

REVIEW of “Canadian language attitudes from “coast to coast to coast”: on the pluricentricity of English in North America”

Summary

This is an excellent paper, eminently worth publishing, with its wide-ranging research on the attitudes and perceptions of many kinds of Canadian speakers to their national variety. It situates the paper effectively by way of introduction to two previous Canadian studies, and builds on them with its own thorough investigation of attitudinal variation toward Canadian English, embracing regional and sociolinguistic diversity within Canada. It offers unprecedented insights into the views of mono- and multilingual speakers of a non-dominant language within the pluricentric paradigm. The role of school education in perpetuating an unfocused notion of “standard language” is pertinent to the Australian scene. The paper balances statistical information with interpretive discussion, offering a wealth of detail for the extended conclusion – an essay in itself.

Detailed comments:

- Great to have such a large and geographically spread population in the survey (from coast to coast to coast)
- Query reference to “North America” in the title, since that term geographically-speaking includes “Canada, the US, Mexico and the countries of Central America” in the OED definition. If the intention is simply to refer to just Canada and the US, it’s still not ideal, since there’s little discussion of AmE itself in the paper. Could the title be adjusted to the “pluricentricity of Canadian English?”
- Many interesting discriminations, e.g. in attitudinal differences between monolingual and multilingual speakers, and between binary and non-binary users of Canadian English.
- Very interesting table of different responses to the question of what is “Standard Canadian English”? A question that needs to be taken up by education departments and teacher-trainers.
- Writing style is clear and purposeful
- The only typo I noticed was in the very last sentence, where “to be see” has lost its “n”. If there were other typos they slipped under my radar.