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## **ROOTED IN MYTH? SCOTLAND'S LANGUAGES IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY NORTH-AMERICAN JOURNALS**

Throughout the nineteenth century, journals, magazines, books and the popular press more in general played a very important part in the popularization of scientific contents – see Dossena (2016). In addition, such materials were invaluable for the dissemination of knowledge concerning literature, history and cultural issues. Circulating libraries, inexpensive books and even broadsides were sources of information among a readership whose level of schooling was not always very high. Similarly, readers outside Britain could employ the same kind of documents to expand their knowledge of topics that pertained to “the Auld Country”, regardless of their status as recent immigrants or as people who had already begun to develop a more distant relationship with the land of their ancestors, but who were still interested in its cultural background and indeed wished to retain links with it, so as to enhance or preserve their sense of rootedness – see Dossena (2012).

Within this framework, it may be of interest to investigate if and how Scotland's languages were discussed in journals and other printed materials aiming to reach a wide audience in North America. The articles printed in both US and Canadian journals place themselves in the context of a relatively widespread interest in the origins of languages that pervaded Late Modern times: an interest that underpins the development of philological studies, certainly, but which on the other hand was also often tarnished by mythical interpretations of religious and literary presuppositions, especially as distance increased from original materials whether diachronically or geographically.

My presentation will aim to discuss to what extent such articles reflect well-established ideas or whether they have any innovative traits. While my approach will be mostly qualitative, key items will be the object of investigation in a critical discourse analytical perspective. Starting from an overview of the distribution of articles on Scotland's linguistic history in various journals, which may indicate how extensive the readers' interest was, and whether it concerned Scots more than Gaelic, or the other way round, I will then investigate the indebtedness of these articles to views of Scotland's past that could be traced to literary Sources. The discussion will centre on how such sources may have reinforced perceptions that were not necessarily true for the languages per se, but which instead were based on very popular (and carefully constructed) registers.

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Robert Dunbar (University of Edinburgh)

## **NOVA SCOTIAN GAELIC VARIETIES: MORE THAN FOSSILS**

Gaelic-speaking emigrants began arriving in what is now the Canadian province of Nova Scotia in 1773, and significant Highland migration to the province continued to the middle of the nineteenth century. This resulted in the creation of the largest and most enduring Gaelic-speaking communities in the world outside of Scotland, and in spite of precipitous language shift over the course of the twentieth century, there are still small numbers of native speakers in the province and, over the last fifteen years, more determined government-supported efforts to revitalise the language, resulting in apparent increases in the number of new speakers

Both group migration and chain migration were significant features of Gaelic migration to and settlement in Nova Scotia, resulting in the retention in Nova Scotia of dialect features originating in the districts of the Scottish Gàidhealtachd from which migrants originated. The presence of certain features associated with areas of the mainland Highlands, in particular, in which Gaelic has all but disappeared has often been commented on, and although there is evidence of considerable conservatism, I will also consider how the language has evolved, and has been impacted by contact with other varieties, especially North American English. I will conclude by considering a number of issues regarding dialect, register, and orthography which have emerged in the context of more recent language acquisition and broader language revitalisation efforts.

## THE ELUSIVE BUTTERFLY OF SCOTTISH STANDARD ENGLISH

It is universally acknowledged that Scottish Standard English (SSE) is one of several standard varieties within the pluricentric global language we call English (e.g. Giegerich 1992; McClure 1994). However, there is still a dearth of research on its non-phonological characteristics (cf. Corbett, McClure & Stuart-Smith 2003; McArthur 1979), although we certainly do not lack in checkable intuitions, as pointed out by Aitken (1979) and McClure (1994) several years ago now. In consequence, the oldest L1 standard variety of English out with England itself is at the same time perhaps the least documented one –a hard-to-grasp, only patchily understood ‘elusive butterfly’ of a variety.

I will briefly review the current situation and discuss some of the historical, political and linguistic reasons for the relatively weak position of SSE as a standard variety. In particular, I will argue that (1) there is a long-standing narrative of diachronic convergence on (or assimilation to) Southern British Standard English, which sets SSE apart from other L1 varieties; (2) within the Scots-English sociolinguistic continuum, SSE suffers from what I have elsewhere called ‘the Scots bias’ (Schützler, Gut & Fuchs 2017); and (3) pluricentricity is –at least implicitly –associated with fully autonomous nation states (cf. Dollinger 2019).

Against this background, I will sketch possible strategies for future research on SSE: Which features should we look out for, which contexts of language use should we inspect, and what resources can we use or do we need to develop to put SSE on an equal footing with other standard varieties of English world-wide?

