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<th>著者</th>
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Impressions of Canadian English

Introduction

I went to Canada to study abroad two years ago. I'd thought Canadian English was the same as American English before I went there. However, I often saw British spelling like “colour” or “centre” in many places, so I thought Canadian English was simply a mixture of American and British, but this is not true either.

Sometimes I was confused in daily life, because I heard a word that was neither American nor British. For example, when my Canadian friends wanted to buy “soda”, they said “Can I get pop please?”, not soda. I could see that, in Canada, there were elements of American, British and Canadian English.

I'm interested in how Canadian people view their own English. For example, do they think of their English as British or American or something else? Another question is, what do British and American people think about Canadian English? I would therefore like to compare Canadian, American and British and explore how Canadian English is recognized by the three countries, including Canada.

Literature Review

The Status and History of the Canadian Language

Firstly, I would like to explain how the Canadian language was established and look at the status of Canadian English. As is well known, the official languages of Canada are English and French. Boberg (2010) noted that mainly English is spoken in Canada, but that the next most important language is French. However, almost all French speakers are in Quebec. In Quebec, English is a minority language. It is located close to regions of Ontario and New Brunswick. Boberg (2010) mentioned that Canadians also speak non-official languages because of immigrants from all over the world. These immigrants speak Chinese, Italian, German, Spanish and so on. Canadian languages also include indigenous languages such as Cree. In this way, Canada is a country that is officially, constitutionally and culturally bilingual.

I would now like to discuss Canada’s settlement history. As Boberg (2010) mentioned, Canadian English was established by three important forces: Britain’s victory in the 7 Years’ War, loyalist’s influence and the Industrial Revolution.

Britain aimed to achieve colonial and commercial activities in North America and established Canada as a British colony.

Loyalists’ influence. The English-speaking population in Canada was about 25,000 at the time of the American Revolution (Svartvik and Leech 2006). In 1775, according to Svartvik and Leech (2006), the first act of the American Continental Congress was to invade Canada, not to declare independent. However there are some people who sided with the British during the American
Revolution. These people were called loyalists. They did not stay in the United States. Many of them stayed in Canada. They settled in Nova Scotia at first and then moved to other lands in Canada. According to Svartvik and Leech (2006), the increasing number of loyalists led the British to establish a separate colony in upper Canada (e.g. Ontario) with English-speaking colonists. On the other hand, French-speaking colonists lived mainly in the lower part of Canada (e.g. Quebec). This situation continued until 1867. Svartvik and Leech (2006) mentioned that this situation made Canada a self-governing state (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario and Quebec). Later, the rest of the provinces and territories were added. Canada finally became an independent country in 1931.

The Industrial Revolution. This was a big opportunity to increase the number of Canada’s English speakers and settle the territory that would form the Dominion of Canada in 1867 (Boberg 2010). Finally, the need for new agricultural land and for economic growth, coupled at the end of the nineteenth century with the building of a transcontinental railroad, opened the western half of Canada to non-Aboriginal settlements, which came from four sources: the older Canadian provinces, the United States, Britain and Europe (Boberg 2010, p. 244).

Immigration from all over the world. Tanaka and Tanaka (2012) mention that there has been a lot of immigration in Canada even apart from the immigration from France and Britain. According to Svartvik and Leech (2006), until the 1970s, most immigrants were from the United States and Europe; however, nowadays, many immigrants have come from Asia. In addition to that, these immigrants insist on maintaining their language and culture. Svartvik and Leech (2006). They are still increasing, so it is said that more than 100 languages are spoken in Canada. Especially, Scottish came to Prince Edward Island (a place that is known from “Anne of Green Gables”) and advanced to Canadian provinces such as Ontario and Nova Scotia. For that reason, Canadian English is also influenced by Scottish English (Tanaka & Tanaka 2012).

Canadian politicians recognized the right of indigenous people to have self-government in 1999, so recently Canadian English is greatly affected by multi-ethnicity.

Canadian minorities and their languages

I would now like to write about the relation between English and French in Canada. French and English were established as Canadian official languages by the “Official Language Act” in 1969. Tanaka and Tanaka (2012) wrote that “official bilingualism” had been carried out for about 40 years in Canada. However, in fact, Canadians who speak English and French are only about 20% in provinces other than Quebec. English is mainly spoken (Tanaka & Tanaka 2012).

