, being first in her English class in Great Britain, and eventually becoming a teacher of English in Japan):

(30) I have a good [+JUD Capacity] English teacher ho is non-native speaker in my high school. She speaks very [GRA: Force: intensity] well [+APP Valuation] even though she is non-native speaker [t, +JUD Capacity]. One day, she talked me about her exchange student’s life in British. She has been to British for only three months as an exchange student. when she was twenty years old. She has wanted [AFF Desire] to go abroad since she was in junior high school. But sadly [-AFF Unhappiness], she was so [GRA: Force: intensity] poor [-JUD Normality] that she couldn’t go abroad. When she was in university, she study English very [GRA: Force: intensity] hard [+JUD Tenacity] she found an information which said that if she pass the examination, she could be an exchange student for free. She was very [GRA: Force: intensity] good [+APP Valuation] at writing in English [t, +JUD Capacity] at that time. But she had one big [GRA: Force: quantity] problem [-APP Valuation], “speaking English” [t, -JUD Incapacity]. She has never talked native English speakers. “I tried to speak to foreign people when I found them at the station, park and even at the hospital [GRA: Force: Extent: Scope: Space] [t, +JUD Tenacity].” She said. She passed the examination [t, +JUD Capacity] with these great [GRA: Force: quantity: amount] efforts [+JUD Tenacity]. But she had only three months. She kept studying very [GRA: Force: intensity] hard [+JUD Tenacity]. In British university, she got first prise in English class [t, +JUD Capacity]. After she went abroad, she took an examination to be an English teacher. But she didn’t stop [GRA: Force: Extent: Scope: Time] studying [t, +JUD Tenacity]. She studied English harder and harder [GRA: Force: intensity] [+JUD Tenacity]. She knows many [GRA: Force: quantity: amount] words which
are very (GRA: Force: intensity) difficult [-APP Composition] therefore even natives don’t know [t, +JUD Capacity]. She showed me that everybody can be a good [+JUD Capacity] teacher with great (GRA: Force: Quantity: Amount) efforts [+JUD Tenacity]. Student #15 / T2

Our coding of inscribed Attitude, that is, using explicit attitudinal lexis, is outlined in Table 1.

Evaluations focus on the NNEST’s linguistic skills and her determination to improve her English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appraising items</th>
<th>Affect</th>
<th>Judgement</th>
<th>Appreciation</th>
<th>Appraised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>+capacity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very well</td>
<td></td>
<td>+valuation</td>
<td></td>
<td>NNEST’s speaking skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wanted</td>
<td>+desire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>go abroad</td>
</tr>
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<td>sadly</td>
<td>-happiness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>being too poor to afford going abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so poor</td>
<td>-normality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>being too poor to afford going abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very hard</td>
<td>+tenacity</td>
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<td></td>
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Table 1: Inscribed Attitude in Extract 30
Instances of invoked Attitude are outlined in Table 2 (with ‘t’ marking ideational tokens/evoked evaluations).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appraising items</th>
<th>Affect</th>
<th>Judgement</th>
<th>Appreciation</th>
<th>Appraised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>speaks very well</td>
<td>t,+capacity</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very good at writing in English</td>
<td>t,+capacity</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she had one big problem “speaking English”</td>
<td>t,-capacity</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I tried to speak to foreign people […] at the hospital</td>
<td>t,+tenacity</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she passed the examination</td>
<td>t,+tenacity</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she got first prise</td>
<td>t,+capacity</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she didn’t stop studying</td>
<td>t,+capacity</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she knows many words which are very difficult</td>
<td>t,+tenacity</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td>NNEST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Invoked attitude in Extract 30

These ideational tokens extend the positive prosody of Tenacity and Capacity inscribed through the explicit attitudinal lexis. It culminates in the evaluation that ‘everybody can be a good teacher with great efforts’. Note also how the student uses Graduation to either intensify the Judgements of Tenacity (e.g. ‘study English very hard’, ‘great efforts’, ‘kept studying very hard’, ‘studied English harder and harder’), or to evoke Attitude through the grading of non-attitudinal terms (‘I tried to speak to foreign people when I found them at the station, park and even at the hospital’, ‘she didn’t stop studying’) (see Lipovsky and Mahboob (2008) for further discussion on the students’ use of Graduation). Thus, the NNEST is construed as determined to
improve her English, and rewarded in her efforts as she becomes quite competent in the
language, knowing ‘many words which are very difficult therefore even natives don’t know’.
The student assumed her reader(s) to align with the idea that native speakers are more
proficient in their own tongue than non-native speakers. The word ‘even’ challenges this view,
and thereby sets to demonstrate that tenacity is rewarded—‘everybody can be a good teacher
with great efforts’.