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Ruggero Bianchin (University of Glasgow)

## **WILLIAM DUNBAR'S *TRETIS OF THE TUA MARIIT WEMEN AND THE WEDO* IN ITALIAN AND FRENCH TRANSLATIONS**

For medieval *makars* it was common practice to cross borders and find inspiration in Romance literatures' themes and plots: as documented extensively (Jack 1972; Corbett 1999; Calin 2014), medieval authors writing in Scots often translated or adapted works from the literatures of Latinate parts of Europe. Conversely, poems in Older Scots seem to be less well known to contemporary Continental Romance audiences, with several works still lacking any form of translation in modern Romance languages (as attested by both the BOSLIT and the catalogues of European National Libraries) thus preventing many potential readers unfamiliar with Older Scots from appreciating their riches.

This paper aims to present the results of a linguistic analysis of Italian (Barisone 1989) and French (Blanchot 2003) translations of William Dunbar's alliterative poem *Tretis of the Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo*. To date, Dunbar's *Tretis* is the only poem in the Older Scots poetical canon for which full translations in different Romance languages have been published, making it a significant case study. In this paper the main lexical, metrical and paratextual peculiarities of these translations will be examined to show the circulation and nature of the Romance 'voices' of Dunbar and Older Scots in parts of modern Latinate Europe.

This paper prefigures a wider research project that investigates, for the first time, all available Romance translations of Older Scots poetry. It will correlate the strategies adopted by the various translators with their cultural settings, offering new insights into cross-cultural stylistics and a distinctive contribution to Translation Studies.

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Kevin Buckley (Newcastle University)

## UNCOVERING LINGUISTIC LINEAGE THROUGH USING A CHARACTER N-GRAM BASED DIALECT CLASSIFIER

Quantitative approaches to analysing diachronic change have become popular in examining historical languages (Piotrowski 2012). Character N-grams, which are N-sized letter collocations, are a well-used method in analysing written text (Cavnar & Trenkle 1994) and have been used in language classification, such as in the program Textcat (Feinerer et al. 2013). Buckley and Vogel (2019) used profiles of character N-grams to examine change in historical English over time and to detect features of change across historical epochs.

This paper attempts to create a dialect classifier based on character N-gram features. The chosen linguistic context is Middle English (ME), using the Middle English Grammar Corpus (Stenroos et al. 2011). The classifier successfully delineates between a cluster of Northern regions and a cluster of Midlands and Southern areas.

Using this functioning text classifier, ME texts can be positioned in the regions they are most similar to. The analyses showed that texts of known origin are placed in a correct dialect cluster with high accuracy. Furthermore texts of Older Scots can be classified in relation to these ME regional clusters. Through this a quantitative confirmation that Older Scots is closest to Northern ME was found and that Older Scots texts are most similar to the northernmost counties of the Northern cluster.

Scots texts are analysed over time using the Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots (Meurman-Solin 1995) and it was found that texts become less close to Northern ME texts over time, signalling language change away from medieval forms. The features shared between Scots and Northern ME can be abstracted showing that this method can be a useful tool in examining the relationship between varieties of a language and the strength of the relationship between varieties over time.

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**‘[T]HE LARGEST MOUNTAN IN NORT AMERICA’: EVIDENCE OF ‘SOUTHERN’  
IRISH ENGLISH CONSONANTS IN ULSTER BEFORE 1900 IN THE *CORPUS OF  
IRISH ENGLISH CORRESPONDENCE*<sup>1</sup>**

To date, Irish English (IrE) lacks a broad, diachronic, and empirical investigation of its phonology, simply because the available material has been limited. In the *Corpus of Irish English Correspondence* (CORIECOR) – a collection of over 6,000 texts written between the late 1600s and 1940, nearly all of which are Irish emigrants’ letters – many non-standard features of IrE phonology can be found (McCafferty and Amador-Moreno in preparation). The closeness to speech found in many of the letters allows us to trace historical IrE phonology. For many letter writers, their unfamiliarity with the written medium is reflected in spelling variation, revealing features of the authors’ speech.

This paper presents key results from my doctoral thesis which attempted to catalogue phonetic representation of features of Northern Irish English (NIrE) in CORIECOR where each letter was individually examined for spelling variations and information about the author and place of origin. The paper takes an empirical look at phonetic representation of what we today would describe as Southern Irish English (SIrE) consonants and documents their diachronic, geographical, and social distribution in the historical province of Ulster between 1700–1940.

The documented consonant features include dental [t̪, d̪] or alveolar [t, d] stops for dental fricatives /θ, ð/ (TH-fortition), [t̪, d̪] for /t, d/ (T/D-dentalisation), voiceless alveolar ‘slit’ fricative [t̪] for post- and intervocalic /t/ (T/D-fricativisation), [j] for /s/ (S-palatalisation), and [t̪] for [t]. Results show that these ‘typical’ SIrE consonants in fact occurred much further north before the early twentieth century, especially around (recent) *Gaeltachtaí*, than where they are expected today, which could point to language contact and feature transfer between Irish and English.

