The Way Forward for the Scots Language

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WHAT SCOTS IS

Unlike Gaelic, Scots is closely related to English and it is now often asked: 'What is Scots?'; 'Is it a language or a dialect of English?'; 'Is it bad English?'; 'Is it swearing?'. Certainly, in some quarters, Scots has a bad image associated with a drunk staggering about the street and asking every passing male: "Ir ye awricht Jimmie?" Despite the close relationship with English, sentences written in Scots sometimes look very different and perhaps incomprehensible to an English person. For example: "Ilkane gangs his ain gait" or "Monie a pikkil maks a mukkil."

It is difficult to answer the question 'Is Scots a Language?', because whether any mode of speech is regarded as a language or a patois depends on the status we accord it. If we see it as the speech of a country, then Scots becomes a language. If we see Scotland as an abberant part of England, then Scots becomes a deviant form of English - a patois. It has often been suggested that a language is essentially a particular dialect which has an army and a navy to support it.

What Scots is, is essentially a political question. For example, in the sixteenth century, Portugal and Spain were politically united and if they had stayed united, Portuguese would probably have remained another Iberian dialect rather than a language in its own right. Similarly, Dutch is now seen as a distinct national language rather than a form of Low German, because of the fact of Dutch independence. On the German side of the Dutch border, where the language may be linguistically Dutch and practically indistinguishable from that spoken on the Dutch side, then Low German it becomes. The future of the Scots language certainly depends on the political future of Scotland.

The term 'Scots' is at present a generic term which covers every aspect of the language: the language of the medieval makkars and the Scottish Court; the literary Scots which developed after about 1707; and all the surviving dialects, such as the speech of Buchan, the Borders, Caithness and Shetland. Contemporary colloquial Scots, now differentially eroded under the influence of English, is what is left to us of the State Language of Scotland before the Union of the Crowns in 1603.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This language, Scots, is descended from the form of Anglo-Saxon spoken in Lothian and Berwickshire, which originally formed part of the ancient Kingdom of Northumbria. This area became a permanent part of Scotland after the Battle of Carham in 1018 and its language eventually replaced Gaelic, the ancient language of the Scots Kingdom, as the language of the Scots Court. As late as the fourteenth century, this language was still known as Inglis and seems to have been very similar

on opposite sides of the Border. However, in the following centuries, it developed along very different lines. On the Scottish side, the language began to evolve into the language of an independent kingdom. On the Northumberland side, the language came to be regarded as a northern English dialect where eventually, words which had been in common use on either side of the border, such as "bairn", "doun", "faither", "gang" and "heid", came to be seen as imports from Scotland.

Scots, as it survives today, has many Norse features, such as "kirk" for church, "skraich" for screech, "ilk" for each, "streik" for stretch; many words borrowed from French such as "ashet", "aumrie", "cundie", "douce", "dour" and "tassie"; a number of Flemish influences through words such as "loun", "pinkie" and "scone"; in addition to Gaelic words such as "bourachie", "brae", "glen", "ingil", "keelie", "loch" and "winnok". Many other words borrowed into Scots from various European sources are quoted by Murison (1977).

Scots -The State Language

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Scots was certainly the State language. It was the principal language used at the Court, State records were kept in Scots and it was spoken by everyone in Scotland who did not speak Gaelic. Scots had a body of literature of European standing, represented by the works of Robert Henryson, William Dunbar and Gavin Douglas. At this time, Scots was generally seen as adequate for every purpose in life and Gaelic, the ancient language of the Scots kingdom, was not held in high regard in the lowlands and had become known as 'Erse'.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, during the reign of James VI, there were a number of Court poets such as Alexander Scott (1525-84), Alexander Montgomerie (1545-1611) and Mark Alexander Boyd (1563-1601), and the following stanzas from a poem by Montgomerie exemplifies the Court language they used:

The Nicht is Neir Gone
Hey! now the day dawis;
The jolly cock crawis;
Now shroudis the shawis
Thro' nature anon.
The thissel-cock cryis
On lovers wha lyis:
Now skaillis the skyis;
The nicht is neir gone.

The fieldis owerflowis
With gowans that growis,
Quhair lilies like lowe is,
as red as the rone.
The turtle that true is,

With notes that renewis
Her pairtie pursuis:
The nicht is neir gone.

This poem exemplifies the Scots practice of using what appears to be the singular form of verbs with plural nouns, as in: "Auld men dees an bairns suin forgets!" "The kye cums hame." This feature is still found in contemporary Scots speech, for example, in such sentences as: "The weeds cums throu the fence aye," and "The nichts is fairlie drawin in." This was the subject of a paper presented by Michael Montgomery (1991) at the third International Conference on the Languages of Scotland. It is an interesting feature of the Scots grammar and good Scots, but has often been presented in our schools as bad grammar, because it represents a deviation from standard English.

This period in Scottish history was also characterised by some remarkably enlightened legislation. For example, the 1574 Act Anent the Puir (Donaldson, 1974) involved the imposition of a levy to provide for the socially disadvantaged, and an important distinction was made between "sturdie beggaris" and "puir dounhauden bodies":

"An sen cheritie wald that the puir, aigit and impotent personis sould als necessarlie be providit for as the vagabundis and strang beggaris ar repressit, and that the aigit, impotent and puir people sould have ludgein and abyding places throuchout the realme to settil thame selfis intil ..... the eldaris and deaconis in everie citie, burgh and gude toun and the heidsmen of ilk parochyn to landwart sal .... tax and stent the haill inhabitantis within the parochyn, according to the estimatioun of thair substance ... to sic ... contributiun as salbe thocht sufficient to sustene the saidis puir people...."

Scots can perhaps be regarded as having reached its zenith as a recognised national language suitable for every purpose of life about the time of the Reformation in 1560. However, the process of evolution into a language distinct from English was arrested in the middle of the century by the introduction of an English translation of the bible by the reformers from Geneva. The Scots language was sufficiently close to Elizabethan English for this version of the bible to be understood in Scotland and it became universally used. A passage from Purvey's version of Wycliffe's New Testament was uplifted by Murdoch Nisbet around 1520 and given Scotticised spellings, but no satisfactory published version of a translation of the bible into Scots was available at this time.

Thus, the Scottish people, while still politically independent from England, quickly acquired the impression that since the word of God was evidently in English, God must certainly be an Englishman: a dangerous misconception. There are certainly very few examples of Scottish writing in which God is represented as a Scot. One is found in the joke where the sufferers in the torment of hell hold up their hands and plead: 'But Lord, oo didnae ken, oo didnae ken!' only to receive the response, 'from God in His infinite mercy: Weill, ye ken nou!'

