



# Escargot, Sushi, Samosas: Loanwords in Canadian English

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## Introduction

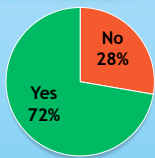
### Purpose:

- To survey native Canadian English (C.E.) speakers and non-native English speakers to compare comprehension and use of international lexical items

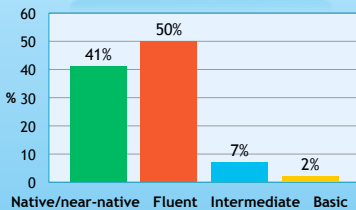
### Hypotheses:

- Native Canadian English speakers will correctly define more loanwords than non-native speakers.
- Native Canadian English speakers will use loanwords more frequently than non-native speakers.

#### Is English your native language?



#### Fluency of Non-native Speakers



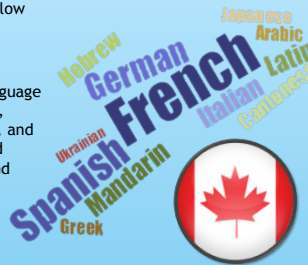
## Survey

### Participant information:

- 166 total participants between the ages of 18-65, with a mean age of 21
- 72% are female, 28% are male, and 1% identified as other
- 120 participants reported English as a first language, and 46 reported a native language other than English
- Participants include native speakers of 15 different languages other than English, and non-native speakers of an additional 10 languages
- The languages most commonly spoken or studied by participants are represented in the word cloud below

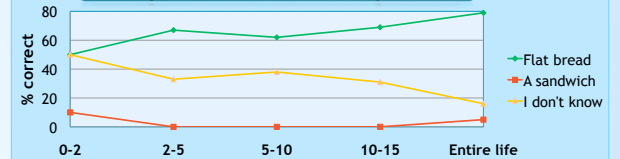
### Methods:

- Selected 16 loanwords from 8 language families (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish); many were food-related
- Surveyed the recognition, use, and comprehension of international lexical items between native C.E. and non-native speakers
- Examined language proficiency and time spent living in Canada



## Loanword Comprehension

### Meaning of 'Focaccia' vs. Years Living in Canada



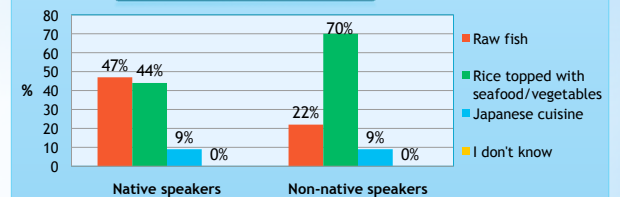
- % of correct loanword identification increases, and % of 'I don't know' decreases with years spent living in Canada. Loanword comprehension could result from increased exposure to multiculturalism in Canada

## Semantic Shift

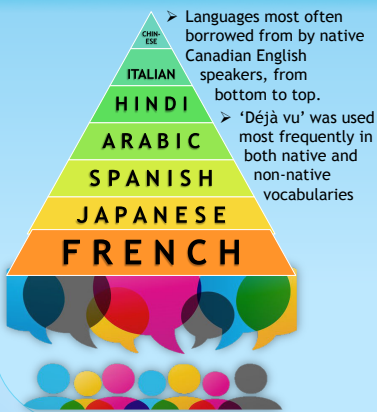
### What exactly is sushi, anyway?

- Native C.E. speakers correctly defined *sushi* only 44% of the time (and 94% of them use it), while non-native speakers did so 70% of the time
- The correct definition was chosen by all native Japanese speakers (the word's language of origin), all native English speakers who speak or study Japanese, all Mandarin speakers, and over half of Cantonese speakers
- We hypothesize that the number of incorrect responses made by native C.E. speakers is due to semantic shift, and that the meaning of the word has narrowed from 'rice topped with seafood or vegetables' to 'raw fish'

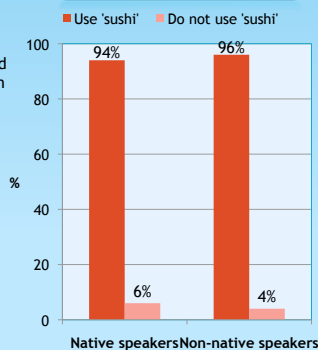
### What does the word 'sushi' mean?



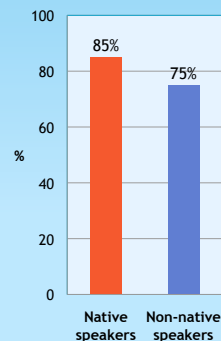
## Results



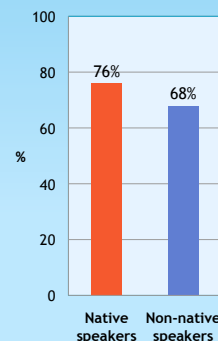
### Use of the Word 'Sushi'



### 1. Mean Percentage of Correct Loanword Definitions



### 2. Mean Percentage of Loanword Use



## Conclusion

- Hypothesis 1** was proven correct. On average, native speakers of C.E. correctly defined loanwords 85% of the time, and non-native English speakers chose the correct definition 75% of the time
- Hypothesis 2** was also proven. Based on the average across all loanwords, native Canadian English speakers reported more frequent usage than non-native speakers, with rates at 76% and 68%, respectively
- Finally, our findings on loanword usage and comprehension support the idea of a growing international lexicon in Canadian English