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<sup>1</sup> Quote from a letter by George Anderson, New York to James Anderson, Co. Tyrone, 28.06.1833.

## TOWARDS A SPEECH ACT ANNOTATION SCHEME FOR 18<sup>TH</sup>-CENTURY SCOTTISH LETTERS

To date, little emphasis has been placed on researching the realisation of speech acts in historical regional varieties of English. Studies have shown, though, that e.g. early modern Scottish and English letter-writers manifest variation regarding their preferred speech act realisation strategies (Elweiler forthcoming a, forthcoming b). In order to facilitate historical cross-varietal speech act analyses, I plan to develop a speech act annotation scheme for 18th century Scottish, Irish and English letters. This paper presents a pilot project which aims to lay the groundwork for the development of this speech act annotation scheme by focussing on ca. 50 18th-century Scottish letters from *ScotsCorr*.

Speech acts are not used in isolation in letters, but occur in speech act sequences, so-called macro-speech acts (van Dijk 1980: 184), as the following example illustrates:

*I have so great a pen. in my head that I cannot wet on you this day. m<sup>r</sup> all Alexander McCloud hes. that peper. I was speking to you. of: & he hes promised. to give you a sight of it to morrowmorning. so both of you. will be plesed. to advice. what is proper to be don.* (Anne Mackenzie, 1700)

The letter-writer first apologises for not being able to wait for the addressee due to a headache and offers to make amends for this. This apology then serves as a grounder for the following request to consult with McCloud on how to proceed. Macro-speech acts may in turn be grouped into global speech acts, resulting in a hierarchical organisation of speech act sequences in an interactive scheme (Félix-Brasdefer 2014: 342–343). The goal of this pilot project is to devise and test an annotation scheme reflecting this hierarchical organisation. My talk will present an outline of the project and discuss, in particular, the selection of criteria for the categorisation of speech act sequences based on the preliminary analysis of a small range of letters.

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**Jamie Fairbairn (Banff Academy)  
and Claire Needler (Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen)**

## **SCOTS LANGUAGE TEACHING: THE TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL OF AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO HOME LANGUAGES**

It may at first seem out of place to see a paper about Scots language in schools in a new book about home language teaching edited by scholars from the University of the West Indies (Needler & Fairbairn 2020, in Jules & Belgrave 2020). However, the challenges facing young people engaging with their home language (mother tongue, indigenous languages) as part of their education are common across the world, and an international view can trigger change in attitudes and create opportunities for progress.

In both the Caribbean and Scottish contexts, English is the dominant tongue, and Scots and Bahian languages have both been subject to prejudice, both past and present. A case study of pupil engagement and attitudes towards the Scots language at Banff Academy is described, and the impacts of such engagement assessed. The work is set in the context of language policy in Scotland, compared with approaches in the Caribbean. Our innovative approach to language teaching has wider relevance for minoritized language education in classrooms and community settings.

A school-university research partnership between Banff Academy and the Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, explored the impacts of Scots language teaching on pupil self-esteem and wider achievement. The use of Participatory Action Research, creative arts and ethnographic methodologies to investigate attitudes to Scots and promote positive attitudinal change towards Scots highlighted the transformative power of home language education.

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## THE SCOTS NORTHERN SUBJECT RULE IN CONTACT

The Northern Subject Rule (NSR) is a subject-verb agreement pattern, historically distinctive of Scots, Irish English, and Northern English. In the Older Scots version of the NSR, the present tense verb is inflected with *-(i)s* unless it is immediately adjacent to a 1sg or any plural pronoun subject, such as: “*the girls sing-is*” while “*they sing*”, and “*I sing and dance-s*”. The emergence and trajectory of the NSR is shaped by language contact; the plural *-s* inflection has roots in Northumbrian, while the 1sg inflection can be traced to Scandinavian *-r* inflections (Rodríguez Ledesma 2013: 152), and the NSR pattern has spread via Ulster to North America (e.g. Montgomery 1994; Schneider & Montgomery 2001; Pietsch 2005).

We investigate the NSR in 16th-18th century Scots, using syntactically annotated (parsed) correspondence data from the *Helsinki Corpus of Scottish Correspondence* (CSC; Meurman-Solin and VARIENG), from 1540-1750; the period of *anglicisation* of Scots. Previous research finds the *adjacency* condition less strong than *subject type* in modern Scots (e.g. Buchstaller et al. 2013), and in Northern Early Middle English (Fernandes Cuesta 2013), suggesting that the *adjacency* condition is weaker overall (e.g. de Haas 2011), while Rodríguez Ledesma (2013) finds *adjacency* to be as strong a condition as *subject type* in 14th-15th century Scots data, supporting earlier findings by Montgomery (1994) on 17th century Scots. With correspondence data from the new parsed CSC, we can uncover syntactic outcomes of the contact between Scots and English which shaped what we recognise as Scots today, and hopefully access a more personal language of people in Scotland during this time.