**NNESTs as role models**

An effect of NNESTs’ success in their language learning is that it emulates their students. The
following comment illustrates this point:

(31) They [NNESTs] became great [GRA: Force: intensity / +JUD Capacity] speakers of the specific
[GRA: focus] language even they are not native speakers. To learn the language which is not first
language for students by the teachers who are not native, students can be encouraged [+AFF
Happiness]. Student #19 / T2

Likewise, NNESTs’ tenacity is a model that their students are keen to follow:

(32) I learned her if we think we want [AFF Desire] to be something and study hard [+JUD
Tenacity], our dream [AFF: Desire] come true [+APP Valuation]. Student #1 / T1

**Enjoyment**

A last category of comments concerns the pleasure or enjoyment that can derive from
learning a language. The following evaluation exemplifies this point:
I think that non-natives are also **good** [+JUD Capacity] teachers. Because they can teach us the **pleasure** [+APP Reaction] of learning new language! [GRA: Force: intensity] If there had not been Japanese English teacher, I would never know the **pleasure** [+APP Reaction] of learning English. Student #19 / T1

The absence of similar comments about NESTs does not mean that no pleasure can be derived from attending their classes:


Student #18 / T2

**Discussion**

This study highlighted how students perceive NESTs and NNESTs as having complementary strengths. NESTs were usually praised for their oral skills (in particular their pronunciation and conversation) and knowledge of vocabulary (including slang and idioms). However, this did not preclude a number of NNESTs from being praised for these skills as well. On the other hand, NNESTs attracted positive evaluations for their teaching of literacy skills and knowledge and teaching of grammar, highlighting how these skills are independent of linguistic skills as they can be learned. NNESTs were also appraised positively for their teaching methodology, stemming out of their own experience and skills acquired as language learners, and that their students could benefit from. Likewise, students felt that their NNESTs shared empathy with them, since they had experienced the same difficulties in learning English, while their tenacity to master the language became a role model some students were keen to emulate. N/NESTs’ competence (or lack of competence) in their students’ native tongue (L1)
was viewed as either an advantage or a liability. Some students viewed their teacher’s lack of knowledge in their L1 as an incentive for honing their own speaking skills in English, while some other students viewed it as impeding comprehension as the teacher’s explanations were at all times provided in English. Conversely, the availability of L1 use could deter students from asking questions in English and prevent them from progressing in their L2, or on the contrary facilitate their comprehension of their teacher’s explanations. Significantly, the Appraisal analysis highlighted the strong link that students perceive between their teachers’ linguistic skills (pronunciation and knowledge of students’ L1) and their own performance.

Regarding the language of evaluation specifically, the students in their essays generally shunned negative evaluations to favour positive evaluations of their N/NESTs. The data contain few negative explicit Attitudes. When they do, negative Judgements and Appreciations often derive from negations, that is, the student negates a positive performance, rather than stating directly that it is bad, e.g.:

(35) My high school’s English teacher can’t speak English well [t, -JUD Capacity].

(36) My English teacher does not good [-APP Valuation] accent [t, -JUD Capacity].

In (35), the student states that her teacher ‘can’t speak English well’, rather than writing that s/he speaks English badly. Likewise in (36), the student states that her teacher ‘does not good accent’, rather than stating that her accent is bad. This mitigation denotes some reticence on the part of the students to be critical of their teachers—although there are a few exceptions (as
Another way students mitigated their evaluations was to use invoked Appraisal, as in the following example:

(37) They [NNESTs] sometimes speak like Japanese pronunciation [t, -JUD Incapacity].

In this example, rather than criticising NNESTs directly through explicit negative lexis, the student chose to invoke her criticism through a comparison. Note also how this token of Judgement actually only states that NNESTs’ pronunciation is non-native. Students’ use of invoked Attitudes through the expression of ideational meanings also demonstrates an attempt to be objective rather than subjective.

Example (37) highlights another particularity of students’ Appraisal of their N/NESTs in that it was commonly comparative. Here is another example:


In (38), the NEST’s pronunciation is qualified as ‘much better than Japanese teachers’—rather than ‘good’. The intensifier ‘much’ points at a criticism a contrario of NNESTs’ pronunciation—although the way it is merely implied makes it impossible to determine whether their pronunciation is bad or just not as good as NESTs’. Of course, this tendency to compare NESTs’ with NNESTs’ skills could be attributed to the nature of the task that the students were given.

Students’ evaluations of their N/NESTs were not only mostly positive, but also highly graduated, e.g.:

(39) Her pronunciation is very [GRA: Force: intensity] good [+APP Valuation]
(40) They became great [GRA: Force: intensity / +JUD Capacity] speakers of the specific language even they are not native speakers.

(41) Their conversations [NNESTs’] are so cool [GRA: Force: intensity] cool [+APP Valuation] ! [GRA: Force: intensity] Student #19 / T1

In (39), the pre-modifying intensifier ‘very’ amplifies the positive Valuation of the teacher’s pronunciation—alternatively, the teacher’ pronunciation could have been said to be ‘good’ or ‘kind of good’. In (40), the intensifier is fused within a lexical item that also serves a semantic function, as ‘great’ can be unpacked as ‘very’ + ‘good’. In (41), the intensification is realised through the pre-modifying intensifier ‘so’ as well as the exclamative. Thus, the students not only positively appraised their teachers, but often also amplified their positive evaluations of them (see Lipovsky & Mahboob, 2008 for further discussion of students’ use of graduation).