Svartvik and Leech (2006) also stated that Canada is a bilingual country. Speaking French is important for Canadian people in Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick. In addition to that, immigrants from all over the world are increasing, so more minority languages are appearing, such as Chinese, South Asian languages and many European languages.

Svartvik and Leech (2006) explained that English in Canada has been coexisted with French and other language for some 250 years. “Bilingualism in Canada does not mean that all Canadians master both the English and French languages. What it means is that the country is officially, constitutionally and culturally bilingual” (Svartvik & Leech 2006, p. 94).
**Contemporary Landscape of Canadian English**

In the famous cities of Toronto and Vancouver, only half of the people are native speakers of English (Boberg 2010). On the other hand, in Montreal, there are fewer native English speakers than in Toronto and Vancouver. Most people speak French or non-official languages. The remaining regions of Canada, such as Newfoundland and several areas of the Maritime Provinces, are notably distinct linguistically from the main variety of Canadian English used in central and western Canada. The difference in Canadian language is also found in social class, sex and age. Especially, according to Boberg (2010), differences in words are found. Boberg explained that Canadian English is influenced by the US because of its geographical situation at the top half of North America. However, it is not only the geographical situation, but there are also many historical, cultural and economic ties between Canada and America. Boberg (2010) said that, especially, historical and geographical conditions are big reasons why Canadian English is developing as a part of a general North American English even if Canada was formerly a British colony.

**Three types of Canadian English**

Americans think Canadian English is British, but on the other hand British think of it as American English (Crystal 2003). According to Trudgill and Hannah (2008), many people think Canadians speak American or British English, but actually there is a pronunciation specific to Canadian English.

Canadian English is divided into three main types. These are General, Maritime and Newfoundland.

**General.** Trudgill and Hannah (2008) mention that most Canadians speak the General type in main areas like Victoria and Vancouver to the west to Toronto. Ottawa and Montreal have the English-speaking minority in the east. It seems that Canadian English is similar to the English that is used in the Western area of the United States, but not completely the same.

I would thus like to describe the characteristics of “General Canadian” a little. Firstly, Trudgill & Hannah (2008) said the most distinctive feature of Canadian English is that Canadians often use “eh?” at the end of the interrogative sentence. Trudgill and Hannah (2008) give this example: “You were walking in the park eh?” This indicates agreement.

A second feature, unlike in General American English, Canadian English has /ou/ sound in words such as “borrow” and “sorry” (Trudgill & Hannah 2008).

Thirdly, Trudgill and Hannah (2008) said that Canadian English is “rhotic” as is American English, so when Canadians say words like “car” or “buyer”, the “r” sound is absolutely pronounced. This contrasts with the British “non-rhotic”.

**Maritime.** The next type is Maritime. According to Trudgill and Hannah, the linguistic history of this variety is very different from the rest of Canada. Nova Scotia struggled because of power between England and France in the 17th and 18th centuries. In 1749, Britain founded Halifax, Nova Scotia. Since then, French settlers called “Acadian” were forced to leave and new immigrants from the British Isles and New England came. Gaelic-speaking Scottish Highlanders settled in a number of areas, so there are still some Gaelic speakers now. Trudgill and Hannah (2008) explained that after the American War of Independence, approximately 35,000 American loyalists moved there and half of the population was formed by New Englanders. Then, Irish people arrived and settled nearby Halifax (Trudgill & Hannah 2008).
According to Trudgill and Hannah (2008), in 1758 Prince Edward Island was occupied by Britain. That’s why French-speaking settlers were forced to move away. Britain ceded the island in 1763. Most of population are former settlers. They were mainly Highland Scots, Ulster Scots, English and southern Irish (Trudgill & Hannah 2008).

In New Brunswick, from 1713 to 1755, Britain had taken over and had French-speaking American settlers expelled. Trudgill and Hannah (2008) mentioned that a number of American loyalists from New York came after the American War of Independence. It is said that the province is totally bilingual.

