Michty me, whit are ye gassin' aboot?
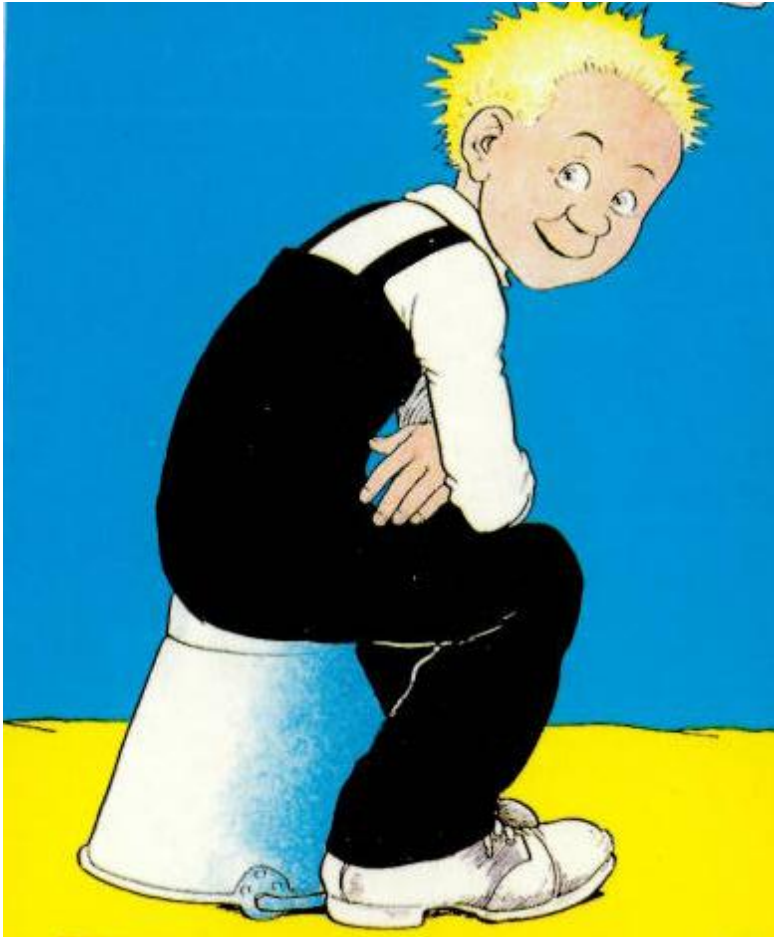
The use of Scots in the newspaper comic strips *The Broons* and *Oor Wullie*

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Sammendrag

Skotsk har lang historie som skriftspråk. Før Skottland og England ble forent under en konge ble det skrevet ekstensivt på skotsk, men da unionen ble et faktum begynte de fleste som kunne skrive å rette seg sørover med henhold til skriftspråket. Resultatet var at det skotske skriftspråket forsvant, med unntak av fra poesien, der det fortsatt sto sterkt.

I dag er det flere og flere skotske forfattere som skriver på skotsk. Dessverre sliter de med tre forhold: Holdninger til språket, der mange ser på det som en mindreverdig avart av engelsk; at deres potensielle publikum er skolert i å lese engelsk, og derfor har problemer med å skjønne sitt eget språk når de ser det på trykk; og det enkle faktum at det ikke finnes noen skriftlige rettelinjer for språket. Tidligere forsøk på å skape en skriftstandard har resultert i et språk som er avleggs og syntetisk.

The Broons og *Oor Wullie* er to tegneserier som går i ukeavisen *The Sunday Post*. De første stripene dukket opp i 1936, og seriene har gått fast siden da. For mange skotsktalende var disse tegneseriene deres første møte med skotsk på trykk. I tillegg er språket i tegneseriene ufravikelig skotsk, men likevel lettfattelig for en som er skolert i engelsk.

