



Background

- People often talk about Canadian English as not really being distinctive or interesting.
- There are a number of books that list hundreds of terms unique to Canada. These terms are called “Canadianisms” and are known and used by most Canadians.

Purpose

- To investigate whether Canadian English has unique lexical features.

Hypotheses

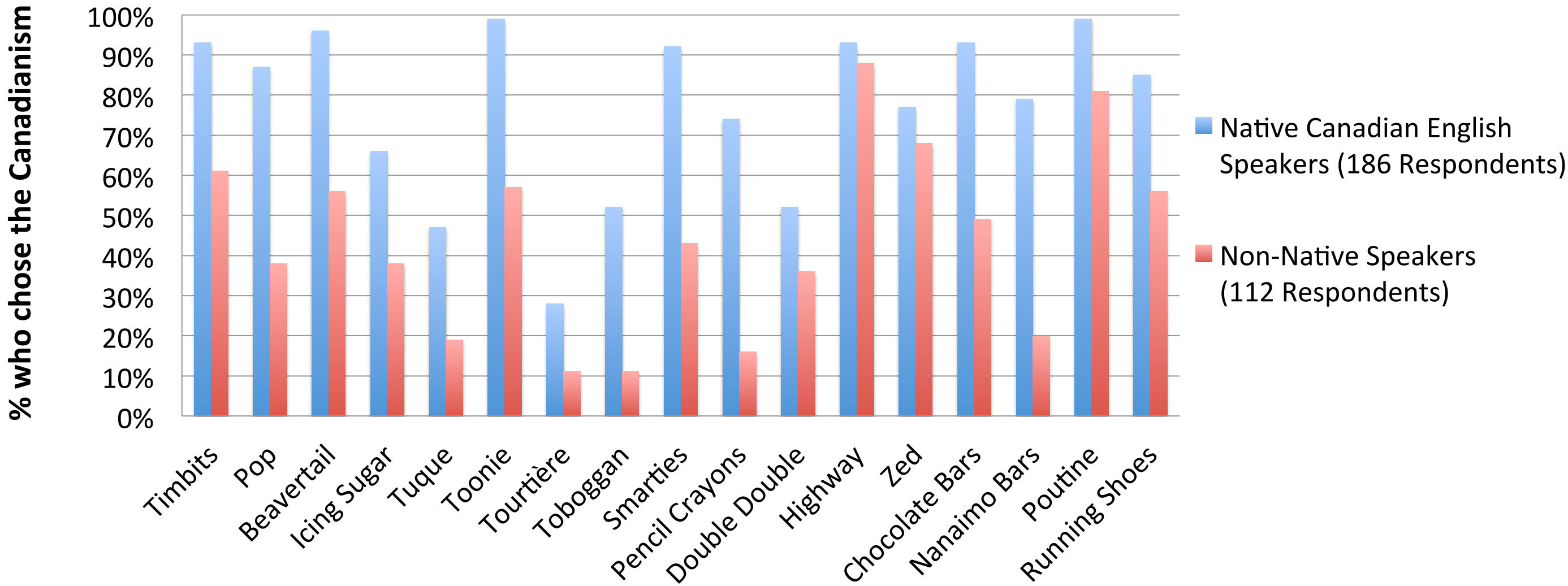
1. Native Canadian English speakers will be able to identify more Canadianisms than non-native speakers (including non-native English speakers and native English speakers of another variety).
2. Of these non-native speakers, the longer a respondent born outside of Canada has been in Canada, the more Canadianisms he/she will identify correctly.
3. Native Canadian English speakers will identify more Canadianisms than native American English or British English speakers.

