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ABSTRACTS

Main theme: *Communities, activists, champions*

Plenary 1

Warren Maguire
(University of Edinburgh)
The Phonological Documentation of Traditional Dialects of English and Scots in Ulster: History and Prospects

The phonology of traditional dialects of English and Scots in Ulster is of crucial importance for understanding the genesis and development of the dialect landscape of the province, which arose in a situation of language and dialect contact (Maguire 2020a). But compared to phonological documentation of traditional dialects of English and Scots in England and Lowland Scotland, published documentation of traditional dialects of English and Scots in Ulster has been rather patchy, especially outside of the Ulster Scots heartlands. This means that there are significant gaps in our knowledge of the traditional phonological of Ulster dialects. Nevertheless, from the mid 19th century onwards data has been collected from various locations, though not all of it has been published or is well known.

In this presentation I examine the phonological documentation of traditional dialects of English and Scots in Ulster since that time, including:

- 19th century sources such as Ellis (1869), Staples (1896) and Wright (1905)
- Mid 20th century sources including *A Linguistic Survey of Ireland* (see Henry 1958), the *Linguistic Atlas of Scotland* (see Mather & Speitel 1986 and Maguire 2020b), and Robert Gregg's work on Ulster Scots (especially Gregg 1953, 1958, 1959, 1972, 1985)
- Late 20th century sources, especially Harris (1985) and the *Tape-recorded Survey of Hiberno-English Speech* (see Barry 1981)

Furthermore, I discuss whether it is still possible to document traditional forms of speech in Ulster, concentrating on my work on the Ulster English dialect of south-west Tyrone (cf. Maguire 2023). In each case, I examine geographical and linguistic coverage, the nature of the data that was gathered, issues that exist with the data, and the prospects of filling out our knowledge of these traditional dialects. It will be seen that a considerable amount of data has been gathered from across Ulster, though it is not all unproblematic and much of it is from Ulster Scots-speaking areas. But it is still possible to document the phonology of traditional dialects of English and Scots in the province, so that a fuller understanding of the traditional dialect landscape of Ulster and its history is attainable.

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Session 1: Education

Karen Lowing (University of Hull) and Edina Krompák (University of Teacher Education Lucerne)
Scots and Swiss German Languages in Superdiverse Education Spaces: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Scotland's *Scots Language in Curriculum for Excellence* (2017) report and Switzerland's *Lehrplan 21* curriculum

Language hierarchies within diglossic and superdiverse education contexts (Mehmedbegovic 2017; Creese and Blackledge 2018; Vertovec 2007) may create barriers to children's progress (Benson 2014; Wong and Benson 2019). This paper compares the minority languages of Scots and Swiss German within Scottish and Swiss diglossic and superdiverse education contexts (Berthele 2020; Unger 2013; Lowing 2023). Historically comparable (Gorlach 1985), the positioning of each language in their education system is analysed to inform and assist in the future development of language education policy and practice in both countries. Previous critical discourse and content analyses of Scottish and Swiss language education policy and curriculum (Berthele 2020; Unger 2013; Lowing 2023), demonstrates the respective hegemonic positioning of English and German in Scottish and Swiss classrooms. This study conducts a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2015) of comparable texts which potentially influence current language practices in Scottish and Swiss schools: Scotland's *Scots Language in Curriculum for Excellence* (2017) report and Switzerland's *Lehrplan 21* curriculum. Specifically, this analysis enables a comparison between the positioning of multilingualism in both societies, the role Scots and Swiss German play in children's acquisition of multilingual competences within each country, and the extent to which societal language hierarchies and linguistic practices are reflected in the curriculum of each education context. Results indicate that multilingualism is ostensibly welcomed within both texts, however Scots is frequently marginalised in *Scots Language in Curriculum for Excellence* (2017), whereas Swiss German remains a recognised language within *Lehrplan 21*. The results of the study raise questions regarding the prestige and role of each language in their respective societies and school systems.

Keywords: Scots, Swiss German, diglossia, superdiversity, applied linguistics

Louis Coeyman (University of Glasgow)
Is Scots a language? Insights from stakeholders in education

In this presentation, I examine the concept of "Scots language", and more precisely the extent to which Scots is perceived as a language and the ideologies that are at play in these perceptions. Scots is another Germanic language spoken in the United Kingdom and is often described as a "sister language" to English. However, unlike English, Scots is not necessarily perceived as a language (Scottish Government, 2010). In addition, Scots lacks an official standard which in turn can limit its use (Costa, 2015, 2017), and its official use in the education system is also limited. This presentation explores folk perceptions of language boundaries and the complex question of what makes a language "a language".