In some urban areas of the Maritime region, such as Halifax, the spoken language is not radically different from that of the rest of Canada, but it is different in rural areas, having a number of similarities with the English of Newfoundland and features which appear to owe to Irish or Scottish influence (Trudgill & Hannah 2008).

Newfoundland. The last type of Canadian English is Newfoundland. Trudgill and Hannah said that 95% of the population in Newfoundland are of British or Irish origin. The remainder of the people are French speaking. Newfoundland English is characterized by considerable social variation among North American English varieties (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008). A first impression about Newfoundland is that it “sounds Irish”, but actually it is not entirely so. Overall varieties seem to be the result of a mixture of southern Irish English and southwestern English. Trudgill and Hannah (2008) said that unlike in mainland Canada, Newfoundland still pronounces the distinct vowels of “cot” and “caught”.

Language in Quebec

Quebec is one of the famous provinces in Canada, because Quebec was colonized by France and 90% of the francophones (people who speak French) live there now. However, Yazu (2008) said that the language of Quebec has been changed by language contact between French and English.

English’s influence on French. Firstly, I would like to focus on English’s influence on French. Yazu (2008) explained this by distinguishing “borrowing” and “interference”. “Borrowing” means a part of the second language changed into the first language consciously. On the other hand, “interference” is opposite: it means changing unconsciously.

As for “borrowing”, using English words without changing the language is called a “simple loan”. For example, boss, brake, wiper (Yazu 2008). These are exactly the same as the English.

There is one other kind of borrowing. The spelling is changed to be like French. Yazu’s (2008) examples as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun</th>
<th>cocktail</th>
<th>coquetel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pudding</td>
<td>pouding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verb</td>
<td>to watch</td>
<td>watcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to check</td>
<td>checker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yazu (2008) also explained “interference”. Interference is divided into “calque” (an expression introduced into one language by translating it from another language) and “semantic loan shift”. In interference, the form of the English changes to be like French, so that one can say it easily in French. It seems that the word is mixed English and French. Yazu (2008) provides the following example:

eleveteur (for “elevator”, Eng.) ascenseur (Fr.)
Influence of French on English. Secondly, I would like to write about the influence of French on English. Yazu (2008) mentioned that English in Quebec mixes the meanings French and English. For instance, people in Quebec use “population” for what is otherwise called “the public” because of French’s influence.

In this way, we can see the language contact of French and English in Quebec, but this is only one part of Canada (Yazu 2008).

Influence from American and British English

I would like to write about American and British English, because when I compare American and British English to Canadian English, it is easier to understand if I know the differences between American and British English.

Svartvik and Leech (2006) said that there are about 4000 different words in common speech in one country from the other. In the vocabulary of America and Britain there are over 600,000 different words in the latest version of the Oxford English Dictionary. Svartvik and Leech (2006) cited examples of differences between American and British English words. For example, cookies and biscuits have a different meaning. In Britain, biscuits are eaten as a snack like chocolate biscuits. The forms are small, flat, thick pieces of pastry. On the other hand, in America biscuits are not used as snacks. They are eaten as little breakfast breads and part of a meal. In this way, there are words that can cause misunderstanding to occur between American and British words. Moreover, in spelling, there are differences between the two Englishes.

The following examples are from Svartvik and Leech (2006, pp. 154-155):

In words of more than one syllable ending in –our in British, American English omits the u:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[AmE]</th>
<th>[BrE]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>behavior</td>
<td>behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>color</td>
<td>colour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In words like theater, -er in AmE is often equivalent to –re in BrE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[AmE]</th>
<th>[BrE]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>center</td>
<td>centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liter</td>
<td>litre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>theater</td>
<td>theatre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In verbs like travel (ending with an unstressed syllable vowel + consonant) the British double the final consonant before –ing and –ed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[AmE]</th>
<th>[BrE]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>canceling</td>
<td>cancelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traveling</td>
<td>travelling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for grammar, American and British have almost the same grammar with the same inventory of forms, but one example of a difference in grammar between American and British English is the American word “gotten”, as the past participle of “get”. British uses “got” like “she is got into trouble (Svartvik & Leech 2006).
Svartvik and Leech (2006) also explained other differences in meaning and in grammatical construction. For example, time expressions:

- The tour lasted from May through August. [AmE]
- The tour lasted from May to August. [BrE]

(Svartvik & Leech 2006, p.167)

In the case of American English, the meaning is clear, because it is shown “up to and including”. On the other hand, in British, you do not know whether August is included.