Denne oppgaven viser at tegneseriene har forblitt svært konsistent over de 70 årene de har eksistert. De ortografiske konvensjonene i tegneseriene korresponderer til studier av faktisk uttale, og selv om grammatikken ikke er like "bred" som fonologien følger den også i stor grad dokumenterte forhold.

Oppgaven viser også hvordan holdninger til språk kommer til uttrykk i tegneseriene gjennom kodebytte.

Acknowledgments

A thesis is never written in a vacuum. There are a number of people without whom this thesis would never have seen the light of day.

First of all, thank you to my supervisor, Professor Kevin McCafferty, for help and encouragement. I think he had more faith in my ability to finish than I did at times.

Thank you to my father's cousin and her husband in Newcastle, who generously donated the 2003 *The Broons* collection I have been using to give me a start on the whole project.

Thank you to other friends and family, for encouragement and support. There were quite a few disbelieving laughs when I told them what I was writing about, but everyone was very interested once I started explaining.

Thank you to my mother and younger sister, for putting up with me during this time.

Thank you to my cousin and older sister for starting my fascination with comics, even though I have thoroughly out-geeked them by now.

Last but not least, thank you to my father, whose encouraging words were crucial for my decision to jump ship to the English department in the first place, and who first expressed interest in the project when I described it to him. I'm sure that if he had lived, he would have been very proud of me.

I tried to contact the publishers at D.C. Thomson several times for permission to use the panels I have used as illustrations. As I never got either a positive or a negative answer, I have decided to use these panels and cite reasonable use.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

<   > - orthographic writing

/   / - phonemic writing

[   ] - phonetic writing

adj. – adjective

adv. – adverb

int. – interjection

n. – noun

pron. – pronoun

V+P+N – verb + pronoun + negation

P+V+N – pronoun + verb + negation

Vna(e) – verb + -na or –nae

p. – page

OED – Oxford English Dictionary

SND – Scottish National Dictionary

NE – Northern English

RP – Received Pronunciation

Sc – Scots/Scottish

ScStE – Scottish Standard English

StE – Standard English

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim and scope

> My first experiences with Scots as a written language came from reading 'The Broons'
> and 'Oor Wullie' in the dear old *Sunday Post*. Words like *jings* and *crivvens* were
> rather like the *begorrahs* and *bejabers's* of the Stage Irishman, but because the
> dialogue was so different from that in the English comics, I got the first inkling that
> my native tongue was something different; precious and to be savoured. (Purdie n.d: 9)

For many Scots speakers, *The Broons* and *Oor Wullie* was their first meeting with their
language in written form. This thesis uses primarily[1] five collections of the comics *The
Broons* and *Oor Wullie* to find out how Scots is represented in these comic strips. The chosen
collections span four different decades (with a gap between the 1960s and 2000s).

The main goal is to map the representation of Scots with respects to phonology,
grammar and sociolinguistic processes (in this case code-switching). The phonology
(represented through orthography) and grammar are subject to questions of the manner,
degree and consistency of representation, as well as whether there is a history of such
representation in writing and how well it matches the language as spoken. The language of the
comics is also subject to analysis in turns of whether it is Scots or Standard Scottish English.

The code-switching is subject to study of the effect it has on the story-telling, and whether
or not this says something about the attitudes towards language that are present in the comics.

1.2 Why comics?

Comics have long been considered inferior literature compared to other prose. One can
wonder whether or not they are able to yield any kind of interesting information.

While I do not argue that the comic strips analysed in this thesis are grand literature
(although that does not necessarily reflect on the medium itself), I believe that they have
certain advantages. For one thing, almost everything written in the comics is dialogue, thus
heightening the impression of mimicking normal speech. For another, analysing popular
literature is a way of getting an idea of what representations of the language are available to
most people. The magazine *The Broons* and *Oor Wullie* appear in has a very large readership.

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[1] Chapter 7: Code-switching uses some examples from one other anthology book spanning 60 years as well.

The idea of judging laypeople's attitudes towards and impressions about language is explored further in the methods chapter.