The discussion will be informed by the results of focus group discussions conducted in 2023 with stakeholders in education (students, teachers, parents, and staff from an education body), in both the Glasgow area and the

Scottish Northeast. The focus on stakeholders in education can be explained due to the increase in recent years of the place of Scots in schools (e.g. SQA Scots language award). The project as a whole aims to understand which ideologies are held by stakeholders in education and what consequences this has for the Scots language revitalisation.

Some of the key topics this presentation will address include the perceived connections and boundaries between Scots and English, the belief that Scots is slang and is not a whole language, and the topic of bilingualism. Overall, this presentation will contribute to having a better understanding of the factors influencing people's perceptions of the status of Scots as a language, and how this may impact revitalisation efforts.

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Linda Bruce (Open University)
From Potential to Essential? Adult Learners as New Speakers of Scots

New speakers of minoritised languages have been defined as "individuals with little or no home or community exposure to the language ... growing up but who instead acquired it through ... immersion ... or as adult language learners" (O'Rourke et al., 2015, p. 1). The new speaker term emerged around the 1980s in Galician, Catalan, Basque and Breton, and has been applied to minoritised languages including Occitan (Costa, 2015), Irish (O'Rourke & Walsh, 2020) and Gaelic (e.g., Carty, 2017; Dunmore, 2017; Mcleod & O'Rourke, 2015). This research asks to what extent adult Scots learners can be considered new speakers, and the implications of applying this category to Scots.

Research Questions:
To what extent can adult learners of Scots be considered an identifiable social group of new speakers?
How similar/different are adult learners of Scots, in terms of motivations, learning methods/models, language practices, language ideologies and identity constructions?

Materials/Methods:
I collated new speaker definitions from 40 papers published between 2005 and 2020 across 18 languages. I collected demographic/language background data and conducted semi-structured interviews with 25 adult learners of Scots. The transcribed interviews form a 220,000-word corpus of adult learners of Scots. A Corpus Approach to Discourse (CADS) is employed, combining Corpus Linguistics with Discourse Analysis.

Findings:
These participants cannot be considered a social group of new speakers of Scots, since they lack a "collective sense of togetherness, we-ness, or belongingness which indicates the formation of a psychological group" (Turner, 1982, p. 16) around the new speaker term. However, participants do align partly with profiles of new speakers of other minoritised languages, placed on a continuum of 'new speakerness', as "potential" or "occasional" new speakers. Very few display "functional" or "essential" characteristics (Ramallo & O'Rourke, 2014, p. 61) - positions requiring fundamental change to Scotland's sociolinguistic conditions.

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Session 2: Working with corpora

Patricia Ronan (TU Dortmund) and Christine Elsweiler (University of Munich)
Directives in SPICE-Ireland and ICE Scotland from a Cross-Varietal Perspective

Recent decades have seen a surge in research investigating pragmatic differences between Irish English and other regional varieties of English, such as English English and American English (e.g., Farr and O'Keeffe 2002, Barron 2005, Barron 2008), indicating, among others, that Irish English is characterised by indirectness. However, studies analysing pragmatic differences between Southern Irish English and/or Northern Irish English and Scottish English are rare (Burmeister 2013, Clancy and Vaughan 2024) and, to our knowledge, the three regional varieties have not been compared regarding speech act use. Given the potential influence of Scots/Scottish English on Northern Irish English (Kirk and Kallen 2010), it is important to examine how these three varieties compare pragmatically.

This study addresses this gap by analysing the use of directives in Northern Irish English, Southern Irish English and Scottish English, using the SPICE-Ireland (Kallen and Kirk 2012) and ICE-Scotland corpora (Gut and Schützler 2020). Previous cross-varietal studies of directives in Irish English and English English have shown that comparable strategies are used by speakers across the two regional varieties (e.g. Schneider 2024). However, Irish English speakers use more internal modifiers such as the progressive aspect and the conditional in *I was wonder if you would like to…* in order to make their requests sound more tentative (Barron 2008). The present study draws on Ronan's (2022) findings for directives in Southern Irish English as represented in SPICE-ROI. Her results showed that indirect directive strategies, e.g., volition questions, are more commonly used in (semi-)public genres such as broadcast discussions and classroom discussions. By contrast, direct strategies, e.g., imperatives, are more frequently found in private genres such as face-to-face conversations.