Here are more examples of grammatical differences between American and British English:

In American English the past tense rather than the perfect can be used for the recent past; American English often omits the “have” here, but British prefers the perfect:

- Did you eat yet? [AmE]
- Have you eaten yet? [BrE]

Prepositions are also sometimes used differently in American English and British English. “Out” and “off of” are commonly used differently in American and British English.

In addition, according to Svartvik and Leech (2006), it is said that British often uses adjective forms as adverbs compared to American:

- [AmE] They pay them pretty well.
- [BrE] They pay them pretty good.
- [AmE] You will have to speak slowly.
- [BrE] You will have to speak slow.

(Svartvik & Leech 2006, p.168)

The left-hand examples show a standard use of adverbs like “well”, while the grammar of Britain is on the right. Svartvik and Leech (2006) explained that there is thus a little bit of difference between American and British; however patterns of Britain are relatively accepted in America.

**American and British pronunciation.** Svartvik and Leech (2006) mentioned that rhotic is the accent with the “r” sound after vowels. In general, American is rhotic, while British is non-rhotic. In standard American, “r” is always pronounced in all positions.

Svartvik and Leech (2006) concluded that in American English and British English spelling and grammar are very similar. Vocabulary is different in some areas, but almost the same. Lastly, pronunciation is definitely different from each other.

**Principal features of Canadian English**

According to Svartvik and Leech (2006), most British people think that Canadian English is like American, but from the perspective of Americans, some specific Canadian accents are identified as British accents. Interestingly, Canadians think their language does not belong to either of them. Svartvik and Leech (2006) mentioned that much Canadian pronunciation is similar to American English, but all of pronunciation is not. It is said that Canadian English is a mixture of a larger entity
and mainly Northern American English (Svartvik & Leech 2006). Svartvik and Leech (2006) showed some main ways in which Canadian pronunciation is similar to the pronunciation of General American English.

Firstly, both Canadians and Americans pronounce /r/ sound in words like “higher” and heard. It is known as “rhotic”. Second, in the case of casual speech, /t/ is pronounced like /d/, so “butter” is like “budder” in American and Canadian pronunciation. /t/ sound is also deleted after /n/ sound. For example, the city of “Toronto” in Canada is said to sound like “Toronna”. Thirdly, pairs of the words like “cot” and “caught”, “awful” and “offal”, “collar” and “caller” are pronounced with the same /a/ (Svartvik & Leech 2006, p. 96). Lastly, Canadians and Americans pronounce -ory (laboratory) or -ary (secretary) separately, as two syllables each, while British pronounce them as one syllable.

These are similarities of pronunciation between Americana and Canadian. Next, I would like to write about how Canadian pronunciation is different from general American pronunciation by reference to Svartvik and Leech (2006).

Firstly, most Canadians pronounce the letter “z” as /zed/, not /ziː/. This “z” is the same as British. Second of all, there are words for which Canadians use the pronunciation of either American or British. For example, news /nuːz/ or /njuːz/, schedule /skedjuːl/ or /shedjuːl/ (Svartvik & Leech 2006, p. 96).

Lastly, there is a special characteristic of Canadian pronunciation called “Canadian raising”, which occurs in diphthongs before consonants (Svartvik & Leech 2006). “This means that out rhymes approximately with boat (if you talk British English). When a Canadian says “out” and “about” it may sound like oat and a boat! Interestingly, Canadian raising (although thought to be a more recent development) reinstates two characteristic diphthongs of Shakespearean English.” (Svartvik & Leech 2006, p. 96).

Thus, as for pronunciation, there are both of similarities and differences in Canadian English and general American English.

Center or Centre? Svartvik and Leech (2006) discussed not only Canadian pronunciation, but also Canadian spelling. There are spellings from both America and British English in Canada. For example, following Svartvik and Leech (2006), “check” and “cheque”, “curb” and “kerb”, “tire” and “tyre”. These words are used in Canada. Svartvik and Leech (2006) stated that American spelling is commonly used in newspapers, while British spelling is often written in textbooks.