Preliminary results show high frequencies of inflection in clauses with full NP and 3sg pronoun subjects, indicating an operational subject type condition, but the frequencies of inflection are lower than expected from a categorical NSR grammar (peaking at 75-85%). There is no apparent difference in frequencies of inflection between subject-adjacent and non-adjacent verbs, suggesting a weak adjacency condition. We will explore whether this NSR pattern in the CSC can be traced to outcomes of language contact in the anglicisation period.

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## **“I WILL COME BACK ALRIGHT” – UNCOVERING LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES IN SCOTTISH SOLDIERS’ LAST WILL LETTERS**

The First World War is remembered as one of the most lethal wars in history. Since its participants were faced with imminent death on a daily basis, many of them had made a will before entering battle. In case an explicit will was missing, however, a letter would be accepted by the War Office as evidence of the soldier’s last wishes. These 'nuncupative wills' have been collected by the National Records of Scotland and present a fruitful resource to reveal the idiosyncratic linguistic identity of the authors. While for many soldiers those letters co-occurred with deployment, others had already seen the lethal consequences of war and felt compelled to take precautionary measures.

Although the study of ego-documents has become a staple of linguistic investigation in recent years, with a few exceptions (Helmers 2016, Housiel 2014, Sandersen 2007), war correspondence is a surprisingly neglected sphere. This explorative study uses discourse analysis to uncover the linguistic strategies which are employed by the writers to communicate the possibility of imminent death and its consequences to their loved one in private war correspondence. Based on a corpus consisting of letters by 22 Scottish soldiers, this qualitative research will put special emphasis on the discursive construction of the taboo subject of death. Linguistic strategies range from mitigation and identity construction as a survivor, to the use of directives, performative speech acts (Searle 1976) and in-group expressions (Benwell & Stokoe 2006). In essence, this study offers a glimpse at the idiosyncratic communicative practices of soldiers on the brink of or during battle.

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## ***THE DIGITAL LEXICAL ATLAS OF SCOTLAND: AN INTRODUCTION AND SOME FIRST RESULTS***

By the time of this paper (October 2021), the digitisation of the lexical material of the *Linguistic Atlas of Scotland* (LAS), vols. 1 and 2 (Mather & Speitel 1975, 1977) will be well advanced. From a specially constructed relational database, and appropriate development, new interactive maps of different sorts can be derived, and various lists drawn up, on a scale hitherto unprecedented for the traditional vocabulary of Scots.

The goal of the project is to digitize the data and maps which the atlas made available, thereby securing those data for future use and providing fresh access to them; to provide the resources for new analyses of this large amount of data on a strictly lexical basis; and to present those data on interactive maps for fresh areal analyses and interpretations of the lexical composition of Scots. The project makes use of various digital tools, which enable not only new results of the data, but also easy and interactive access to those data for various analytical and presentational purposes.

The new atlas is based on various open-source base-maps, onto which the data can be interactively projected, including displays for age and gender. In addition to an electronic version of the original atlas, the major innovation is a recategorization of the data in terms of purely lexical (i.e. etymologically-lexical) types – ‘lexemes’ – regardless of spelling. The results show that, for each onomasiological concept (or ‘lexical variable’), lexemes can be divided between major, minor and oncer types, and between denotans and non-denotans types, with the last comprising a broad range of descriptions, metaphorisations or unexpected or seemingly inappropriate responses.

In this way, nothing short of a re-evaluation of the distribution of lexemes per lexical variable across the whole of Scotland becomes available, including a fresh interpretation of areal patternings of those lexemes. Thereby, using lexical criteria, it will be possible to re-assess the dialect structure of Scots (cf. Tulloch 1997).

In the present paper, we will present full analyses of several lexical variables, developing the preliminary work reported in Hessle & Kirk 2020 and Kirk & Hessel 2020.

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## LETTERS FROM THE FRONT: A HISTORICAL SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF TRENCH LETTERS WRITTEN BY SCOTTISH SOLDIERS

Historical correspondence has been the object of increasing interest in the field of English linguistics; such research interests, in the case of vernacular letters, offer a valuable insight into language use seen from below. While lower order letters differ from oral autobiographical memories, they can be considered “as close to speech as non-fictional historical texts can be” (Elspaß 2014: 156).

This work investigates a corpus of personal letters produced by semi-literate Scottish soldiers serving on the Western Front in the Great War. The corpus has a total of approximately 94,477 running words written between September 1914 and late November 1916 and thus covers the first two years of the conflict. Since letter writing is a socially situated practice, one in which meaning, and significance derive from its situation in “cultural beliefs, values, and practices” (Barton and Hall 1999), such letters can afford the modern-day reader a glimpse of the letter writers’ experiences and views as texts are always historical as is discourse as it is inextricably linked to both contexts and other discourses (Wodak & Meyer 2009).