Another example of God having a Scottish identity can be found in Alastair Mackie's poem, "In Absentia":

Syn God said: "Nou I'm awa,
Mak a kirk or a mill o' t!"
And God gaed tae the back o beyond
i the midst o aathing.

The Downgrading of Scots

The period when Scots was internationally seen as the separate language of an independent kingdom came to an abrupt end in 1603, when James VI blithely took his Court with him to London. As a result, the language lost both the prestige of being associated with the Court and its principal national focus. Thereafter, because of this political development, a tendency developed to regard Scots as an inferior or corrupt form of English. Although the language survived and evolved in its spoken dialect forms, particularly in rural areas such as the Borders and Buchan, its further development as a literary language or as a medium of communication for 'serious' purposes was impaired.

During the seventeenth century, English became the language of kirk and state and became more and more associated with power and politics. Scots became more associated with barn and byre, and flesh and feeling. This distinction was well established by the time of Robert Burns, who demonstrated that he no longer regarded Scots as a language suitable for every purpose, by usually shifting into an English register in his poems whenever he wanted to express lofty sentiments.. This' practice is illustrated by the first two stanzas of the poem, 'To a Mouse'. The title is in English, the first stanza is in rather uncompromising Scots and the second reflective stanza in a stilted kind of English.

"Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breistie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty
Wi bickerin brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an chase thee,
wi murderin pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion,
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow mortal!"

The processes of confining and downgrading Scots continued in the nineteenth century and, towards the end of the century, Scots had become identified by the Kailyard writers as a parochial form of speech, at one and the same time associated with the parish pump and the deepest feelings of those who had been exposed to it in childhood. This connection with profound feelings is revealed in some of the Kailyard novels. In "Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush" (MacLaren, 1895), we have some very poignant scenes. For example, in the scene where the death of Dr MacLure is described, his friend Drumsheugh puts up a prayer at the bedside:

Amichty God .... dinna be hard on Weelum MacLure, for he's no been hard wi onybody in Drumtochty ... Be kind tae him as he's been tae us aw for forty year ... Forgie him what he's duin wrang, an dinna cuist it up tae him ... Mind the fowk he's helpit ... the weemen an bairnies ... an gie him a welcome hame, for he's sair needin it, eftir aw his wark ... Amen.

Although this novel might now be seen as Victorian schmaltz, it ran to eight editions in the 1890s and about 50,000 copies were sold.

Perhaps the low-water mark in the Kailyard was reached with Alexander Anderson's "Cuddle Doon". Here, the final stanza is clearly on the wrong side of that ill-defined boundary between sentiment and sentimentality:

The bairnies cuddle doon at nicht
Wi mirth that's dear to me;
But soon the big warl's cark an' care
Will quaeten doon their glee.
Yet, come what will to ilka ane,
May He wha rules aboon
Aye whisper, tho their powes be bald,
"Oh, bairnies, cuddle doon."

The Lallans Movement

Throughout the present century, there has been a growing reaction against the parochial image of Scots created by the Kailyard writers. There were some signs of this reaction in the Scots written by Robert Louis Stevenson and it became more forthright with the Lallans movement started by C. M. Grieve (Hugh MacDiarmid) in the 1920s. This movement gathered momentum during the following two decades. MacDiarmid demonstrated in a number of fine lyrics in Scots, such as "The Bonnie Broukit Bairn" and "Empty Vessel", that the range of Scots could be extended to cover cosmic themes.

The Bonnie Broukit Bairn

Mars is braw in crammasy,
Venus in a green silk goun,

the auld muin shaks her gowden feathers,
their starry talk's a wheen o blethers,
nane for thee a thochtie sparin,
Earth, thou bonnie broukit bairn!
But greit, an in your tears ye'll droun
the haill clanjamfrie!

This was a new non-parochial use of Scots and it led to a significant revival of interest in the language as a medium of poetic expression. William Soutar was writing in excellent Scots at this time and a number of emulators of MacDiarmid appeared on the scene. Archaic words were resuscitated, notably by Lewis Spence and Douglas Young, and an attempt was made to restore integrity to what had been a noble language. These activities have been described, perhaps over-optimistically, as "The Scottish Renaissance". However, some fine poems were written in the early post-war period by writers like Robert Garioch, Alastair Mackie, Alexander Scott and Sydney Goodsir Smith.

Although this movement had a profound effect on creative artists in Scotland, it hardly reached the general public and there was no detectable political effect. There was, however, a certain amount of uneasy sneering. The following parody of the efforts of the Lallans poets, which was published in a student magazine shortly after the end of World War II, indicates the character of the reaction in some quarters.

I hear the speugs abune the sheugh,
the whaups up on the muir,
but I maun plod ahint the pleugh,
an' O ma hert is sair!

In general, the Lallans movement cannot be said to have been a great success in the short term. It had no sigificant effect on the treatment of Scots in schools and some poems were written in a bogus kind of Scots - a language which was syntactically English, laced with archaic Scots words dredged from a dictionary. This was not so much the fault of the Lallans poets as the consequence of the neglect of Scots in the schools. It is very difficult to write well in a language without standards or instruction.

One unfortunate effect of the Lallans movement was that the public was left with the curious impression that Hugh MacDiarmid, single-handed, created a language called Lallans or Synthetic Scots, which was in some sense artifical. This notion was peddled by Robin Bell (1989) in the introduction to an anthology of Scottish verse published in 1989. Bell declared that he was not sorry that there was so little work in Lallans in the anthology and went on to state, 'I regard it as a wasteful distraction for Scottish poetry that such a great poet and persuasive personality as Hugh MacDiarmid should have reached his peak at a time when there was a fashion for synthetic languages. Bernard Shaw was an advocate of Esperanto, but he had more sense than to write his plays in it.' (Bell, 1989)

Perhaps the most charitable thing that can be said of these remarks is that they do not bear examination. The term Lallans, as used by Burns and Robert Louis Stevenson, is simply another word for Scots and the comparison with Esperanto is absurd. Except for a few experimental pieces, the language used by MacDiarmid in his poems was very natural. In Crowdieknowe, for example, apart from two anglicised features (the use of the exclamation "Oh" in the first line and the rhyming of "bairn" with "swearin" in the second stanza) the language is entirely natural.

Oh to be at Crowdieknowe
when the last trumpet blaws,
An' see the deid come lowpin owre
The auld grey waws.

Muckle men wi tousled beards,
I grat at as a bairn
'll scramble frae the croodit clay,
Wi feck o swearin..