For our analysis, we expand on Ronan's findings to explore how the level of directness of directive speech acts in Northern Irish English and Scottish English compares to Southern Irish English. For this comparison, we will semi-automatically extract directives from SPICE-Ireland (SPICE-NI) and manually identify them in ICE-Scotland. The instances will be categorised according to Leech's (2014) classification scheme for directive speech acts. The analysis focuses on three genres representing different points along the public-private continuum for which Ronan (2022) has found considerable differences in the distribution of directive strategies: broadcast discussions, classroom discussion and face-to-face conversations. In view of previous findings for directives in Southern Irish English, we investigate to what extent differences in directness levels along the public-private continuum can be found in the three regional varieties and to what extent Southern Irish English uses a higher degree of indirectness through internal modification.

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Beth Beattie (University of Glasgow)
Establishing a Scottish Reformation discourse: A corpus-based approach

The idea that different ideologies can be distinguished by their vocabulary is well-established (Williams, 1976 [2015]), and there is a small body of research that has applied this principle to historical religious groups. Hudson (1981) explored the linguistic usages of the Lollards, noting that collocations and keywords would help corroborate long-held assumptions about religious-coded vocabulary. For example, "godly" has often been associated with English evangelical denominations and has been identified as a keyword in English evangelical sermons (Collinson, 1983; Smith, 2020). Developments in corpus analyses have also resulted in more systematic descriptions of discourses of other Christian denominations in sixteenth-century England (Smith, 2021). However, these techniques have yet to be applied to Scotland. Much of the existing research on Scottish religious discourse focuses on the use of Scots and English (Gribben, 2006), or consists of critical analyses of specific individuals (Mullan, 2021). This paper seeks to expand the scope of such research and explore how corpus-based methods can contribute to establishing a Scottish Reformation discourse.

The corpus used in this research consists of material by ten Scottish religious figures, covering Catholic and Protestant writing in both Scots and English published between 1558 and 1581, resulting in a dataset of 235,000 words. Key words and phrases are identified by frequency and keyness analyses, as well as by comparing this corpus to an equivalent reference corpus of texts from England. The results of these analyses indicate that the vocabulary use by Scottish Reformation writers is significantly different to that of their English equivalents, but there are also fewer differences between Protestant and Catholic word choice in Scotland than in England. These results suggest a distinct Scottish religious 'community of practice' (Kopaczyk and Jucker, 2013) that transcends denominational boundaries, in which there are indications of a religious discourse different to that of England.

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Pia Lehecka (University of Edinburgh)

Orthographic evidence for the (im)mobility of Older Scots long back vowels

This paper explores changes in spelling practices for representations of the Older Scots vowels /uː/, /oː/ and /ɔː/. Scots long-vowel changes, including the Great Vowel Shift (GVS) and Northern Fronting (NF), have been approximately dated by scholars such as Johnston (1997) and Aitken & Macafee (2002). However, a systematic corpus-based analysis of spelling evidence to date the changes has yet to be undertaken.

Stenbrenden (2016) recently undertook a large-scale corpus investigation of English long-vowel changes between 1050-1700, resulting in novel findings on the phonological context and timing of these shifts. Recently available corpora such as the *Linguistic Atlas of Older Scots, From Inglis to Scots* and the *Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots* have allowed me to conduct corpus-based research on orthographic changes in Scots to the same extensive and systematic degree as Stenbrenden (2016). Orthographic research of this kind follows the *littera* approach, which is based on the theory that sound shifts are reflected in spelling changes in a pre-standard variety (Laing 1999, Laing and Lass 2003).

Exploring the development of back vowels in Scots not only has merit in its own right, but allows us to assess whether the GVS was a pull chain or a push chain (cf. Jespersen (1909), Stockwell & Minkova (1988), Luick (1896), and Lass (2000)). If early fronting of /oː/ in the North is assumed to be causally related to the lack of diphthongisation of /uː/, then we should expect spellings to reflect this fronting before there is any evidence in spelling of the raising of /ɔː/.

