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Canada is a country of immigrants and as such, it will undoubtedly arrive at linguistic diversity. While in 1871 Canada was made up largely of the British and French charter groups, by 1991 others represented one-third of the population. (Driedger, 1996. p.74) Prior to the WWII, immigrants were largely from European countries, mostly from the British Isles. This trend began to change dramatically during the last 50 years with more immigrants starting to come from non-English speaking countries. As Bednarek (2009) writes, this multiculturalism has led to the rise in interest of Canadian studies over the past thirty years.

According to J. K. Chambers, Canada is probably the most multicultural and ethnically diverse country in the world, not for the obvious reason of having many ethnic groups present, but because these language groups sustain themselves beyond the second generation. This is a very clear indicator not of assimilation but of integration taking place without the loss of mother tongue (Chambers, 1979).

This leaves no doubt that Canadian English is being affected by the linguistic standards of these groups. To what degree, however, do new immigrants affect Canadian English? Do they cause greater language inconsistency or, in their desire to adjust to Canadian standards, quite the opposite?

The sociolinguistic theory the Linguistic Founder Principle states that early migratory inputs are more important to the outcome of the dialect mixing process than later immigration. As newcomers, immigrants try to accommodate themselves to the established linguistic patterns

Canadian English differ from preferences of recent immigrants. Taking into consideration that English is not a mother tongue for 40% of Canada's population, making this type of distinction in my research approach seems to be valid.

In order to eliminate repetitions, the following acronyms will be used in this paper: NS for Native Speakers of English – people who were raised speaking English as their main language, and NNS for Non-Native Speakers – people who learned English after gaining a native command of their mother tongue.

Hypotheses

The objective of this paper is to investigate how different the language preferences of native speakers of English are from those of recent immigrants, and which group is more consistent in their language use. The study hypothesizes that there will be no significant difference in lexical or pronunciation preferences. It is anticipated, however, that more NNS than NS will choose British spellings over the American ones. These hypotheses were founded on the following assumptions. Immigrants try to accommodate themselves to the linguistic model in their new language so that, except for their different accent, they will follow the speech pattern of their Canadian counterparts. In their desire to achieve a sense of belonging, they will follow Canadian standard spelling (which I am assuming to be British). Newcomers will not use American spellings where they have a choice. Written language as less spontaneous, allows for a more conscious decision than verbal utterance.

This research involved a survey in the format of a questionnaire (see Appendix A). It focused on lexical, spelling and pronunciation tendencies of both groups. Differences in accents and the systematic, phonological aspect of Canadian English was

language. Canadians o

was the survey giver supposed to resolve the issue? It was decided to include him with NNS, but whether this was the right choice remains unclear. These two examples highlight the difficulties in identifying

of them said that this was the spelling they had learned in school. Seven people recognized the British and the American spellings, but most of them weren't sure which one was which. Three of them stated that they preferred the British spelling, but they had chosen many American variants.

Overall, the results were similar to the results of other studies showing uncertainty and confusion among Canadians about what is an American and what is a Canadian [traditionally British] spelling.

Part Two: Word Choice

In Part Two the participants were presented with 10 sets of words or phrases, each set containing synonyms. Participants were asked to indicate their lexical preference and the reason behind it. Before the results were compiled, sets 7 and 10 were eliminated (see Appendix A), set 7 because most respondents indicated using two or three of the terms alternatively, set 10 because many participants were adding another word (*bathroom*) as their preference, while some didn't answer at all, which might indicate their use of a different term not listed. The results showed similarity in vocabulary preference between NS and NNS, if the majority of each group is considered. The only exceptions are *fire hall/fire station* and *eavestrough/gutter* where the groups' preferences were polarized.

This proves the first hypothesis, that recent immigrants use similar vocabulary to their Canadian counterparts. However, slightly more consistency in using vocabulary was observed among NS. In 4 out of 9 sets of terms NS answers concurred over 90% of the time; one variant--the term *pop*--was chosen by 100% of respondents. Such conformity in NNS group was obtained for only 1 out of 9 terms with a score of 91%.

The results by age for vocabulary were similar to the results for spelling. Younger people are more consistent in choice of vocabulary than the older generation. They showed 100% support for terms *napkin*, *fire station*, *dish soap* and *pop*.

The results proved the hypothesis that NNS pronunciation choice is similar to NS. Out of 15 words, only two

PART III

Please circle your answer according to your pronunciation of the word:

1. Does the ending in AVENUE sound like in *canoe* or *discontinue*
2. Does the ending in SEMI, as in semi-trailer, sound like *my* or *me*
3. Does the ending in ANTI, like in antidemocrat, sound like *tie* or *tee*
4. Does the U in STUDENT sound like *oo* or *you*
5. Does NEWS rhyme with *cruise* or *views*
6. Does LEISURE rhyme with *seizure* or *pleasure*
7. Does the ending in MULTI, as in multi-vitamin, sound like *tie* or *tee*
8. Does LEVER rhyme with *cleaver* or *clever*
9. Do you say HERB with the H or without like *erb*
10. Does the beginning of EITHER sound like in *eager* or *item*
11. Does the beginning of SCHEDULE sound like in *shoe* or *school*
12. Does GENUINE rhyme with *fine* or *fin*
13. Does RATION rhyme with *fashion* or *nation*
14. Does E in ECONOMICAL sound like in *except* or *eager*
15. Does ZEBRA rhyme with *Deborah* or *libra*

Thank you for taking part in this survey.

Appendix B
Survey Results

Table 1. Results for Part One (Spelling Variants)

<i>Variant</i>	Native Speakers %	Non-Native Speakers %	Age 14-39%	Age 40+ %	Females %	Males %
favour	83	80	88	83	90	78
centre	42	64	38	79	40	36
catalogue	92	64	100	57	70	78
harmonise	17	27	13	14	15	10
colour	92	91	100	86	92	73
jewellery	58	45	50	64		
connexion	0	9	0	10		
gray	25	36	25	29		
labour	92	92	88	93		
defence	58	73	50	71		
programme	25	9	13	21		
judgement	100	55	88	71		
airplane	92	82	100	79		
pyjamas	50	36	25	50		

Table 2. Results for Part Two (Word-Choice Variants)

<i>Variant</i>	Native Speakers %	Non-
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