MacDiarmid certainly introduced archaic words (such as "howdumbdeid" and "amplefeyst") into the fabric of several of his poems, but this happens with writing in any language. Perhaps the only sense in which the language of MacDiarmid's poems can be said to be regarded as unnatural or contrived, relates to the extent to which he has anglicised his work to suit the notion that modern dialects of Scots (presumably including that of Langholm) were 'debased' or 'degenerate'. It has been pointed out by Milton (1986) that in believing that dialect forms reflect linguistic impoverishment and incompetence, MacDiarmid was about fifty years behind the times. Serious investigators of language had abandoned such views a long time before.

MacDiarmid's negative view of regional dialects as the speech of mere 'hinds' or 'chawbacons' appears to have been derived from what Milton (1986) has called 'the anglicising prescriptivists of Her Majesty's Inspectorate' in the latter half of the nineteenth century, as recorded by Keith Williamson (1982, 1983). At this time, the use of local dialects of Scots was evidently firmly disapproved of in the class room. No doubt as a consequence of negative attitudes encountered in his youth to his own natural speech, MacDiarmid appears to have developed a contemptuous attitude to dialect and a view that literary Scots was a 'corrected' version of colloquial Scots, conforming to the grammatical and syntactical standards of literary English.

THE CURRENT STATE OF SCOTS

Scots in Education

Ever since the Treaty of Union of 1707, generations of Scots have had to come to terms with a situation in which they had been taught English in English at school and

where the way of speech natural to them was officially regarded as wrong by definition. This created a situation in which many Scots felt that the way they spoke was unacceptable, or something to be ashamed of, so that the sooner they rid themselves of their Scottish characteristics the better. A case is on record of a school in Fife where a five year old girl complained to her teacher: 'Please Miss, yon laddie hut me.' When the teacher enquired which boy she was talking about, the girl informed her, 'It wes John Potato.' The infant mistress was puzzled by this, since there was nobody of that name in the class, but it suddenly occurred to her that there was a boy by the name of John Totty. The little girl had translated this boy's name into English for the teacher's benefit.

The educationist, John Low (1974), cited the case of the schoolboy who was asked to compose a sentence containing the word "bell" and offered the following: "The skuil bell skunnert ma lug". Since this imaginative sentence, involving relevant social commentary, was dismissed as unacceptable, the boy's feelings appear to have been fully justified.

To a significant extent, what we have had in Scotland, in place of education over many generations, is a process of deracination - a process of separating children from their roots - which is the opposite of education. Education should help children build upon their cultural heritage. It really is a wicked thing to tell a five year old child at school, 'The way you speak is wrong and must be corrected.' To tell a child this is very damaging. The child's cultural identity is undermined and the child's whole family insulted. This treatment of generations of children in Scotland has probably introduced a schizoid element, an element of self-hatred, into the national psyche. Associated with this is self-contempt, the well-known Scottish cringe.

The Anglicisation of Place Names

One consequence of the loss of justifiable pride in the Scots identity has been the 'zeal' of local authorities, local tourist boards and cartographers in anglicising Scottish street names and place names. "Avenues", "terraces", "hills", "crescents" and "lanes" have been ruthlessly substituted for our native "gaits", "raws", "braes", "wynds", "loans" and "vennels". "Church Hill" replaces "Kirk Brae" and "The Sauchiebrae" is transformed into the "Willowbrae Road". In St. Andrews, "Baxters Wynd" has been disgracefully tranamogrified into "Bakers Lane"! The velar fricative in "haugh" is sometimes dropped so that a street named "Pan Ha"' has appeared near Kirkcaldy on a "haugh" where salt used to be panned. The surname "Waugh" becomes pronounced "Waw" and Loch Menteith becomes 'The Lake of Menteith' by corrupting "The Laigh o Menteith", the name of the adjoining "carse". Whole communities have lost their Gaelic or Scots names. Applecross suddenly appears in the North-West Highlands and cartographers transmogrify "Muirbattle" (where "muir" was pronounced in the same way as "mair") in the Borders to Morebattle.

In recent years there have been moves by parochial tourist boards to anglicise the native descriptions of Scottish topographical features and attempts have been made,

against public opposition, to rename Clydesdale as Clyde Valley, Strathspey as Spey Valley. It is difficult to discover what authority exists for such changes. In any self-governing country, native place names which reflect the history of the country are seen as valuable national assets, which have a value for tourism and which require government protection.

Social Attitudes - 'Good' and 'Bad' Scots

The problem with Scots is, of course, compounded by representing it as incorrect or corrupt English at school. Since education has to do with imparting a view of the world based on our social roots, no educational purpose can be served by representing Scots in such a denigratory way. For generations, Scottish children have been given an image of good English at school; but no image of good Scots. Instead of being given an image of good Scots, children have been sometimes presented with the psychologically-damaging notion that Scots is inherently bad or ugly, and some parents have collaborated with this treatment.

In a study of social attitudes to the use of Scotticisms in Edinburgh, Karl Sandred (1983) discovered striking differences in the prestige accorded to certain Scots words within and between different social classes. Astonishingly, the word "ken" was classed by eighteen informants as 'Good Scots' and by twenty-two informants as 'Bad Scots'. Clearly, there can be nothing inherently bad about a word like "ken". It can only have been perceived in this way by Sandred's twenty-two informants as a result of some imagined association with economic or social failure. Sandred (1983) also reported the case of a girl whose mother hit her so hard on the face when she heard her using the word "ken" that she lost two front teeth.

There is certainly a widespread notion that bad (or gutter or "tumshie") Scots is spoken by socially disadvantaged people who have not been deracinated by what has passed for education in Scotland, while some facility with good (or "neip") Scots is a resource for the more economically successful. It is perhaps inevitable that patterns of speech associated with economic deprivation or squalor should be regarded with disfavour by those who have been more fortunate. To some extent, the Scots language as a whole has shared this disagreeable image and low status associated with economic failure.

Also associated with the low status of Scots and the Scottish provincial cringe is the notion that Scots is simply bad English or a comic language appropriate for Buttons and the Ugly Sisters in a pantomime. The fact that Cinderella speaks a different language from her sisters is really a political statement. Scots is certainly a wonderful language for humour and numerous books were published in the last century which were full of reminiscences centred on the Kirk, of funny stories about ministers and beadles (Ford, 1895).