The letters in the corpus were written to members of the soldiers’ immediate families, a setting in which Scots is likely to have been used. While the letters are written in English, there are frequent occurrences of Standard Scottish English (SSE) and Scots. Instances of SSE and Scots use were then subjected to thematic analysis. The analysis reveals how the letter writers adopted Scots words when referring to specific topics closely related to home and family; instead, SSE was used less frequently than English. The analysis suggests that Scots was a vital part of the soldiers’ linguistic repertoire employed in letter-writing that, in turn, enabled them to lessen physical and emotional distances.

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## **FISHER, FARMER, TEUCHTER, CHAV: HYPERLOCAL PERCEPTIONS OF NORTH EAST SCOTTISH SPEECH**

From the outside, the North East of Scotland may be perceived in fairly uniform terms as the home of ‘the Doric’. However, speak to those from within the region, and a complex picture of intraregional identities soon emerges. Inevitably, the ideologies surrounding these identities often go hand in hand with perceptions of linguistic variation.

Using Diercks’ (2002) notion of the *linguistic homeland* as a starting point, I will present findings from my perceptual dialectology study of the North East region, with a focus on the importance of considering hyperlocality when interpreting results. Surveying 320 informants from across the region, the study uses an adapted version of Preston’s (1999) five-step methodology in which informants draw maps of perceived variation, rate places on several different scales, evaluate speech samples and engage in conversations about language. The results of this process reveal several common ideas about linguistic variation in the region; however, when perceptions are examined at a more hyperlocal level, there is a considerable level of heterogeneity in the responses. This is manifested in the linguistic labels participants use to geographically categorise speakers, in the frequency with which they mention certain speech communities, and in the way they react to clips of speakers from different parts of the region (with the latter point containing several examples of what Coupland et al. (1999) have termed *claiming* and *denial*). Such results offer insight into the feelings of linguistic identity evident in these communities – with some still tied to more traditional constructions of local identity, while others are adapting in a manner reflective of the changing times. The study also reveals a hyperlocal ‘shifting’ of the ‘Doric’ boundary, resulting in what I propose can be viewed as a series of perceived ‘micro-Dorics’ within the region. This will be considered in reference to Cramer’s (2018) discussion of *etic* and *emic* descriptions.

Finally, I will consider the impact of these findings: both for those engaged in perceptual dialectology research elsewhere, and for those interested in Scots language issues affecting the region.

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## SCOTS AND NYNORSK: A COMPARISON OF TWO LANGUAGE MOVEMENTS' STRUGGLE FOR RECOGNITION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

As demands for independence continue to be made in Scotland, a growing Scots language movement attempts to gain recognition for Scots as an independent language as opposed to a variety of English (Unger 2013). These attempts include calls for recognition in the higher education sector. Although not formally linked to the independence movement, the Scots language movement has interesting parallels in the Nynorsk movement which emerged as Norway gained independence in the years preceding and following 1905 (Almenningen et al. 2003, Linn 2014, Hyvik, Millar and Newby 2016). This paper explores the early phases of the struggle to have Scots recognised as suitable for use in schools and higher education in Scotland and draws parallels to the similar struggles faced by the Nynorsk movement c. 1884-1939. The paper will show how language rights in schools and higher education are linked and interdependent, how the early phase of bringing Scots and Nynorsk into universities in both cases was driven by pioneers, and explore the shared ideologies of the Scots and Nynorsk movements.

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***EPPIE ELRICK, A DORIC TOUR-DE-FORCE***

William P. Milne's 1955 novel *Eppie Elrick* is one of the most extensive and most uncompromising texts in the North-East dialect of Scots (for general accounts of the dialect see Dieth 1932, McClure 2002, Millar 2007). The modern history of this dialect as a literary medium begins with John Skinner, Alexander Ross and Robert Forbes in the eighteenth century, what time it was still fully developed as the everyday speech of the region (on their language see McClure 2013 and 2017). After something of a decline during the nineteenth century it was vigorously revived for both prose and poetry towards the end of the century, with William Alexander, Charles Murray and Mary Symon as the leading exponents; by this time compulsory education and other factors had led to some decline in its use and status as a spoken form, but its enduring vitality is amply reflected in the literature (on the literary background see Milton 1983 and 1995). Both its literary productivity and its decline as a spoken tongue have continued unchecked to the present day. The discussion of *Eppie Elrick*, a novel with a historical setting in which extensive passages are in an attempted reconstruction of the dialect in its pristine form, will examine the dialect writing itself, with its wealth of local idioms and vocabulary items and careful orthographic representation of its phonological features. Particular attention will be paid to precisely localised features rarely attested in literature (e.g. *l'se jist dyae* (= "go", usually written *gae*)) and unhistorical eye-dialect forms (e.g. *ur* for "or"), and reference made to Milne's apparent use of his listed sources of information (e.g. Dieth, Alexander, David Murison (editor of the *Scottish National Dictionary*)). Its status as a putative memorial to a socio-linguistically defined community long vanished by the time of writing will also be discussed.