Figure 1: Southern English and Scots Great Vowel Shift and Northern Fronting
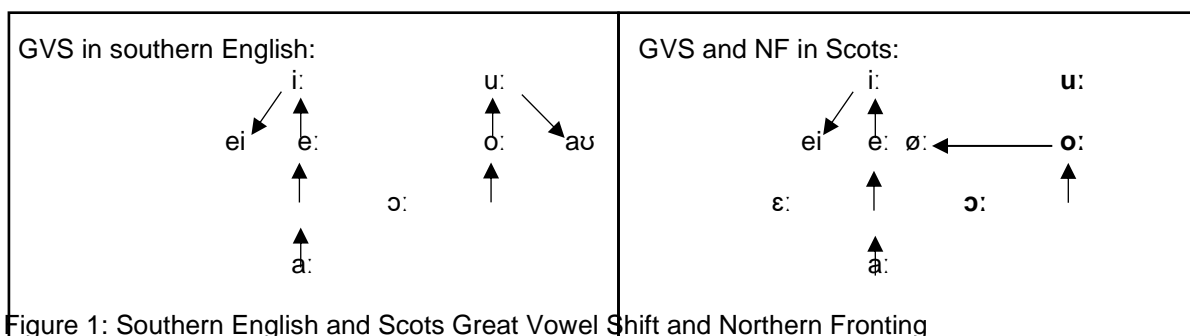
This paper investigates whether spelling practices representing etymological /uː/, /oː/ and /ɔː/ change between 14c-17c. My results show the patterns of maintenance and change in the spellings of the relevant vowels, helping to draw a timeline for the underlying phonological changes. Preliminary results show that NF of /oː/ is reflected in spellings supporting frontness. Items with Early Scots /ɔː/ show a proliferation of spelling variants during the mid-15c, which could correlate with a phonological shift such as raising. Lastly, results concur with current literature on the phonological and orthographic stability of /uː/, supporting a connection between (lack of) sound changes and spelling changes.

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Session 3: Ideologies and representations

Hamish Pottinger (University of Oxford)
Language ideology, Scots literacy, and the pursuit of 'a language'

The typical configuration of what a language 'is' and ought to 'do' presents a challenge for many minority languages. Received ideals of homogeneity – such as standardisation, universality, or anonymity – are both a means of validating social groups and of limiting diversity within those groups (Costa et al. 2017). Since diversity is often the very purpose of minority language movements, this constitutes an inherent conflict in the development of those minority varieties, particularly when they are on a continuum with the superordinate variety.

This paper considers how Scots activism responds to this trade-off in the context of literacy. In confronting ideological conflicts of legitimacy and authenticity (cf. Woolard 2016), discourses and language choices are often managed strategically so as to help Scots achieve the status of 'a language like any other'. While efforts are made to conceptualise Scots as pluricentric, it is predominantly a homogenising standard language ideology which offers a digestible and recognisable framework for understanding 'stigma' and 'language'. Accordingly, via a cautious preference for orthographic and lexical features from a long literary history that has influenced language planning efforts (e.g., Purves 1997), Scots is said to qualify as a discrete language, rather than a mere dialect. To illustrate this, I draw from semi-structured interviews conducted with literary writers – most of them activists – and other supplementary discursive and linguistic datasets.

This raises questions about the focus of language development. There is some evidence that abstraction from recognised forms of spoken Scots in writing can negate the ultimate aim of Scots activism – the validation of speaker identity – since it connotes a decontextualisation of and a distancing from the 'natural' vernacular. Hence, Costa (2024) has argued that Occitan language planning has suffered from assumed distinctions between 'language' and 'patois', cautioning against a pursuit of the former which does not consider speakers' perspectives.

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Alexander Jarvis (University of Glasgow)
A Second Scots Census: Mapping the Scots-language data from Scotland's 2011 and 2022 censuses

The inclusion of a Scots language question in Scotland's 2011 census was a significant achievement for the language's activists in raising its public profile. As a means of data collection, the census far exceeds the outreach of surveys academia is typically able to initiate. Although the language questions are brief and their responses subject to the biases of self-reported data, Macafee comments that "[s]o as long as we are alert to the validity issues, we have here an extremely valuable set of data" (2017: 64).

The wealth of data it provides with respect to Scots remains under-utilised, however. Existing research is concerned as much with issues around the inclusion and wording of the questions (e.g. Sebba 2019) as with the data itself. Census datasets and their limitations have been studied for Welsh (e.g. Higgs et al. 2004) and Scottish Gaelic (e.g. Ó Giollagáin et al. 2020), with Macafee providing perhaps the sole comprehensive analysis for the 2011 Scots data – analysing by age, gender, and regional geography.

The 2022 census data released this May allows us to corroborate sociolinguistic trends observed by Macafee, and to draw conclusions on what the differences may reveal about how present sociocultural forces are impacting the acquisition of Scots skills (or people's willingness to identify with them). This research will analyse the new data following established methodology (Macafee 2017) and then seek to uncover new conclusions from both datasets, through the lens of dialect areas and individual settlements. The combination of the granularity afforded by census data and established dialectal mapping enables specifically-defined and linguistically meaningful geographies to become our base unit of consideration. By comparing settlement and rural populations within an area, data visualization can reveal hotspots of speakers (both urban and rural) which might be missed when not considered separately from their wider region.