This analysis also revealed the advantage of an Appraisal analysis over a Thematic analysis, as the former appeared more fine-tuned than the latter. For instance, the Appraisal analysis highlighted aspects of N/NESTs’ (lack of) knowledge that are doubled-sided, such as when it showed how NESTs’ lack of knowledge in their students’ L1 or on the contrary NNEST’s knowledge in their L1 could each either be viewed as an advantage or a drawback.

The Appraisal analysis also highlighted affective issues that had been downplayed by the Thematic analysis. Students in examples (6) and (29) above highlighted how learning a foreign language can be ‘hard’. This explicit negative Valuation actually brings to light more private affective issues—as shown by the double-coding as a token of Unhappiness—highlighting how discouraging mastering a foreign language can at times appear. Examples (31) and (32) on the
other hand highlighted how students can be encouraged by their NNEST’s success in learning another language.

Another benefit of the Appraisal analysis comes from the fact that it takes into account the co-text of the evaluations. Students’ evaluations about their N/NESTs did not come in a void. They were often stringed to narratives developing a particular aspect—the way Tenacity is discussed in example (31) is one example. The analysis highlighted how students’ Appraisals of their NESTs and NNESTs often recurred throughout their essays, with long strings of text devoted to some given evaluation, with the result of an ongoing cumulative effect. Furthermore, the students often amplified their evaluations through intensifications or repetitions. In other words, ‘the volume is turned up so that the prosody makes a bigger splash which reverberates through the surrounding discourse’ (Martin & White, 2005: 20). This highlights the advantage of Appraisal over Thematic analysis, as Appraisal ‘unfolds dynamically to engage us, to get us on side, not with one appeal, but through a spectrum of manoeuvres that work themselves out phase by phase’ (Martin & Rose, 2003: 56). As such, the analysis of extended units of meanings underlined the semantic prosody of the students’ essays and provided more finetuned information.

Conclusion

The present study supports other studies that found that students do not necessarily prefer being taught by NESTs or NNESTs, but rather value the combination of their qualities, as shown in this comment:
(42) It is not that natives teachers know better [JUD: Capacity / GRA: Force: intensity] than non-natives teachers. So I think that teaching to each teachers is important [APP Valuation] things for us. Student #4 /T1

At a time when communication in English more often concerns L2 speakers than L1 speakers, and the status of the native speaker of English becomes less significant, this analysis challenges the view that a sole native speaker model should be the goal of language learning and teaching. Importantly, the analysis of students’ language of Appraisal in their evaluations of their N/NESTs also brought a new perspective to the existing body of literature as it highlighted not only what the students said and thought about their N/NESTs, but also how they said it, providing added fine-tuned perspective con the topic.
References


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Mahboob, A. & Griffin, R. B. (2006). Learner Perspectives of Native and Non-Native Teachers, 40th Annual TESOL Convention Tampa, FL.


Appendix A

Examples of categories from Mahboob & Griffin (2006)

Linguistic Factors

Oral Skills

Positive Comment NEST: I wanna learn English by native speakers because I wanna be like a native speakers. Their conversations are so cool! Non-native’s conversations are not real...(TS: T1)

Negative Comment NNEST: And non-native speakers is dificult. I think non-native speakers no beautiful. I think native speakers is natural. non-native speakers is no natural...(MT: T1)

Grammar

Positive Comment NNEST:...If we want to learn grammatical English, non-natives are better...
(ES: T1)

Writing

Positive Comment NNEST: My high school’s English teacher can’t speak English well but, I can learn good writing at his class...(ME: T1)

Negative Comment NEST:...And, my English school’s teachers are all American and Canadian. They teach me writing not so much...(ME: T1)

Culture
Positive Comment NEST:...natives teach me many slangs, American culture, and about American...(AKA: T2)

Teaching Styles

Ability to Answer Questions:

Negative Comment NEST:...if we asked some questions to native speakers, they didn’t answer them clearly... (ES:T2)

Teaching Methodology

Positive Comment NNEST: I think that non-natives are also good teachers because they can teach us the pleasure of learning new language! If there had not been Japanese English teacher, I would never know the pleasure of learning English...(TS:T1)

Personal Factors

Experience as an L2 Learner

Positive Comment NNEST: I think that non-natives can also be efficient teachers. Because this four month, we learned with non-native and native. Sometimes our accent were not correct, but non-native understood what we want to say more than native. When we talked, they understood more than host family. Non-native speakers know how to learn English from teacher. They know which word we learned fast. They know what kind of words we can use. They understand us.(AM:T2)
Hard Work

Positive Comment NNEST: I think that non-native speaker can be also be efficient teachers. Because I think that if we effort to learn English we can teach. It may be so hard but I think it is important for non-natives speaker to try their best. My high school English teacher is non-native speaker but he have tried his best for twenty years. So he is as good as native speaker...(MHO:T1)

Negative Comment NEST: For example, if you native teachers, you haven’t to study English very hard. Because they were born in America. That’s they have spoken English...(SK:T1)

Affect

Positive Comment NNEST:...how to make friend in the country I don’t know anything, and many other things. And non-natives teachers support us, when we have homesich or something...(AKA: T2)