Wrench or spanner? In the case of vocabulary as well, Canadian people may choose some words which are either American or British. Svartvik and Leech (2006) give examples: American uses “billboard”, but British uses “hoarding”. Canadians are divided in their usage of the vocabulary.

Boberg (2010) claims that Canadian English is much closer to American English than British English, but that Canadian English is not simply a mixture of American and British. Specific Canadian words do exist (Tanaka & Tanaka 2012).

Boberg (2010) illustrated the specific Canadian words by comparing vocabulary from each of Canada, the USA and Britain. The following words have the same meanings:
Boberg (2010) took this from a Canadian television series, “Corner Gas”:

Davis: Hey Brent! Who’s your favorite football team?
Brent: The Riders: duh!
Davis: No, not Canadian football.
Brent: Oh, then the, uh, Minnesota Vikings.
Davis: No, out on the pitch!
Brent: Whaddaya mean, soccer? Well then it’s a tie between the Manchester
I don’t give a craps and the London Not a real sports.

He writes as follows:

The dialog is a humorous illustration not only of the ambiguity of the term football, which Brent
naturally interprets in its North American sense, but also of the strongly North American cultural
orientation of most native Canadians. (Boberg 2010, pp. 110-111)

Boberg (2010) also explains some expressions, phrases and discourse particles that are typically
Canadian. Canadians often use “how’s it goin’? roughly equivalent to the American “how ya doin’?”.
As one can see, it seems Canadian English is more casual than American English in greetings.

Another specific Canadian phrase is “give’er”. It means making a sincere and enthusiastic effort at
something, possibly a shortening of “give’er what you got”, or give’er your best shot, and so on
(Boberg 2010). Boberg gave an example of this expression: “He was just given’ er”, which means he
was going full out or trying his hardest.

Boberg (2010) furthermore noted grammatical differences and gave examples. For example,
firstly, “committee” and “council” are used with a plural verb in British; however, in the case of
American and Canadian, with a singular.

Second, when British people make up for the lack of number distinction in the second person, they
use “you lot”. However, Americans and Canadians say “you guys” or “you all”.

Thirdly, Boberg (2010) said that when British use a sensory verb like “look”, “seem” or “sound”,
they usually use it directly. On the other hand, Americans and Canadians use expressions such as
“seem like” or “look like”.

Lastly, there is a different way to use double objective verbs like “give”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[Canadian]</th>
<th>[American]</th>
<th>[British]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bachelor apartment</td>
<td>studio apartment</td>
<td>studio flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bank machine</td>
<td>ATM</td>
<td>cash dispenser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>couch</td>
<td>couch</td>
<td>settee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>runners</td>
<td>sneakers</td>
<td>trainers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wash room</td>
<td>restroom</td>
<td>loo or lavatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grade one</td>
<td>first grade</td>
<td>first form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parkade</td>
<td>parking garage</td>
<td>car park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Boberg 2010, p. 245)
“I gave it you yesterday” for “I gave you the book yesterday.”
“Throw it me” for “throw me the ball”.  [BrE]

“I gave you it yesterday” or “I gave it to you yesterday.”
“Throw me it” or “Throw it to me.”  [AmE]

(Boberg 2010, p. 163)

In this way, Boberg (2010) suggested that in grammar Canadian is similar to American English.
Boberg (2010) also mentioned the Canadian characteristic “eh?” as did Trudgill and Hannah (2008).
It is said “this is the best known nationally characteristic phrase in Canadian English, having reached status of a stereotype among Americans” (Boberg, 2010, p. 122). Boberg (2010) explained how to use “eh?” in Canada, and its different functions:

(Boberg 2010, p. 122)