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Petra Poncarova (University of Glasgow)
Scots and Twentieth-Century Radical Gaelic Magazines

Throughout the twentieth century, radical magazines that sought to promote new Gaelic writing and the use of Gaelic to discuss contemporary affairs also took a stance on Scots. In the presentation, I will outline the attitudes to Scots in the Gaelic periodicals founded and run by author and activist Ruaraidh Erskine (1869–1960) in the 1900s – 1930s, especially in the quarterly *Guth na Bliadhna* (1904-1925); in the anthology *Alba* (1948); and in the quarterly *Gairm* (1952–2002), established and edited by poet and scholar Derick Thomson (1921–2012), whose contributors included prominent authors who worked in both languages, including poets and translators George Campbell Hay and William Neill. From attempts to present Gaelic as superior to Scots and make Scotland wholly Gaelic on the part of Erskine and his contributors to the 1978 SNP Gaelic Policy prepared by a group chaired by Thomson and published in *Gairm*, which proposed equal provisions for both languages, the paper will comment on changes of attitudes to Scots on the part of these champions of Gaelic and on intersections between the two movements. It will also explore the link between linguistic and cultural agenda and Scottish political independence, which these periodicals and their editors supported, in the manner of nineteenth-century national revivals on the European continent, and how an interest in other languages and cultures across the globe informed their vision of Scotland.

Session 4: Correspondence

Christine Elsweiler (University of Munich), Marina Dossena (University of Bergamo), Sarah van Eyndhoven (University of Canterbury, NZ), Mo Gordon (University of Leiden)
Historical Corpora of Scottish Correspondence: Views on the Past, Glimpses into the Future

Letters are a valuable data source for historical (socio)linguistic research as they contain essential meta information about writers and addressees, and often pertain to groups underrepresented in historical documents, such as women and the lower classes. Since the first corpora of (Older) Scots were compiled four decades ago, the study of the linguistic history of Scottish correspondence has grown considerably, examining usage among different social classes, in different regions and for different communicative purposes, ranging from familiar letters to business exchanges. In recent years, new projects were launched and additional resources were made available, in order to enhance research capabilities (see e.g. Dossena 2012, Meurman-Solin 2017, Eyndhoven 2021, Gordon et al. 2022, Gotthard 2022, Elsweiler 2024). However, these resources were created to address specific research questions (whether in syntax, morphology, or historical sociolinguistics and pragmatics) and have specific, expert users in mind.

In this presentation our aim is to take stock of the ways in which corpora for the study of Scottish historical correspondence have been developed over the years, how they have been improved, and to outline strategies through which they could be expanded even further to allow large diachronic studies across a long-scale time-depth. One such strategy would be the promotion of crowdsourcing initiatives along the lines of *Europeana Transcribe* (https://europeana.transcribathon.eu/) combined with automated tools like Transkribus (www.transkribus.org/) for the transcription of manuscripts in accordance with institutions like the NLS, EUL, local and national archives, etc.

It is suggested that large-scale corpora could be built through such initiatives, comprising at least 100,000 words per 50-year sub-period, thus matching the scale of the *Helsinki Corpus of Scottish Correspondence, 1540–1750* (*ScotsCorr*). In a first step, we aim to compile a pilot corpus consisting of ca. 50 letters per 50-year sub-period (1700–1750, 1750–1800, 1800–1850, 1850–1900). Making such correspondence materials available to the general public and to researchers at the same time would improve the visibility of Scots usage in history and also elicit the interest of potential learners through the involvement of secondary schools. Moreover, such new corpora would enable research questions to arise from the documents themselves, thus leading to corpus-driven, rather than corpus-based, analyses and possibly being conducive to new and unpredicted findings, thus enhancing the understanding and recognition of Scots.

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Sarah van Eyndhoven (University of Canterbury, NZ)
Scots and New Zealand