Over the last few decades, Scots has come under increasing pressure from English as a result of the influence of British radio and TV and the genuine article is

becoming more and more hard to find. There is no doubt that as a spoken language it is now becoming rapidly undermined and eroded. Scots has also suffered from the misconception that it is a disreputable dialect compared with the various kinds of Scots-English (representing varying degrees of anglicisation) which are now spoken in Scotland and which are seen to constitute some kind of norm. This notion has led to a bizarre state of affairs where Scots speakers speaking in a relatively natural way in their own country may suffer from a social handicap and be treated as quaint or amusing by people who actually speak in an artificial or affected way. There is certainly no rational basis for this view, since all patterns of speech are dialects, although some may be more ephemerally fashionable than others.

The extent of erosion of spoken Scots under the impact of English is now so great that there is now a problem of definition with spoken Scots. David Murison (1979) in a paper on the historical background to the languages of Scotland has stated: 'Because of its kinship and similarity to English, Scots is becoming more and more confused and corrupted by it, and so fewer people speak it correctly, perhaps even fewer than Gaelic.' Murison's concept of a correct Scots, however, does not seem to be shared by A. J. Aitken (1982), who has appeared to deny the existence of a spoken Scots language. Aitken has stated that 'Scottish language can fairly be called a highly distinctive national variety of English,' Thus Murison sees spoken Scots as having been corrupted by the influence of English while Aitken evidently regards it as an eccentric kind of English. To some extent, these appear to be as much political as linguistic judgments and the question arises whether it is proper to call a 'national variety' of English any kind of English at all. Certainly, nobody would describe official Norwegian, which is closely related to Danish, as a national variety of Danish.

It is not very helpful to the disadvantaged linguistic situation of the Scottish urban, slum-dwelling speakers of what Aitken would agree is normally called 'Bad Scots', to be told that there is no such thing as 'Bad Scots' or 'Good Scots'. From Aitken's point of view, 'Bad Scots' has to be seen as a deviation from good English rather than from 'Good Scots', so that the urban speaker of bad Scots is to be denied the consolation of ever establishing any connection between his speech and the body of literature in Scots. Thus any Scots features in his speech are to be viewed as deviations from good English, rather than deviations from good Scots, which Aitken asserts is a myth which does not really exist.

If good Scots does not exist, from this standpoint, bad Scots does not exist either. These are relative concepts. Nevertheless, in a considerable paper, Aitken (1982) has attacked the concept of an 'ideal, perfect good Scots' in an immaculate English, which shows no signs of any deviation from the current notion of 'ideal perfect English'. He goes on to state: 'condemnation of dialects like Bad Scots for alleged slipshodness, lack of correctness and ugliness, ultimately represent a response not to their qualities as language but to social evaluations of the sort of people who speak them.' While this view is becoming generally accepted, Aitken's observance of the current standards of good English implies that he has a notion of linguistic quality of language which is independent of social evaluation. This is a chicken which will

not fight, because the quality of a language is a value judgment which is inseparable from its social evaluation.

Scots as a Means of Cultural Expression

Although spoken Scots appears to be in danger of dying out altogether as a living language, there is now considerable interest in Scots as a means of cultural expression. The poet Sydney Goodsir Smith used to argue in public that it was necessary for him to write in Scots because English had become a global, technological language which had lost contact with its social roots. English, he argued, had become spiritually worn out and was no longer a suitable medium of poetic expression. This view was an echo of assertions made by Hugh MacDiarmid in 1923 (Buthlay, 1977), when he described Scots as:

"a vast unutilised mass of lapsed observation made by minds whose attitude to experience and whose speculative and imaginative tendencies were quite different from any possible to Englishmen and anglicised Scots today. Just as psychologically we have lost certain powers possessed by our forefathers - the art of wiggling our ears, for example - so we have lost word forming faculties peculiar to the Doric for the purposes of both psychological and nature description. There are words and phrases in the vernacular which thrill me with a sense of having been produced as a result of mental processes entirely different from my own and much more powerful. They embody observations of a kind which the modern mind makes with increasing difficulty and weakened effect."

There have been a number of useful developments in the last few decades in relation to Scots. The Lallans Society (later renamed the Scots Language Society) was founded in 1972. The Lallans magazine was launched in 1973. The Scottish National Dictionary was completed under the editorship of David Murison in 1976. Professor Lorimer's New Testament in Scots was published in 1983. The Concise Scots Dictionary was published in 1985. Robert McLellan's "Linmill Stories" were published as a complete collection in 1990. The Concise English-Scots Dictionary appeared in 1993 and the Scots Language Resource Centre was established in Perth in the same year. Professor Lorimer's New Testament in Scots, although perhaps about 400 years overdue, turned out to be a best seller. There is certainly a dearth of good prose in Scots and the "Linmill Stories" help to remedy this deficiency by providing a useful model for prose writing in Scots.

Scots and Lesser-Used Languages

Much more interest is now being shown within the European Union in the condition of the lesser used languages of Europe: such as Basque, Breton, Catalan, Cornish, Frisian, Occitan, Scots, Scots Gaelic, Welsh and the Romance languages of Northern Italy. There has been a European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL) with an office in Dublin for several years. This is an institution financed by the EU which has the object of improving the status of such languages within the

member states.

Although some of these languages are in a healthier state than others, most of them are now taught in the schools to some extent, and are provided with radio and TV slots. Around 40% of TV programmes in Catalonia are now in Catalan, and Catalan, Frisian, Irish and Welsh now have the status of official languages. The contrast between the treatment of these languages by governments of the states in which they are spoken and the the treatment of Scots by the UK government is extraordinary. For the past five years, Gaelic has received annual government grant support at the level of around £10 million. The present Annual grant to Comataid Telebhisein Gaidhlig (Gaelic Television Committee) is £8.7 million.

While nobody in the Scots Language Society would grudge this level of support for the ancient language of the Scottish kingdom, when it is considered that about fifty times as many people know some Scots than know Gaelic, then the British government should now be spending about £500 million per year in supporting Scots! However, by comparison with Gaelic, government support for Scots has been almost negligible and largely confined to small sums for the Scottish National Dictionary Association and the Scots Language Resource Centre.

The Scots Language in Drama

While the use of Scots in drama is certainly more limited than it should be, many of the major theatres in Scotland and many amateur companies produce plays in Scots. Perhaps too many of them are translations of plays by Moliere and others, rather than original work. The view seems to have become popular in theatrical circles that Scots is a particularly suitable language for use by Moliere's monstrous caricatures. The linguistic register involved in the Scots used in plays which have been recently produced ranges from the colloquial Scots of the "The Steamie" and "The Guid Sisters" to the sixteenth century Scots of the "Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaites", which has been produced as the centre piece of the Edinburgh International Festival on five occasions since 1948. This morality play in middle Scots by Sir David Lyndsay was also performed in Warsaw by the Scottish Theatre company, where it received standing ovations before the abrupt abandonment of the company in 1988.