Methodology

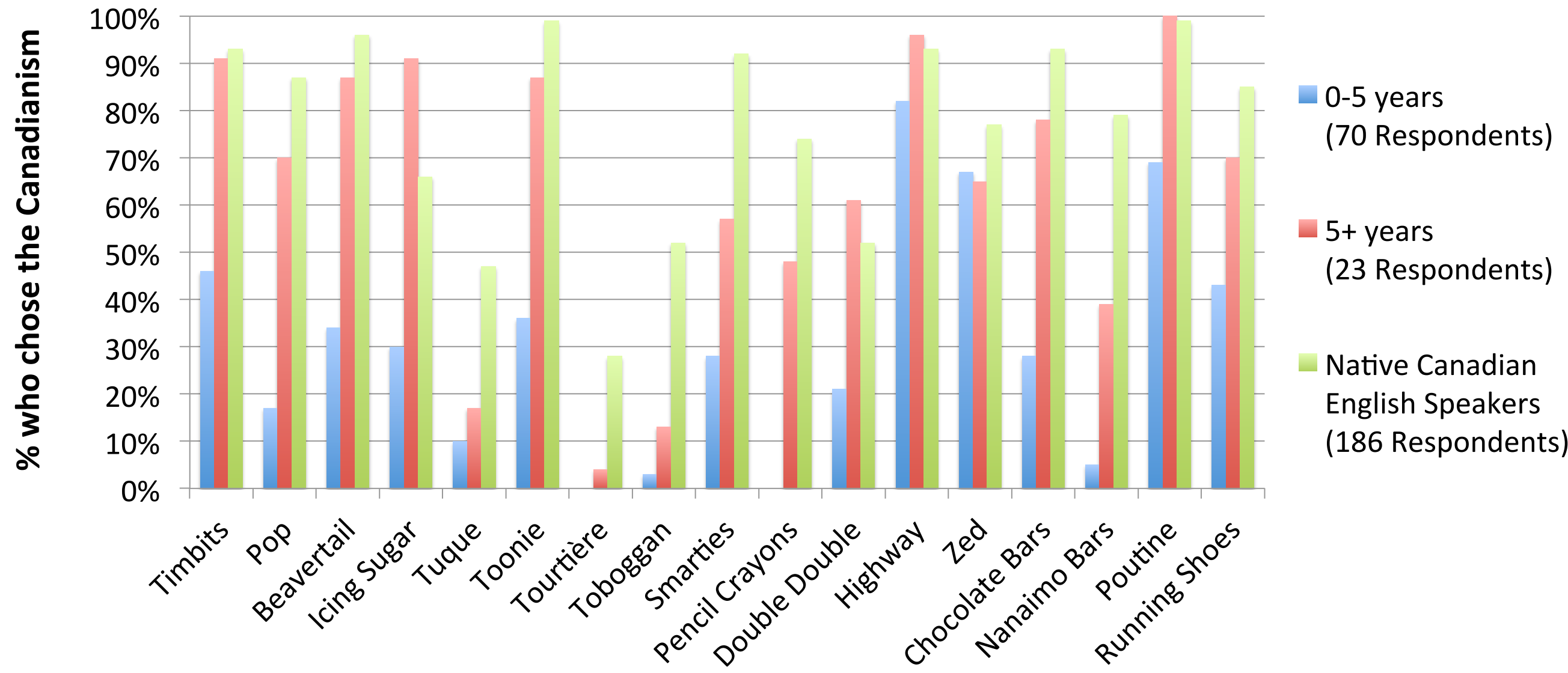
- Twenty Canadianisms were selected from three book sources that outlined Canadianisms and their origins (shown in References).
- Surveys were distributed online to both native Canadian and International individuals via Facebook, email, and the Queen’s University International Centre student list serve.
- Respondents include people born in Canada, as well as people born in Brazil, UK, Taiwan, India, Mexico City, USA, China, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Romania, Sri Lanka, Scotland and more.
- Survey questions asked respondents to either:
(1) Look at and identify a picture, or,
(2) Read a description and pick a corresponding term
(See examples in Survey Samples).