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## THE NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE LINGUISTS IN RÉUNION AND SCOTLAND

This study deals with native and non-native linguists in the research of local languages in Réunion and Scotland. In Réunion, a French island next to Madagascar, the local language Réunionese Creole coexists with French while, in Scotland, the local languages Scots and Scottish Gaelic coexist with English.

These territories are comparable (McDonald 2021) as they exhibit similar forms of situations of unequal linguistic plurality (Bretegnier 2016), which may be considered to be non-Fergusonian diglossia (Lüdi 1989: 260) with a high degree of bilingualism (Fishman 1972) and interlect (Prudent 1981), especially for the pairs Scots-English (Görlach 2008 [2004]: 221; Maguire 2012: 53) and Creole-French (Georger 2011: 48), but also the Gaelic-English diglossia (McEwan-Fujita 2020 [2005]: 185).

The concept of native speaker is relevant as it relates directly to language, despite the difficulties in the definition (O' Rourke & Ramallo 2011: 140). I also refer to 'native linguistics', conceived of by Catalan linguists like Aracil and Ninyoles (Lebon-Eyquem 2007: 65) and adopted by French Caribbean researchers like Prudent (1981).

The objective of this study is to compare the place of the native and non-native linguists in the research of the indigenous languages in Scotland and in Réunion i.e. which proportion of the linguists are native? How do these linguists position themselves with respect to their (non-) nativeness? and, above all, How does their (non-)nativeness influence their research?

I use primarily bibliographical research to determine whether a scholar is native or not, whether in their own writing or in biographical articles. I then proceed to an analysis of the roles of the native and non-native scholars.

I expect to discover to which extent native and non-native linguists participate in the production of research on these languages, the change over time, the origins of the non-native linguists and some indications of (non-)native speaker status influence.

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## ASSESSING AND AMENDING THE GAELIC LANGUAGE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2005

Since it came into effect 15 years ago, the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 has been the cornerstone of Gaelic language policy in Scotland. The Act has had a significant impact in several respects, but gaps and weaknesses in the legislation have become increasingly apparent over time, and a range of practical shortcomings in relation to implementation have come to the fore. The newly re-elected SNP government campaigned on a pledge to introduce a new Scottish languages bill, and this will provide a mechanism to strengthen the legislative foundation for Gaelic policy.

The 2005 Act created a statutory language board, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, with a range of duties and powers. Arguably the most important of these is the power to order individual public authorities in Scotland to develop Gaelic language plans. The Bòrd is required to assist public authorities in developing these plans and also to monitor and enforce them. This is an uncomfortable combination of roles and perhaps for this reason many of the plans agreed have been weak or tokenistic, even plans by authorities in areas with high densities of Gaelic speakers.

One mechanism to deal with this problem might be the creation of a Language Commissioner to oversee the implementation of Gaelic plans. Such commissioners have played an important role in Wales and Ireland, among other jurisdictions. To carry out this role effectively, a Language Commissioner would require investigatory and enforcement powers that are considerably greater than those currently given to Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

Other mechanisms to strengthen the Act might include a more detailed and stringent set of requirements concerning the contents of Gaelic language plans and the creation of enforceable rights to receive Gaelic-medium education and to use Gaelic in court. Following the model of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, an explicit legislative statement that Gaelic is an official language of Scotland would be a useful advance.

This paper will consider the range of legislative issues concerning Gaelic and place this discussion in the wider sociolinguistic and policy context.

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Peadar Ó Muircheartaigh

## THE EMPIRE WRITES BACK: ENGLISH-GAELIC CODE-SWITCHING IN A LETTER FROM NEW YORK 1778

The summer of 1778 brought with it a number of difficulties for the British Army forces charged with regaining control of the American colonies from rebel forces. During this period of the American War of Independence, one Scottish Highland Regiment, the largely Gaelic-speaking Black Watch, was stationed on Long Island, just outside of New York. Writing to a friend in Glasgow from a tent on Long Island, the Chaplain of the Black Watch reported on the progress of the war, enquired of the political situation in Britain, and engaged in some intensely local discussions relating to contemporary Gaelic scholarship. The letter is remarkable for its use of both Gaelic and English.