Traditionally, the use of Scots has been an important feature of drama in Scotland for hundreds of years, although in this century until the mid 1930s, its use had become largely confined to comic characters in pantomime. These roles reflect a denigratory attitude to the language but, since the mid 1930s, we have seen some extension of the traditional comic use of Scots in mock-historical c.omedy plays by a new breed of playwrights. A one-act play by Robert McLellan called "Jeddart Justice" was produced in 1934 and this was followed by a full-length play, "Toom Byres", which was produced in Glasgow in 1936. Other plays by McLellan included "Jamie the Saxt" (1937), "Torwatletie" (1946) and "The Floers o Edinburgh" which explores the language problems in Scotland in the eighteenth century. Other playwrights of

merit who followed McLellan's example in the post-war period were Robert Kemp, who wrote "The Other Dear Charmer", "The Scientific Singers" and "The Laird o Grippy" and Alexander Reid who wrote "The Lass wi the Muckle Mou" and "The Warld's Wonder". There have also been a number of plays popular with amateur companies in the genre of "Johnny Jouk the Gibbet" by T. M. Watson and "The Honours of Drumlie" by James Scotland. Here we have a closed world, populated by "galluss lads", "chaumer louns" an "wurthie beylies". The action in such plays is frozen in historical time. However, since the late 1930s, the use of Scots on the stage has not been entirely restricted to this genre and there have been productions of plays in demotic Scots on contemporary life by a range of authors.

A comprehensive list of plays written in Scots since 1900 has been compiled by Charlotte Reid (1991) for the Scots Language Society and published by Glasgow City Libraries, running to 44 pages. Most of these plays are comedies, but Scots certainly has the linguistic resources to be extended to cope with any dramatic situation, from comedy to tragedy and from pantomime to high drama. In this connection, it is of interest that much of the plot of Shakespeare's Macbeth is recorded in Middle Scots in the Bellenden Manuscript, dated 1536. There is now great scope in the theatre for extending and upgrading the dramatic use of Scots outside its conventional association with pantomime and mock-historical kitchen comedy.

There is no good reason why Scots on stage should not be employed in tragedy. It was with this end in view that the author made a translation of Macbeth into Scots (Purves, 1992). The following is a well-known passage from Act II, scene 2:

"Cum blinndin nicht, hap up the tender ee
o peitie, an wi yeir bluidie
inveisibil haund, blouter the lyfe
that hauds me aye in fear! The nicht faws,
an hame the craw flies til the mirk wud.
The guid things o the day begins ti dover owre,
an the beiss that hunts i the derk begins
ti steir thairsells an set aboot thair wark.

A see ye wunner at ma wurds!
Now juist you cum yeirsell!
Things wi ill sterts growes strang wi wickedness."

There seems to be no reason to doubt that Scots has the resources to cope with any dramatic situation and that its image should not be confined to pantomime 'coamics' and television characters such as Rab C. Nesbitt.

Following the demise of the Scottish Theatre Company in 1992, the Advisory Council for the Arts in Scotland set up a committee to campaign for a National Theatre for Scotland. The campaign has received the support of the Scots Language Society

and many arguments have been advanced in favour of the establishment of a National Theatre. Because of the erosion of spoken Scots under the impact of English on the media, actors may not be sufficiently familiar with the uncompromising Scots used by some playwrights, so that many productions are currently marred by solecisms and mispronunciations of Scots words. Attempts at Scots by some actors sound embarrassingly inauthentic, although most actors know enough Scots to correct mistakes if they are given a little informed advice. Against the background of the way in which theatre is presently organised in Scotland, such advice is seldom sought. Furthermore, some playwrights do not seem to be concerned whether the Scots they write is authentic or not. In the play "Bondagers" by Sue Glover, which is a social commentary on the lives of female agricultural workers in the Borders in the nineteenth century, the language does not correspond to Border speech either in this century or the last.

A National Theatre would presumably be concerned with providing resources, information and advice to help directors to improve standards of authenticity in performance in Scots. This would be an obvious key function and an educational challenge for a National Theatre. In any country, the proper function of the theatre is to reflect the cultural mores of the community it serves and to extend awareness at a more universal level in the context of the native cultural heritage. A global view of human relations has to be presented from the country's own national perspective. At present, in the absence of a National Theatre, there is no effective general commitment in the theatre to Scotland's indigenous culture. In Scotland we have three principal linguistic registers for dramatic productions: English, Scots and Gaelic. Two of these registers are unique to Scotland and each is a valuable dramatic resource.

Since the Scots language is what is left to us of what was once the State language of Scotland before 1603, it is an important part of our cultural heritage. For many people, the theatre now provides the only opportunity for hearing the Scots language in a relatively uneroded form. The dramatic potential of Scots can only be properly realised against the background of a National Theatre which can provide a focus for Scotland's indigenous culture and a basis of a living dramatic tradition.

SCOTS IN BROADCASTING

In general, the media behave as if the Scots language does not exist although a majority of the population of Scotland know and employ some Scots every day. A negligible amount of material in Scots is published in Scotland's 'national' newspapers. The pattern is much the same in radio and television. In radio in Scotland, there has been some limited devolution to local radio and to BBC Radio Scotland,which has recently run a Scots Language Week in which a number of features have focused on Scots. This included a short news bulletin creditably read in Scots. However, Scottish television is almost entirely London-centred. Few television programmes are produced outside the London area and only a small proportion of those are produced in Scotland. The number of plays in Scots

produced in Scots is so small that there is no prospect of the development of satisfactory expertise and associated infrastructure in this area. The same can be said of the possibility of developing an indigenous Scottish film industry.

Those few TV features which are produced in Scotland are starved of adequate funding and expected to conform to the pattern seen as suitable for broadcasting on the 'network'. In practice, this means that programmes often have to project images of Scotland congenial to viewers in the London area. In consequence, TV plays produced in Scotland are seldom in uncompromising Scots and often involve the 'hard-man' image or images associated with urban deprivation in west central Scotland. It is certainly true that Rab C. Nesbitt and his associates speak a kind of Scots but it is certainly not true that such characters can be seen as representative of Scotland as a whole or that there is any necessary association between the Scots language and urban deprivation.