I also found examples including “eh?” on the Internet (Gold 2004). “Eh?” is used in almost every region in Canada, so I would like to analyze when and how Canadians use this expression through the examples from Gold (2004):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF EH</th>
<th>SAMPLE SENTENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Statement of opinion</td>
<td>Nice day, eh?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Statement of fact</td>
<td>It goes over here, eh?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Commands</td>
<td>Open the window, eh?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Exclamations</td>
<td>Think about it, eh?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Questions</td>
<td>What a game, eh?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. To mean ‘pardon?’</td>
<td>What are they trying to do, eh?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. In fixed expression</td>
<td>Thanks, eh?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I know, eh?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Insults</td>
<td>You are real snob, eh?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Accusations</td>
<td>You took the last piece, eh?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Telling a story [the narrative eh]</td>
<td>This guy is up on the 27th floor, eh? Then he gets out on the ledge, eh…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this way, there are many meanings of Canadian “Eh?” and it is used in various occasions in daily life.
Regional variation. Boberg (2010) said that vocabulary that used by Canadian is different in each region. Here are some examples of regional variation:
Standard set of pizza topping: the works, all-dressed, deluxe.
House in country for summer weekends: cottage, cabin, chalet, the lake.
Athletic shoes worn as casual attire: running shoes, sneakers, runners.
Bag with shoulder straps for students’ books: backpack, knapsack, book bag.
Place where you pay for something in a store: cashier, check-out, cash, register.
Carbonated beverage: pop, soft drink, coke, soda

(Boberg 2010, p. 171)

Research

Questionnaire: Attitudes toward Canadian English

I conducted my survey about Canadian English by asking friends to respond, and also in front of Himeji castle in Hyogo on November 22 and 23. The reason why I chose this place is that tourists from all over world tend to come here every year. I asked English speakers who were Canadian, American and British, and I limited my survey to native speakers and who were not immigrants to those countries. My survey included thirty participants (10 per country).

I wanted to know “What do American and British people think about Canadian English?” and “How do Canadian people view their own English?” I had two varieties of the questionnaire. One version was for Canadians, the other for Americans and British.

My expectation was that Canadian people would think that Canadian English is similar to American English, but not completely. I mean that there are some British spellings in Canada, so they may think that only the spelling is similar to British. On the other hand, I assumed American people would think Canadian English is almost the same as American. Especially, they would think Canadian pronunciation is similar to American. However, British may think Canadian English is independent from both of them, because British accents are very different from American English, so it may easy to notice the specific Canadian characteristics. British, I hypothesized, might think Canadian English is more casual than British. However, I couldn’t say the reason for this definitely. I wanted to find out more clearly what Canadian, American and British thought about Canadian English. The format and questions on the questionnaire were as follows:

This questionnaire is only for my graduation thesis. Thank you for your cooperation in advance.

For Canadian
(Please circle your answer and give an example, if you can.)

1: Do you think Canadian English is
(a) similar to American English
(b) similar to British English
(c) independent from both American & British English
(d) other ____________________________

(Boberg 2010, p. 171)
2: In what respects do you think Canadian English is independent?
(a) Pronunciation ______________________ (give an example if you can)
(b) Grammar ________________________________
(c) Vocabulary __________________________________________________________
(d) Spelling _____________________________________________________________
(e) Other___________________________________________________________________

3: Which Englishes in America and British can you hear easily?
(a) American
(b) British
(c) Both of them

4: What do you think is a characteristic of Canadian English? (for example, casual, calm, etc)
_______________________________________________________________________

5: (1) In the future, Canadian English will
(a) be more similar to American
(b) be more similar to British
(c) no change
(d) other__________________________

(2) Why do you think so?

The questionnaire for American and British was the same for questions 1, 2 and 5, but some parts were a little bit different.

**For American and British**

Are you
(a) American
(b) British

1: Do you think Canadian English is
(e) similar to American English
(f) similar to British English
(g) independent from both American & British English
(h) other______________________________________________

2: In what respects do you think Canadian English is independent?
(f) Pronunciation ______________________________ (give an example if you can)
(g) Grammar _______________________________________
(h) Vocabulary________________________________________
(i) Spelling____________________________________________
(j) Other______________________________________________
3: How often do you notice the difference between Canadian English and your English, when you talk with Canadians?
   (a) At all times
   (b) Often
   (c) Sometimes
   (d) Never

4: What do you think about Canadian English compared to your English? (for example, more casual, more calm, etc.)

5: (1) In the future, Canadian English will
   (a) be more similar to American
   (b) be more similar to British
   (c) no change
   (d) other______________________________________________________________

   (2) Why do you think so?