The Chaplain in question was Rev. James McLagan (1728–1805), the preeminent eighteenth-century Scottish Gaelic literary collector and scholar (Ó Muircheartaigh 2016; 2020; Innes and Parsons 2021). His correspondent was Rev. Hugh MacDiarmid (†1801), an important collector of Gaelic literature in his own right. This paper will introduce the letter and then focus on its use of Gaelic in terms of both form and function. The purpose of the code-switching will be discussed, and set alongside other examples of English-Gaelic epistolary code-switching from the same period. The form of language used will then be examined to shed light on the linguistic repertoire of the Gaelic-speaking ministers with regards to register and dialect.

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## **“PARTICULAR” FACTORS FAVOURING CONSERVATION OF LESSER-USED LANGUAGE VARIETIES (THE EVIDENCE OF AN ISLAND DIALECT OF SCOTS)**

*Key words: regional language, resettlement dialect, linguistic island, island dialect, sustainable development.*

Insular dialectology began mostly as a subdiscipline of the German language studies and for many years remained a part of them. However, as is known, speech islands are not confined to German dialects. For example, Ulster Scots (further on “US”), seems to be the only alive “classical” insular dialect group of Scots. Quite understandably, for Scottish and English scholars such phenomenon as speech island was not so topical as for their German colleagues, moreover, as regards US, it started to be studied much later than the other Scots dialects. Such classics as A. Ellis (1968), J. Murray (1873), J. Wright (1905) and W. Grant (1921; 1986) even do not mention US in their principal works or sections of works devoted to Scots. No one has characterized US as an insular dialect group so far.

Ulster Scots is an example of a variety of a lesser-used language becoming both the focus of public attention and an important tool of social policy. Its inclusion in the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 as an important element of the cultural heritage of the Protestant community was a historical event, which has led to some positive changes, mostly those of somewhat improved attitudes to this idiom within the community and without.

As there exist a number of features characterising the US language area as a speech island, and no one has designated it as such, our goal is to describe US as an insular, resettlement dialect group of Scots relying on available criteria (Hutterer 1982; Mattheier 1996) and to typologise it, correlating it with other insular resettlement dialects of Europe and the world. In theoretical and methodological terms, we rely on the works of H. Protze (1969), C.J. Hutterer (1982), P. Wiesinger (1983), K.J. Mattheier (1996), M. Putnam (2011), V. Schirmunski (1928; 1930; 1962), and others.

Besides, the evidence considered in the paper does not only confirm the island character of the area of Ulster-Scots, but also substantiates the conclusion that it is a factor counteracting the linguistic shift and favouring conservation of the idiom in question.



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## THE SIGNULARITY IS NEAR: THE FUTURE OF SIGNED LANGUAGE IN SCOTLAND

It is now established that ‘the languages of Scotland and Ulster past and present’ include British Sign Language, in a lineage that can be traced from signing, deaf Princess Joanna (1428-1493) through the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 and into the foreseeable future. Looking into this future inevitably entails situating Scotland in a global context.

I have long argued for recognition of “heritage sign languages” (Turner 1999): encouragingly, there has been increased attention to the nature of these languages and their contribution to society. Inter-generational transmission of national sign languages nevertheless remains under strain in many countries. Combined with ongoing promotion of biomedical interventions, this gives reason for caution about the future of signing communities.

The ground is now shifting further. Signed communication, once inherently face-to-face, now routinely takes place across time and space. Signers everywhere possess the pocket-sized means to express themselves to global audiences.

Meanwhile, technologies to analyse, reproduce and switch between languages advance. The digitisation of movement and embodied expression of emotion are evolving. Machine translation between signed, spoken and written modalities is maturing rapidly.

Reviewing this landscape, this paper concludes that securing the status of signed language may inevitably entail radical integration of the global Deaf diaspora (Friedner & Kusters 2015) as a conjoined whole, connected by increasingly unified forms of International Sign (Rosenstock & Napier 2016). In a global context, therefore, an historically-informed sociolinguistic reading of the future of BSL in Scotland points to incremental lexical and grammatical convergence with other natural signed languages.

This will entail re-evaluation of sign languages as bounded systems, plus profound adjustments in ideas about sign linguistic purism. I will argue that embracing technological shifts – and reorientating to their implications as enhancements – may ultimately underwrite the greatest prospect for the maintenance of Deaf ontologies and the ongoing vitality of heritage signing.