During 1815-1930 an estimated 3.25 million Scots left their homeland for various colonial destinations (McCarthy, 2012). Of these, New Zealand was the most far-flung, and yet Scots emigrated there in numbers well above their population ratio (Bueltman, 2011). Originally portrayed as assimilators who quickly blended into their new surroundings, recent literature has highlighted their strong and ongoing links to the 'homeland' and the dense social networks they established and maintained with other Scots upon arrival in New Zealand (McCarthy 2011). Yet the degree to which they retained Scots features in their language use has received little attention. While Scottish settlers have seen considerable investigation across the historical and sociocultural spheres (i.e. McClean 1990; Bueltman 2008; Lenihan 2010; McCarthy 2008, 2009), they have not yet been the focus of linguistic analysis. By the nineteenth century written Scots was extremely limited among the middling classes who made up most of the migrants, but this did not mean it had disappeared altogether. Certain lexis, expressions and spellings may have remained an indispensable part of their repertoire, serving as pragmatic or nostalgic literary devices (see Cruickshank, 2012; Dossena, 2013, 2019). Indeed, the maintenance of heritage features has been identified in the correspondence of Irish (Bonness 2017, 2019; Avila-Ledesma 2019) and English immigrants to New Zealand (e.g. Hundt 2012, 2015; Hundt and Szmrecsanyi 2012, 2015). Moreover, the Scots language community would also contribute to the development of a supraregional New Zealand English within later generations (Hickey 2003), and to local varieties, most notably in the Scottish enclaves of Southland and Otago which saw a Scots-influenced regional variety emerge (Bauer 1996; Villarreal et al., 2021). To explore this uncharted linguistic landscape, the first corpus of personal writings from early Scottish settlers is being compiled and digitised, followed by analysis into the Scots/non-standard spellings, lexis and syntactic features they retained. This paper explores the process of corpus compilation, the features identified in these historical documents, and compares their frequency and range across region, particularly between the specifically-Scottish settlement of Otago and the more loosely-populated North Island.

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Session 5: Registers

Colin Robertson
Scots Leid Associe and Scots as a Modern Legal Language

The main theme of this presentation is the Scots Leid Associe. The subtheme is Scots language as a modern language of law. The presenter is a member of SLA. With linguistic assistance of SLA members, he contributed articles to its Journal *Lallans* on law-related themes. The presentation draws on these experiences and practitioner work with EU legal English, translation, terminology, and multilingualism. It asks about Scots as a modern language of law. What status? How relevant or useful? Is linguistic adaptation required? The current context of a Scottish Language Bill provides a policy-formation setting. What issues should it address?

Comparisons with Scots in Ulster are important. Does the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 provide a role model for Scotland? How far are the two contexts comparable? Is Scots language more suited as a language of everyday culture, literature and education than of law?

After an Introduction, the presentation begins on a personal note and moves to an appreciation of the work of the Scots Leid Associe. The subtheme of Scots as law of language is then addressed. A distinction between language of law (legal language) and law of language (rules governing the language) is drawn. Similarl, the differentiation between written and oral language. Legal drafting takes place in English, with Scots terminology, but there are overlaps that blur the picture, as well as regional variations in Scots. The more distinctive side for Scots from a legal perspective lies in the oral dimension, where witnesses and litigants are Scots speakers and use it to express themselves. This can give rise to different dialect and speech forms and contrasting interpretations to their utterances. What status oral Scots in court cases? Whose meaning? The intention of the speaker, or legally imposed (by court and judge) meanings? The example of 'aye' as meaning 'yes' or 'always' provides an example of potentially different perceptions between utterer and receiver. Modern Scots literature seems mainly to draw inspiration from the oral language and culture. That is a strength.

Following these reflections, the legal-policy question is posed: whither Scots language? Formal recognition and protected status in Scotland, with support, resources, and encouragement? Education, and literature? But what about Scots as a legal language? Is its situation analogous to Gaelic? Does it need to be a formal legal language?

Conclusions: first, emphasise the role of the SLA; second, observe that Scots has long been a language of law and remains so residually; third, note there is mixing and overlap with English, so it is difficult to make a clear separation at times. Scots legal texts use English language, orthography, syntax, and terminology alongside Scots legal terminology; fourth, the needs of Scots speakers must be identified, recognised and validated, for oral as well as written contexts; fifth, work would be required to adapt Scots for modern legal systems (i.e., spelling, terminology, etc) as it arguably lacks the specialist technical terminology; sixth, the need for Scots as a legal language is linked to the status and use of English; seventh, it is for native speakers to decide how they wish the language to be used and evolve.

Lucy Jackson (University of Glasgow)
Mediatisation of the Marginalised: A Content Analysis of Glaswegian Vernacular Accent Portrayals in Film

The reliance on accent use in mediated performances can inform social meanings of phonetic variation and the presence of language-based stereotypes in society [1], which have been found to negatively impact job prospects [2] and criminal procedures [3]. This quantitative content analysis is the first to examine empirical patterns in the portrayal of the stigmatised Glaswegian vernacular (GV) accent [4] across 12 films. To analyse social stereotypes imbued within mediated GV performances, these portrayals were compared to 8 other accents from the dataset that contrasted in regionality and social class.
A total of 5,825 data points was coded by two coders for 233 characters within the films. Each character was analysed across 25 separate attributes: social attributes (e.g., intelligence, friendliness) were coded using a 5-

point Likert scale system, and ordinal categories were employed to capture socio-demographic information (e.g., gender, weight) and stigmatised social behaviours (e.g., profanity use, aggression, and substance use). To ensure a robust coding framework was achieved, coder 1 was a trained linguist and coder 2 was a lay person. Intercoder agreement between the two coders on character evaluations was achieved with an almost perfect agreement, κ = 86% [5], and greater than would be expected by chance, $z=7.51$, $p<.05$. Due to the acknowledged issue of accent credibility in mediated accent performances, a novel method of accent classification was developed to incorporate both phonetic analysis and contextual cues derived from the mediated source. Further analysis of mediated GV portrayals explores the excessive use of of additional semiotic resources (e.g., profanity use, Glaswegian Scots and stigmatised social behaviours) by actors in an attempt to cultivate credible Glaswegian identities.