Results

Canadian. I would first like to analyze the Canadian answers to each of the questions, then, I will compare the American and British responses. The result of question 1 is that 80% of Canadian participants indicated that they think Canadian English is similar to American English. The linguist Boberg (2010) also mentioned this as a general stereotype. However, 20% people answered that Canadian English is independent from both American and British English. These people said Canadian English is much closer to American than British at first glance, but that there are actually many differences specific to Canadian language.

The answers for question 2 suggested which parts of Canadian English are independent. I asked this to people who answered “similar to American English” in question 1. Pronunciation received the largest number of responses. The examples provided by the Canadian participants are “about”, “out” and “house”. They explained that these words (specifically the “ou” sound) are pronounced very differently than in other Englishes. In addition, this pronunciation is strong by area in Canada. Other examples for pronunciation are “Eh?” and “z” (letter) sound. I learned that “Eh?” is a specific Canadian word, because I often heard it when I stayed in Canada. “Z” sound is one that I didn’t know. Americans pronounce the letter like “zee”. On the other hand, Canadians say it as “zed”. The American sound has a little bit longer accent. The second most common response was vocabulary, such as “rail way” and “wash room”. The third was spelling. Unfortunately, no participants gave examples of spelling. The last one was grammar at 0%.

Surprisingly, I found that it is easy for 80% of participants to understand both American and British English through question 3. The result of question 1, “similar to American English”, was the highest percentage, but question 3 shows that this result regarding similarity is not related to the easiness or difficulty of listening to American and British.

The Canadian participants provided various answers for question 4. I asked them to write in their
own words, so I have extracted some of their main ideas about the characteristics of Canadian English. Firstly, one of the answers was that “Canadian English is easy to hear”, the reason being that there is no strong accent in Canadian English in general compared to other varieties of English. The second most common response was “It is soft”. This would seem to include both Canadian accents and speed of speaking. Three of the Canadians told me that the pace of Canadian speaking is a little bit slower than American or British. The third most common answer was that it is “neutral”. Some people said that there is no big specific characteristic of the Canadian language, if one compared it to the countries which have strong accents like Australia, Republic of Fiji, New Zealand, and so on. Lastly, the most common answer is that 40% of participants answered “casual”. Therefore, Canadian English seems to have a characteristic of being friendly rather than calm or too formal, through the answers for question 4.

The answers for question 5 suggest what Canadians think about the state of their language in the future. 70% of the Canadian participants said that Canadian English will be more similar to American English in the future. The most common reason for this answer was that American influence in Canada is stronger than British. For example, American media (music, movies, TV, Internet, etc.) is quite common in Canada and will likely influence how young people speak. The second reason for this answer is that America is close to Canada, so it is inevitable for Canadian English and culture to be more similar to American. The next opinion for question 5 is “no change in the future”, because language accents in various countries do not tend to change over the years. No one answered “will be more similar to British”. Geographic relation and American media appear to be the main influences on Canadian English from other countries.

American and British. I would now like to compare the American answers and British answers, which clearly showed different ideas about Canadian English.

In answering question 1, 100% of Americans said that Canadian English is similar to American English. However, for British people this was not the same. 50% of people said “similar to American” and 40% of them answered Canadian is independent from both of British and American. This result suggests that British think Canadian English is very different from their own English, and understand that there are specific Canadian words.

Answers for question 2 were a little bit different for Americans and British. 50% of Americans said that pronunciation is independent. For example, Canadians pronounced “about” like “aboot”. “Eh” was also mentioned as in the Canadian answers. 30% of the people answered “spelling”. Canadians sometimes change the spelling at the end of a verb or other vocabulary. For instance, when they write “practice” and “license”, they change the ends of words like “practise” or “license”. This is specific to Canadian words. In addition to that, using aspects of both American and British spelling makes them independent from other countries. On the other hand, 40% of British participants said “vocabulary”. 30% of people answered “pronunciation” and “grammar”. Lastly, spelling was 10%. The examples that British wrote in the questionnaire were almost the same as the Americans.