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## **EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY HOP-SCOTCH: THE BALANCING ACT OF LOCATION, STATUS AND RECIPIENT ON SCOTS IN 18TH CENTURY CORRESPONDENCE**

Early eighteenth century Scots falls into the interesting transition zone from the 'heyday' of Older Scots, to the context of "the domestic, the familiar, the sentimental [and] the comic" (Murison 1979: 9–37). By 1700 the prolonged period of convergence with Southern English had displaced Scots from most written genres, but the extent to which this took place in correspondence, and across different areas of Scotland, remains unclear. Given the frequent familiarity between correspondents (Dossena 2002: 109–110), and reduced self-monitoring of private writing (Mullan et al. 2009), it seems plausible Scots features would have continued in this genre. In order to explore this, the digitised letters of Scottish writers were compiled into a purpose-built corpus and searched for Scots lexis and orthographic variants. Using these results, I explore firstly variation in frequency between authors, and what might condition their use of Scots. Specifically, I focus on external effects, such as location and status, but also linguistic factors, such as salience and stylistic practices. This is complemented by analysing intra-writer variation within specifically-selected authors; in particular the role of recipient familiarity is analysed. Results suggest a complex interplay of social and linguistic factors; location and background influence overall frequency of Scots, and interesting parallels are found between geographically dispersed locations. When looking deeper at the micro-level, we see an interesting effect for familiarity on both location and personal levels; authors' reflect an in-group/out-group preference across different correspondents in their use of Scots. However, the Scots features that remain in correspondence by 1700 were largely determined by linguistic effects, in particular their functional or grammatical nature. This research thus takes the first step towards providing fresh insight into an under-researched area of historical Scots, and its continuation in the early eighteenth century.

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## POLITICS AND PHONETICS: ASSESSING THE INFLUENCE OF PARTY MEMBERSHIP ON PRONUNCIATION AMONG SCOTTISH POLITICIANS

Previous studies have shown that pronunciation can index political identity. Yet, whereas previous investigations predominantly analyzed open vowels, the present study takes a new approach analyzing the production of rhotic sounds among Scottish politicians. Scotland provides a very interesting context due to its current political situation. Whereas the Conservatives and Labour are UK-wide unionist parties, the SNP only represents Scottish constituencies and continuously campaigns for Scottish independence. This study therefore investigates in how far the production of rhotic sounds may be influenced by party membership in Scotland while controlling for other intralinguistic and extralinguistic factors.

Data was retrieved from the Scottish Parliament and following the approach of Hall-Lew et al. 2017, a superficially homogenous speaker sample was selected to account for sociolinguistic factors as well as possible. Data preparation was supported by different ASR and forced aligned tools and /r/ tokens were retrieved applying LaBB-CAT search routines (Fromont and Hay 2012). Auditory and spectrographic analyses were conducted on each token applying the categorization scheme provided by Meer et al. 2021. The data was then further annotated for intralinguistic and extralinguistic factors. The statistical analysis was conducted in R applying the tree-based resampling and prediction method PrInDT (Weihs and Buschfeld 2021) which is designed to handle imbalanced response variables.

The results show that, apart from the regional background and different intralinguistic factors, political party membership has a significant influence on the realization of rhotic sounds among Scottish politicians. Scottish Conservative politicians produce significantly less taps and trills than their SNP and Labour colleagues. Due to the high balanced accuracy of the model (0.7553), the findings show that pronunciation can index political identity in Scotland.

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## ACOUSTIC CORRELATES OF THE FORTIS/LENIS DISTINCTION IN EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY DONEGAL IRISH

In this paper we address the long-standing question of how the distinction between fortis and lenis consonants arose and functioned in Old Irish, and how it is reflected in the present-day Gaelic languages. We report an empirical study of early-twentieth-century Donegal Irish recordings from the Doegen collection. The results show that fortis sonorants (traditionally written /L/ and /N/) displayed significantly greater duration than the equivalent lenis sonorants (/l/ and /n/) both word-medially and word-finally, suggesting that the fortis/lenis distinction did correspond to a duration distinction. Furthermore, ‘voiceless’ stops /p t k/ displayed significantly greater duration than ‘voiced stops’ /b d g/. The magnitude of the effect suggests that the voiced/voiceless contrast in stops during this period was an aspiration contrast, with postvocalic voiceless stops showing preaspiration (Ní Chasaide 1986; Iosad 2020).

There has been a longstanding dispute surrounding the ordering and relationship of lenition and degemination in the Gaelic languages, how duration and fortis/lenis status interacted in the Old Irish period, and how these changes led to synchronic phonemic distinctions in Old Irish and the modern Gaelic languages. In particular, it is unclear whether postvocalic stops Old Irish showed a length distinction, and how the length distinction related to the fortis/lenis distinction in the sonorants. For both Old Irish (Thurneysen 1946) and Donegal Modern Irish (Quiggin 1906; Wagner 1958–1969) it has been suggested that both stops and sonorants were lengthened after a short vowel (cross-cutting the laryngeal contrast in stops), although these accounts are disputed (Greene 1956).

Our results suggest that there was no across-the-board fortition in Donegal Irish: in stops, duration follows laryngeal contrast, and in sonorants it follows the fortis/lenis distinction. We explore the dialectological and historical implications of this result.

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