Results

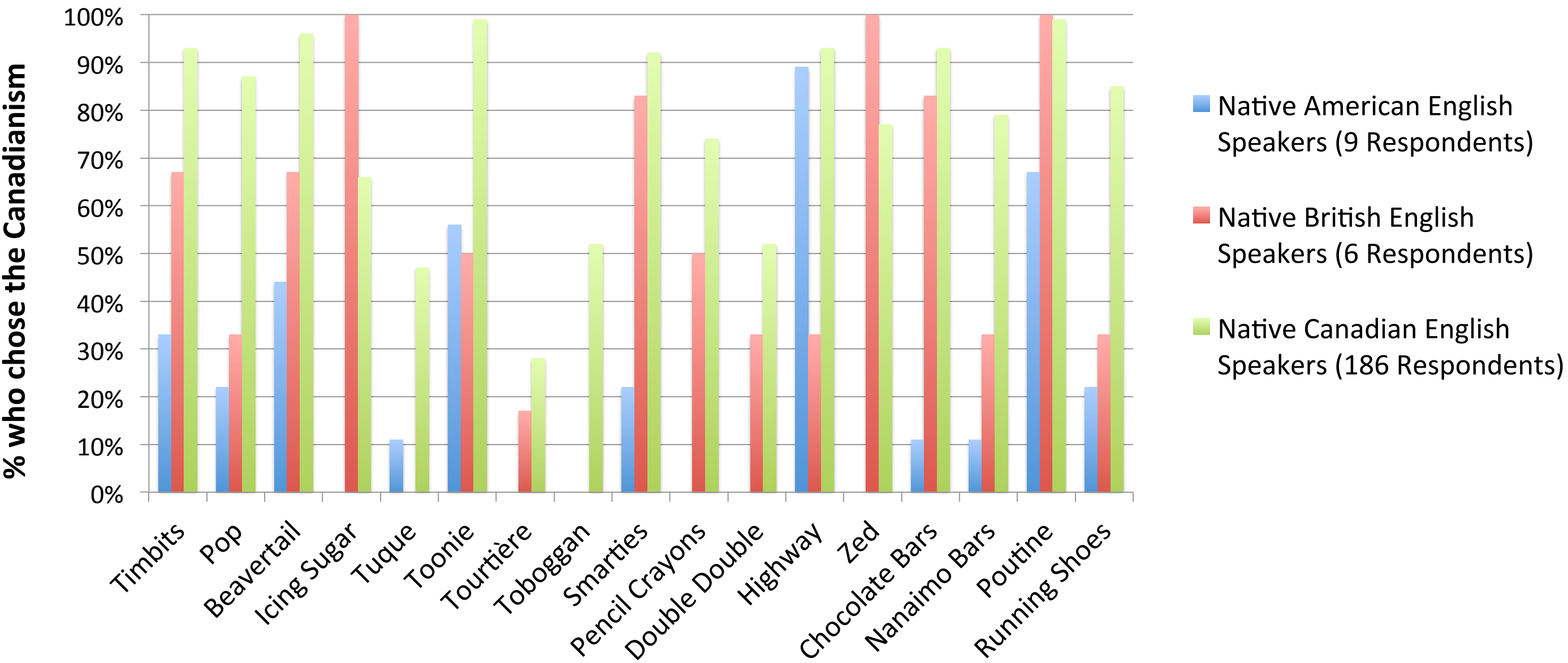
Graph 1.0: Canadian Native English Speakers vs. Non-Native Speakers



Graph 2.0: Non-Canadian Respondents and time spent in Canada



Graph 3.0: American vs. British vs. Canadian English



Survey Samples

Question 1.



1. What do you call the item in the picture above?

2. What term would you use for the article of clothing you wear on your head when it gets cold?

- ☐ Hat
- ☐ Tuque
- ☐ Knit cap
- ☐ Beanie
- ☐ Stocking cap
- ☐ Bobcap
- ☐ Other:

Discussion/Conclusion

- All hypotheses were confirmed.
- As hypothesized, native Canadian English speakers identified the most Canadianisms (see Graph 1.0).
- For the most part, the longer a person born outside of Canada has been in Canada, the more Canadianisms they chose correctly (see Graph 2.0).
- In general, native Canadian English speakers identified more Canadianisms than British and American respondents (see Graph 3.0).
- However, there was a trend that native British English speakers’ results were more similar to Canadians than native American English speakers. (Graph 3.0).
- Can conclude that these terms are unique Canadian English features.

Interesting Survey Responses

- **Canadianism: Timbits**
Responses: berries, buns, squirrel balls, sweet balls...
- **Canadianism: Beavertail**
Responses: schnitzel, pancake, panned chicken...
- **Canadianism: Toboggan**
Responses: sledge, mouse trap, slider, trineo...

References

Barber, K. *Only in Canada, You Say: A Treasury of Canadian Language*. Oxford University Press. Don Mills, 2008. Print.

Casselman, B. *Canadian Words & Sayings*. Toronto: McArthur, 2006. Print.

Tefler, G. *Dictionary of Canadianisms: How to Speak Canadian, Eh!*. Folklore Publishing: Canada, 2009. Print.