I found that most people from both of the US and Britain thought, if anything, that Canadian English was mainly similar to American, but that there were specific Canadian words in some parts of Canada, and expressed this through questions 1 and 2. Question 3 is not same as on the Canadian version. Among American answer, 80% of American participants said that “they sometimes notice the difference between their English and Canadian”. It seems Americans don’t notice the difference frequently. However, 100% of British participants said that they notice the difference at all times. Trudgill and Hannah (2008) mentioned that the way of Canadian speaking is absolutely close to
American English in general, so this might account for this result.

In question 4, there are very big differences between American and British. 50% of American participants said that Canadian English is more polite than American. The next most common answers were “more casual” and “rather similar”. Both of them were mentioned by 20% of Americans. The remaining 10% of people answered “more calm”. I asked the people who answered about politeness which parts of Canadian English were more polite. They said that especially, grammar is used accurately by Canadians, but Americans often abbreviate sentences. They also suggested that Americans don’t pronounce words clearly like Canadians. Therefore, many participants said “more polite”. In contrast with Americans, 80% of British participants said that Canadian is “more casual than British.” They said the way of Canadian speaking, including accents, is very friendly. In addition to that, because Canadian English is similar to American, they felt that there was more slang in Canada than in Britain.

Among answers for question 5, 90% of Americans said that Canadian English will become more similar to American English, parallel to the Canadian responses. No one answered “more similar to British.” The reasons for these opinions were “media influence from America” and “Canada is closer to America”. These opinions are similar to the results from the Canadian respondents. Most Americans also thought that there will be more interaction with America in the future. On the other hand, 70% of British participants said “be more similar to America” and 30% of people answered “no change”. The most common reason for “be more similar to America” was that there was a lot of media from America in Canada. The reason for “no change” was that even if Canada is influenced by culture or media in the future, language will not change so simply. Thus, the results of question 5 were similar for American and British respondents.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, I found that most Canadians think Canadian English is similar to American English. In the same way, most Americans and British think that Canadian English is similar to American English. However, compared to America, some of the British people think Canadian English is independent from American and British.

The most common opinions about the question “which parts of Canadian English are independent” were “pronunciation” and “vocabulary”. Especially, “Eh?”, which means agreement, and pronunciation “aboot” were suggested as Canadian specific phrases by the English speakers. In spelling, changing the letters in some words from “—ice” to “—ise” is pointed out as a definitely Canadian characteristic. I also found that British and American participants also understood some specific Canadian expressions through question 2.

Although Canadian English is similar to American English, most Canadians indicated that they can listen to and understand both of American and British English easily, so this is not affected by the differences in pronunciation and vocabulary. Most Americans don’t often notice the differences between Canadian English and American English, just “sometimes”. However, British seem to notice it at all the time. This must be because the pronunciation of Canadian is closer to American.

Impressions of Canadian English are very different among English speakers as shown in my research. Firstly, Canadian participants think about Canadian English as casual and having a soft accent, which includes the speed of speech. Similarly, British think about it as more casual than British. Both of them think that Canadian accents are very friendly on the whole. Interestingly, the
answers of American participants were not the same. Most Americans think about Canadian English as more polite than American English. The common reason is Americans don’t pronounce words as clearly. Canada is close to the US geographically and the pronunciation is also similar, but Americans think Canadian English must be very different from their English. In this way, there is a big difference in answers to the question 4 between Americans and British.

Most Canadian, American and British participants think that Canadian English will become even more similar to American English in the future, similar to the answers to 1. The most common reason for this is that everything in Canada is influenced heavily by America, such as the Internet, TV, video and so on. Almost all participants think that in the future Canada will have more interaction with the US. Another main reason is that Canada is geographically close to America.

The geographic factor would seem to be one of the major influences on the language of the country. Many people around the world say that Canadian English is the same as American. Surely, in many parts of Canada, the English may be nearly the same as American English, but in fact, specific Canadian characteristic do exist. Moreover, American and British people recognize how Canadian English is different from their English. I would like to say that Canada is an awesome country, because there are mixtures of the language or culture from other countries including America, Britain and France. Furthermore, there is an increasing number of immigrants from all over the world, such as from Asia and Europe, so minority languages are likely to increase. A very interesting question is how Canadian English will change in the future and coexist with future languages.

Reference List