Non-parametric tests and probabilistic ordinal logistic regression models were conducted to account for any significant differences in the social portrayals between accents. The results found mediated GV portrayals to significantly differ in comparison to standard-accented characters. The GV accent was associated with significantly heightened levels of aggression and profanity use, paralleling present social stereotypes of Glaswegians as violent and anti-social [6]. GV characters were represented as low in competence, as found in previous language attitude research on stigmatised varieties and low-status social groups [7, 8]. The findings demonstrate the presence of bias in mediated accent portrayals, questioning the implications of media consumption on societal perceptions towards speech communities and their speakers.

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Dawn Leslie (University of Aberdeen)
ChatGPT – The Next Scots Makar? (…spoiler alert: probably not)

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has been gathering steam in recent years, giving rise to more and more publicly available tools. The most prominent of these is ChatGPT: a chatbot which produces 'human-like' responses when prompted.

For English – a 'high resource language' – ChatGPT does well, producing English which, although the content may sometimes be questionable, is closely aligned to standard written usage. However, recent studies have suggested that for 'low resource languages' ChatGPT performance is diminished (Robinson et al. 2023). GenAI relies on a wealth of online data in a given language to 'train' itself on: something which many minority languages lack.

Modern Scots is arguably a 'low resource language' in terms of online presence. The effectiveness of GenAI content in Scots is also complicated by the lack of an orthographic standard (Bann & Corbett, 2015). In this paper, I will present the results of a small-scale study which uses ChatGPT 4.0 to generate a corpus of 'artificial' poetry in North-East Scots (Doric), using a similarly sized corpus of 'real life' Doric poetry as comparison points and topic prompts.

Firstly, results regarding the frequency of different categories of words will be presented, comparing differences between the 'real' Doric poetry and the ChatGPT texts. These results suggest a more Anglicised form of Scots being generated by ChatGPT and an increased presence of more noncontemporary orthographic features.

Secondly, the GenAI content will be approached with a more critical eye, delving deeper into the orthographic choices. This will focus on the obvious limitations of the ChatGPT function, including noticeable 'errors' or 'non-Doric' features which appear in the ChatGPT poetry, as well as the degree of internal consistency in the Scots being used.

Finally, possible reasons for these limitations will be explored and suggestions made regarding the future of Scots in this ever-changing digital landscape.

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Session 6: Ulster perspectives

John Kirk (University of Vienna)
Ulster and the *Digital Lexical Atlas of Scotland*

Seven Ulster counties (Donegal plus the six counties of Northern Ireland) were included in the *Linguistic Survey of Scotland*. The first lexical questionnaire, on which the survey was based, was distributed in Ulster, in the early 1950s, among 132 informants across 117 localities; the second among 25 informants across 24 localities. The responses were included in the *Linguistic Atlas of Scotland: Scots Section (LAS),* vols. 1 and 2 (Mather & Speitel 1975, 1977), which may be taken to be representative of traditional folk vocabulary. The original questionnaire notebooks, by means of which the data were gathered, are archived at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum. This published atlas material has now been digitized at the University of Vienna in a specially constructed relational database. The digital atlas is based on various open-source base-maps, onto which the data are interactively projected as dot maps, with separate maps for counties and localities. The aim of this paper is thus to introduce the *Digitized Lexical Atlas of Scots* and to present and discuss some preliminary findings. A key innovation of the atlas is a recategorization of the data in terms of purely lexical (i.e. etymologicallylexical) types – 'lexemes' – regardless of spelling or implications for pronunciations. Lexemisation involves the conversion of the great many orthophonological spellings which were recorded for an item into a single spelling as a hyponymic exponent of the lexical variable. Various research questions can now be tested, especially with a focus on Ulster, such as the nature of the data: whether denotative, descriptive, metaphorized, or simply imitative; the issue of the great many diminutives, the origins of Scots; the borders of Scots; the Scots-ness of Scots, and regionality within Scots (including the Ulster-ness of Scots); and the Ulster-ness of Ulster Scots. The discussion will be copiously illustrated with appropriate maps.