It is difficult to foresee any marked improvement in the broadcasting situation without a return of democratic government in Scotland. A move in the right direction might be the creation of a fully-empowered Broadcasting Council for Scotland which would draw its membership from representatives of the Scottish audience, though this body has been impotent in the past in its efforts to protect Scotland's interests. Following the establishment of a Scottish parliament, the creation of a Scottish Broadcasting Corporation would be essential and inevitable.

The Scots Language and National Identity

The Scots language is an important badge of national identity and its erosion and present status constitute a political problem that cannot be tackled properly (or even addressed) until there is a return of decision-making to Scotland. The problem relates to the question of national identity: whether we see ourselves as Britons or Scots. At present, most of us in Scotland vary our speech over a linguistic continuum with Scots-English (which is the cumulative result of the attempts of several generations of Scots to speak English) at one pole and what is left of Scots at the other - now largely confined to those who have not been deracinated by the influence of what has passed for education in Scotland. In speech, most people move along this spectrum to a varying degree, to accommodate the social circumstances in which they are placed. We try to vary our speech according to what we think is expected of us. This is to say that we suffer from linguistic insecurity. Many of us employ the odd Scots word in the context of English sentences to produce results like, "Alasdair is a very kenspekkil figure on the golf course these days" or "There is a wee bit of a stramash going on in the front row of the scrum." This may give spice to our speech and serves as a signal that while the speaker is sufficiently 'educated' not to use uncompromising Scots, he/she has knowledge of the language as a potential resource. In Scottish courts the use of Scots is evidently not expected of us. Indeed, the use of Scots in Court seems to be regarded as a subversive political act, to judge by the experience of a man who was consigned to the cells in 1993 by a Sheriff in Stirling for using the word "Ay" to address the bench.

THE WAY FORWARD

What then, is the way forward for people who are concerned with fostering this valuable part of our cultural heritage? What is immediately necessary is that we should begin to define what good Scots is. We have to establish a standard written Scots with a standardised spelling system, grammar and syntax of its own, so that it can be taught at school and at adult level. In this context, the word 'standard' would necessarily imply a considerable degree of flexibility.

The Scottish Language Project

At the time of writing, there is an expanding interest in teaching Scots at both school and university level and it appears that Scots is at last to be given its due place in schools curricula. In early 1993, all Scottish education authorities agreed to take part in the Scottish Language Project (Robertson, 1993) in partnership with the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (SCCC). The object of this project, which was laucnhed in 1996, is to promote the use of Scots and Gaelic in all primary and secondary schools. This objective is to be achieved with the aid of "Scotland's Kist", an anthology containing prose, poetry and drama, and associated audiotapes and visual teaching aids. The contents of this text were published in early1996 and the Scottish Language Project was duly launched (Scottish Consulative Council on the Curriculum, 1996).

Credit for initiating this laudable project is due to Robbie Robertson, assistant director of the SCCC. The project's description stated that 'the Kist will also contain audiotape readings of all printed texts in the anthology made by native speakers of Gaelic and each dialect of Scots. There will be a videotape showing the different locales in which Gaelic and the dialects of Scots occur.' Here there is no reference to literary Scots, the language in which most writing in Scots is published. An impression is given that while Gaelic is seen as a language, Scots is regarded within the project as a collection of local dialects, eroded to a varying extent under the influence of English in the media and in schools, and that the object of the exercise is to teach surviving dialects.

It is difficult to see how any of the surviving dialects of Scots could be effectively taught in schools. None of them has an extensive literature and none of them, except Shetlandic, has a contemporary published grammar which could be used as the basis for instruction. Furthermore, most teachers in Scotland are not native to the dialect area in which they teach. Scots cannot now be taught solely through the medium of its surviving regional dialects, which are now seriously eroded and infiltrated by English, to some extent as a result of earlier 'educational' policy.

Despite these difficulties, the Scottish Language Project marks a major breakthrough in education and it will involve substantial expenditure. While it is difficult to place a value on the resources which are involved in its implementation, this is estimated to

be in the order of £100,000. Fortunately, it now appears that the content of the Kist will not be confined to dialect material native to the areas covered by the various education authorities and that it will include material in literary Scots to which children will be able to relate their local dialects.

The normal way to teach any language is by reference to the literature in it, and to the idiom, grammar and syntax which the literature exemplifies. While every language is subject to continuous change, the literary form of each language is an anchor which provides linguistic continuity: a standard which ensures that those changes which become established are evolutionary in their nature. There is a substantial body of literature in Scots from around 1700 to the present time which is surprisingly consistent linguistically and which could be used as a useful teaching resource. Unfortunately, what now survives of spoken Scots has become linguistically dissociated in some respects from this literature. An important function in Scottish education should be to re-establish the connection between colloquial speech and the body of literature which exists.

Courses in the Scots language are now provided by the departments of English language at Edinburgh and Glasgow universities. It is understandable that in departments so-named, Scots is sometimes viewed as a kind of non-standard English. A few years ago at an adult education course at Edinburgh University, the teacher started her course by writing down her definition of Scots on the board. This was: SCOTTISH NON-STANDARD ENGLISH - WORKING CLASS. This definition begs many questions and she was astonished when members of the class angrily objected to it. Fortunately, this view of Scots seems to be atypical among university teachers involved in courses in Scots language. The term 'Scots' has really to be seen as a generic term covering every aspect of the language: middle Scots, literary Scots from about 1700 and all the surviving dialects and colloquial remnants.

Standard Scots

The existence of a significant literary tradition in writing in Scots from the time of Allan Ramsay at the beginning of the eighteenth century until the time say, of Robert Garioch and Alasdair Mackie in the second half of the current century has been an important factor in favbur of the survival of the Scots language. However, as a result of the treatment of spoken Scots in the schools, many grammatical, syntactical and idiomatic features of the spoken language have seldom been represented in writing. Many of these features can still be found in contemporary speech. A case has been reported of a schoolgirl who, on being late for school, told her teacher: 'Please Miss, A slept in. Ma mither is in hir bed.' The teacher's response was: 'You mean you overslept. Mother is in bed.' The girl had been under the impression she had been speaking English.

The need to develop Scots as a national language has been argued by Derrick McClure (1980) in a paper which inspired some criticism from A.J. Aitken (1980). McClure drew an analogy with the Norwegian experience in creating Nynorsk. This

analogy is perhaps misleading, since it relates to the synthesising of an artificial language from ancient roots. In Scotland, a national written language is already incipient in the existing fragmentary literature in Scots and, to some extent, in surviving colloquial speech.