Alan Millar (Ulster University)
Ulster-Scots Poocher in an English Stream – Charlie Reynolds a very north Antrim language champion

This paper examines the legacy of the late Charlie Reynolds (1944 – 1923), Ulster-Scots activist, poet/rhymer, researcher and newspaper-columnist.
An "Emblematic" contemporary author, from a "core area", Reynolds can be placed in a tradition of country poets/writers, going back to the Rhyming Weavers and kailyard novels, with themes rooted in close-knit rural communities predominating in his work [1]. Using primary source material, I will appraise key aspects of Reynolds work and public, critical and media reaction to it.
Focussing on conditions of perceived neglect [2] in the late 1990s, the paper assesses Reynolds success (with Charlie Gillen [3]) in increasing community interest in Ulster-Scots, their re-branding and creating a new audience, assisted by Ulster-Scots organisations, but also their limitations – the absence of holistic vision, inter-agency co-operation and resources, in tackling language decline [4] [5]. Reynolds produced two poetry collections during his lifetime [6] [7]. He was principal researcher behind *The Bushside Letters* [8] and as *The Poocher,* wrote articles for local press. [9].

The paper also examines the Ullans Speakers Association (USA), an Ulster-Scots language charity Reynolds co-founded in 2008, now playing a central role in Ballymoney civic life.

Though featuring in critical overviews [10] [11] and anthologies [12], no specific critical work on Reynolds, or USA, has been undertaken, thus this paper fills a significant gap.

Reynolds, language champion and authentic exemplar of the labouring class country-rhymer, built audience by innovating a pre-existing appetite for English language rhymes.

However, his valiant confronting of language decline was partial, with limited vision and assistance from statutory agencies. Nevertheless, Reynolds's significant contribution, increased respect and interest in Ulster-Scots, particularly in north Antrim, created tangible community pride; fostered confidence in a new generation, particularly within the USA, who carry his legacy forward in a blend of Ulster-Scots and civic activities, reflecting community appetite and need.

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Hutchinson W. (2013) Ulster-Scots in Northern Ireland: from neglect to re-branding, *Études Irlandaises* [online] 38-2 2-13 - *p3 Varieties of Neglect.*

Charlie Gillen, known as *Tha Wizard,* fellow Ulster-Scots poet from Dervock, author of *Tha Wizards* Quill et al. They travelled the country promoting Ulster-Scots language together, doing readings, performances etc.

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Ballymoney Chronicle 11.05.23 - *p2* News report on Reynolds's death. Charlie Gillen, in his tribute, says, "It (Ulster-Scots) wus gyley deid whun we started..."

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Aul Han or John McFall wrote for the Northern Constitution from 1906 – 1913, his work was republished by the USA in two pamphlets. The *Chronicles o the aul han* (2009) and *The Bushside Letters* (2011); both edited by the USA. Reynolds was accredited as 'principal researcher' and 'inspiration' behind the project.

As *Tha Poocher* Reynolds contributed monthly Ulster-Scots articles for the Ballymoney Chronicle and Ballymoney Times between 2011 and 2015. The 2012 articles were republished in *Ullans Alive* (2012), the USA magazine

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Plenary 2

Frank Ferguson
(Ulster University)
John Hewitt's Marvellous Lists and the Championing of Language Communities"

John Hewitt has been recognised as a groundbreaking figure within the fields of writing, criticism, book collection and curation. His seminal *Rhyming Weavers and Other Poets of Counties Antrim and Down* (1974) has played a major role in the celebration, preservation and dissemination of work by generations of under-represented working-class Ulster writers. In the fifty years since this publication Hewitt has also been recognised for his celebration of Ulster-Scots writing and his particular ability to engage with various speech communities within Northern Ireland and further afield as part of his work with the Ulster Museum and Irish Pen. In this concluding plenary I will explore Hewitt's approach to poetry and language and examine his decades' long obsession with exploring the writing and vernacular of the province of Ulster. I will trace his early interest in language and writing which culminated in a Masters in the early fifties and investigate how his enthusiasm for the local word continued throughout his life. There is much to commend in his dogged enthusiasm and his endless construction of lists of writers, texts and pamphlets. However, some of his work demonstrates an avoidance of key aspects of the literary and linguistic traditions. I will explore how he is not as complementary to the poetry of the weavers as some more recent critics have been. Furthermore, I will argue that certain contemporary writers and collectors are occluded from his research. Despite this, I will conclude that Hewitt's ability to build connections is very obvious in his approach to language and that these networks provide invaluable information for scholars and enthusiasts.