Literary Scots has been described by Aitken (1980) as 'a somewhat archaistic and idealised form of central Scots', but it does provide a foundation on which a standard Scots could be built. While originally based on the speech of central Scotland, it cannot now be said to be any particular regional dialect and the Scots used by most writers, including Burns and MacDiarmid, from the time of Allan Ramsey, is surprisingly consistent linguistically, as is the language of most songs in Scots. It cannot be said that the language of "Caller Herrin" or "Corn Rigs" is in any particular dialect and such a sentence as, "Willie's gaen tae Melville Castle, buits an spurs an aw; he kissed the lassies aw fareweill afore he gaed awa," cannot be associated with any dialect area. The body of literature which exists in this language is substantial, and there is also a significant amount of writing published in Shetlandic and North-East Scots (now often designated as The Doric). Writing in dialects which can be identified with other areas is practically negligible.

While literary Scots is already standardised to some extent and could, given the will, be further developed into a satisfactory standard form of written Scots, there are great problems of definition. Most literary Scots is in verse and the language is very variable, depending on the extent to which it has been anglicised by various writers. We have already seen that Burns switched into English whenever he wanted to be seriously reflective, and MacDiarmid was greatly influenced by the standards of English literature and a distaste of Scots dialect (Milton, 1986), otherwise he would never have written "Yin canna thow the cockles o yin's hert" in "A Drunk man looks at the Thistle" (MacDiarmid, 1987). It is impossible to imagine anyone ever saying such a thing in Scots, or that Burns could ever have written such a line as, "Gin yin meet yin comin throu the rye!"

In an important paper, Catherine Macafee (1980) stated that 'in grammar more than at other linguistic levels, modern written Scots tends to adhere to the model instilled by literacy in standard English.' This is a natural consequence of the representation of Scots in schools over a period of generations as an incorrect form of English. The adherence by writers in Scots to the standards of English grammar and orthography is not, of course, a modern phenomenon, it has been a characteristic of writing in Scots since the sixteenth century, and this trend was latterly followed by James VI.

Against the background of the continuing erosion of colloquial Scots, it is arguable whether a substantial proportion of recent writing purporting to be in Scots can properly be regarded as Scots at all. What can we make, for example, of a sentence such as "Ah wouldnae of came if Ah had of knew?", quoted by Macafee (1980) as an example of non-standard grammar in Scots. Should this be seen as a kind of Scots or simply as bad English? The acceptance of such a sentence as modern Scots simply perpetuates the pejorative notion that Scots is corrupt English.

Much contemporary writing contains few of the features which characterise the language and appears to consist of attempts at back translation from English into personal notions of what Scots is. Some of the so-called Scots currently written and published may be syntactically and idiomatically English and attempts to compensate for its inauthenticity by spelling English words in an unusual way and/or spicing up the text with bad language. It is not possible to write well in Scots without experience of colloquial speech or a sound knowledge of Scots idiom and syntax. In the absence of distinctive features of Scots grammar, as exemplified in such sentences as, "Auld men dees an bairns suin forgets" and "War the no a Kerr bade aince the ferr syde the glebe?" - the language loses its unique quality. Good Scots certainly cannot be written by anybody who decides to invent their own orthography and grammar off the cuff, because it it too much effort to discover the standards inherent in speech and in the substantial corpus of literature that already exists. A passage in English cannot be transformed into authentic Scots simply by substituting Scots words for English words without reference to structure and idiom.

The magazine Lallans, the journal of the Scots Language Society, is the only publication in existence which regularly appears in Scots. As such, it has provided an important outlet for writers who want to try their hand at Scots. Since it appeared in 1973, the editorial policy initiated by its founder, J.K. Annand, has been to set standards for written Scots, in particular, to encourage prose writing in Scots with a view to extending its use in areas where it has never been adequately developed. The 46 numbers of Lallans which have now been published, together with an anthology from the first 21 years which has been launched recently (MacCallum and Purves, 1995), constitute a valuable archive of writing in dialect and literary Scots in the last quarter of this century.

Nevertheless, we are in a situation where it seems unlikely that literacy in Scots can be sustained for very long unless Scots is effectively taught both at school and university level. Before this can be done, two resources which are obviously necessary are an up to date Scots grammar and a generally recognised orthography for Scots. The most recent publication which could be regarded as a grammar of Scots is, the Manual of Modern Scots (Grant and Dixon, 1921). Thus the publication of an up to date grammar is long overdue. A grammar of Shetlandic, which can be regarded as a branch of Scots, was first published in 1952 and reprinted in 1991 (Robertson and Graham, 1991). This describes many features which have parallels in mainland Scots.

Scots Orthography

In the courtly poems of the Makkars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when Scots was a State language, the rather loose system of spelling used was phonetically superior to that used by later writers, who had to be content with a state of affairs in which Scots had been downgraded for social and economic reasons. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, in the time of Allan Ramsay, Scots was

starting to be recognised in influential circles as a rustic dialect of English, rather than as a national language which had been independently derived from a common ancestor. Ramsay himself employed a system of spelling in his writing that reflected this parochial attitude. There was no satisfactory contemporary model of written Scots so, instead of basing his orthography on the relevant but outdated practices of the Makkars, Ramsay turned to English and embarked on large-scale anglicisation of Scots spelling (Robertson, 1973). Ramsay also introduced unnecessary apostrophes into Scots words with similar English equivalents, thereby giving the impression that they were really careless versions of their English counterparts.

Successors of Allan Ramsay, such as Fergusson, Burns, Scott and Galt, tended to follow Ramsay's spelling ideas, and the general trend throughout the eighteenth and nineteeth centuries was to adopt further spelling practices from English since this was the only accessible standard. By the end of the nineteenth century, Scots orthography was in a state of utter confusion as a result of hundreds of years of piecemeal borrowing from English and it has long been impossible for anyone to write in Scots without using a host of spelling forms adopted from English. The Scots language had come to be regarded as a parochial form of speech and the spellings employed by various Kailyard writers in the second half of the nineteenth century reflected this attitude.

A completely phonetic system of spelling Scots was devised by Sir James Wilson at the beginning of the present century (Grant and Dixon, 1921) and the following stanza from "Caller Herrin" gives an impression of the appearance of Scots written on this basis.

"Neebur weifs, noo tent ma tellin.
Hwun dhu boanay fush yee'r sellin,
At ay wurd bee in yur dailin
Truith ull stawnd hwun awthing's failin."

Although this system has been valuable for recording details of pronunciation, the outlandish appearance of Scots written on this basis ruled it out for general purposes. If the familiar appearance of written Scots is to be preserved, a largely phonetic system of spelling is required which will continue to employ traditional spelling precedents for most of the vowel sounds.

Following a spate of Lallans poetry in the 1930s and 1940s, a significant step towards introducing some order into the spelling of Scots was taken at a meeting of the Makkar's Club in Edinburgh in 1947, chaired by A.D. Mackie, where the 'Scots Style Sheet' was approved (Makkar's Club, 1947). This consisted of a number of recommendations designed to standardise many of the vowels and digraphs commonly used in spelling Scots. The use of apostrophes in words which would have been present if a related English word had been used instead (e.g. "he'rt" for "hert") was discouraged in this document. Many of these ideas were subsequently adopted by Lallans poets, and J.K. Annand, Douglas Young, Robert Garioch, A.D.

Mackie, Alastair Mackie, Robert McLellan, Alexander Scott, Tom Scott and Sydney Goodsir Smith all followed the recommendations in the Style Sheet to some extent.

These proposals closely followed the ideas of Douglas Young and A.D. Mackie and although they were very limited in their scope, as a result of their influence, modern Scots poetry looks much less like a careless version of English, plagued by swarms of apostrophes. Nevertheless, much greater consistency in the spelling of Scots is still required and it is necessary to carry this development a stage further. Since the proposals in the Scots Style Sheet amounted to about a single page of print and no guidance was given on how to represent the vowel in words such as "ben", "ken", "gled", "sned" and "redd", they were hardly adequate guidelines for spelling a language. Further proposals for the rationalisation of Scots spelling were published by the author (Purves, 1979) following support for reform from C.M Grieve. A further set of guidelines entitled 'Recommendations for writers in Scots' was published in Lallans 24 (Scots Language Society, 1985). These recommendations represented a consensus view of a representative group of writers currently employing Scots, following several years of debate and consultation. This document was essentially a developed version of the 1947 style sheet based on traditional spelling precedents in order to preserve the familiar appearance of written Scots. On the basis of this system, it is possible to deduce the pronunciation of nearly every Scots word from its spelling.

As a result of the work done by the Scottish National Dictionary Association, Scotland is well-served with Scots-English dictionaries. However, since it is the function of dictionaries to reflect past spelling practices (or malpractices) and spelling reform involves improving present anomalous practice, the authority of dictionaries can sometimes be an obstacle to progress in this area. In the Scottish National Dictionary and the Concise Scots Dictionary, three or four options can be found for the spellings of some words. The Concise English-Scots Dictionary (CESD) , the first dictionary of its kind, was published in 1993 (MacLeod and Cairns, 1993). This dictionary is unusual in that only one, or at most, two spellings are are given for each Scots word. Although the publication of the CESD is unlikely to end controversy over the spellings of particular words, it should have a useful effect in reducing the number of spelling options currently used by writers.

Probably more than 50 per cent of the lexis of Scots consists of words used in common with English. In the present state of Scots orthography, there seems no good reason to alter the spellings of such words if the English spelling leaves no doubt about the pronunciation, even if another diagraph would be preferred in the Scots system. For example, words such as "deep" and "sleep", "see" and "wee", "field", "here", "scene" and "croon", are probably best left alone. Also, there seems no justification for representing the word for as "fer", "fir" or "fur", since the vowel is unstressed and virtually undifferentiated. The same applies to representing "the" as "thi". If the spelling of a word used in common with English is irregular and there is a traditional precedent for a better Scots spelling, there is a case for using this. For example, "thai" or "thay" for "they", "thair" for "their", "thaim" for "them", "cum" and

"sum" for "come" and "some", are sensible spellings which were used by the medieval Makkars.

In practice, some writers, in accordance with the traditional Scottish tendency for "ilkane ti gang aye his ain gait", appear to invent their own spelling systems off the cuff and introduce additional options, sometimes with bizarre consequences. For instance, it is not unknown for writers to use the spelling "oan" to indicate a difference in pronunciation from the English "on". On this basis, "or" might be spelt "oar", and "clock" as "cloak". The word "land" is sometimes spelt "laund(d)" for similar reasons and an analogy with such spellings, we might feel obliged to use "Scoatlan(d)" for "Scotland". It seems generally unwise to try to alter the traditional orthography of Scots to such an extent that unfamiliar forms like this are the logical result. The object of the exercise of spelling reform is, while preserving traditional aspects of Scots orthography, to create a state of affairs where there will only be one spelling option for each each Scots words and where those who read Scots will be in no doubt from the spelling about the pronunciation of any word. Since any language is a communal system of communication, rather than a collection of individual systems based on the personal whims of writers, the present chaotic state of affairs undermines the status of Scots as a language and confirms its image in some quarters as a kind of broken English.

Reforms Necessary to Improve the Status of Scots

The Scots language is an important badge of national identity and its erosion is a serious national problem. The following reforms are necessary to arrest its decline and improve its status and prestige. The present condition of what was formerly the State language of Scotland is a direct result of the loss of control of the Scottish people over their own destiny. There is no prospect of the satisfactory implementation of such reforms and reversing the decline of Scots without the authority of a democratically accountable Scottish government.

1. In a self-governing Scotland, the Scots language shoud have official status and should be recognised in Scottish public life, including the Courts and the Law, as a valuable part of Scotland's national heritage.

2. The Scots language should be included as an essential part of school curricula, both at primary and secondary level and courses in Scots should be available at Scottish universities.

3. In teaching at both school and university, the Scots language should be regarded as a separate linguistic system from English, with its own idioms, grammar, syntax and orthography.

4. The definition of the grammar and syntax of Scots and the standardisation of Scots orthography are necessary before Scots can be taught effectively at any level. The body of literature in Scots provides a foundation on which a standard written

form of Scots could be built.

5. In order to create an image of 'good Scots' to which local dialects can be related, it is desirable that the teaching of Scots should be related to the substantial body of literature in Scots. Where there is a body of literature in local dialect, this will be a valuable complementary resource.

6. A National Theatre for Scotland should be established which would have as one of its functions the provision of resource, information and advice to help directors to improve standards of authenticity in dramatic performances in Scots.

7. In view of the fact that Scots is a language that can be understood to a varying degree by the great majority of people in Scotland, the Scots language should be given its rightful place in the media as a valuable aspect of Scotland's linguistic heritage.

8. Following the establishment of a Scottish parliament the creation of an independent Scottish Broadcasting Corporation would be essential before Scots could be given its proper place in radio and television

9. The indigenous Scots names of streets and topographical features are vital parts of Scotland's national heritage and steps should be taken by any Scottish government to prevent and reverse the anglicisation of such names.

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