1.3 History of the Comic

The Broons and *Oor Wullie* first appeared in *The Sunday Post* on March 8th, 1936, and have been a part of the paper ever since. Each comic fills one page, with a varying number of panels. (The *Oor Wullie* comics tend to have more panels simply due to the convention of beginning and ending with a panel portraying Wullie sitting on his upturned bucket, usually but not always textless.) The weekly stories are written by an in-house editorial team (*The Broons and Oor Wullie: 1936-1996*, 1996: 4). As of 2006, David Donaldson, managing editor of the D.C. Thomson comics division, is the scriptwriter.

Both strips were developed from the idea of R.D. Low, Managing Editor and Head of Boys Story Papers of D.C. Thomson in 1935. He also wrote a number of the scripts and was one of the driving forces behind the realistic language used (http://www.thatsbraw.co.uk/Biog/DDW-Page.htm).

As various members of the Broon family appear in *Oor Wullie* strips (*The Broons and Oor Wullie: 1936-1996*, 1996: 8), it is clear that they live in the same town. A playacting Wullie refers to himself as 'Lord Provost O' Auchentogle' (http://www.thatsbraw.co.uk/Oor%20Wullie/Wullie-Lord-Provost-Strip.htm), giving the name of the town. The original title of *The Broons* was *The Broons of Glebe Street*, giving their address (later confirmed as no. 10).

The fictional Auchentogle is thought to be an amalgam of Glasgow and Dundee – the *Sunday Post*, where the comics appear, is printed in Glasgow, while the comic was first printed by the publishing company D.C. Thomson & Co. Ltd, based in Dundee.

The Sunday Post is Scotland's most read weekly paper by far. On their webpage (http://www.dcthomson.co.uk/mags/post/index.htm), it says that they have over a million readers each week. This means that *The Broons* and *Oor Wullie* reach out to a high number of readers each week, and is one of, if not *the* most accessible way of seeing the Scots language in print.

Both strips were illustrated by Dudley D. Watkins, until his death in 1969. During the 70s, previous strips were reprinted, and a number of illustrators were used. Ken H. Harrison took over the task of drawing both strips in November 1989, and as of 1995 he was still doing it.

The person currently in charge of both strips is David Donaldson, who has been writing it at least since 2003[2].

In this thesis I am relying on comics from six collections: *The Broons and Oor Wullie 1936-1996*, an anthology of selected comics from the beginning until the mid-nineties, *The Broons and Oor Wullie: The Roaring Forties*, selected comics from the 1940s, *The Broons and Oor Wullie: The Fabulous Fifties*, selected comics from the 1950s, *The Broons and Oor Wullie: The Sensational Sixties*, selected comics from the 1960s, *The Broons: Scotland's happy family that makes every family happy*, comics from 2003, and *Oor Wullie: Oor Wullie! Your Wullie! A'body's Wullie!*, comics from 2008. [3]

1.4 Main characters:

The Broons

The main characters of the *The Broons* comic are all members of the Broon (or Brown) family. Unlike the *Oor Wullie* comics, which always have Wullie as the protagonist, *The Broons* can focus on any one of these characters, or several of them. The four eldest Broon children all have storylines that involve going on dates or trying to get a date with a young member of the opposite sex.

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[2] All attempts at reaching the publishing house for more correct information about the specific authors of the strips have proven to be fruitless.

[3] All of the anthologies, the one spanning sixty years and the three spanning one decade each, have the original date of publishing printed beneath the comic page in question. The two collections specific to one year do not, and the 2008 *Oor Wullie* book does not have pagination either. For easy reference I have pencilled in the pagination myself, the first actual comic page being page 2, and will refer to these page numbers when referring to specific pages in this book. Anyone who wishes to go back to this book with a different copy will have to count the pages to find the specific comic, or write the pagination personally, as I have done.

Table 1.1 The Broons

Name	Age	Position	Other
Grandpaw	Late 70s, early 80s	Paw's father	Occupation: pensioner
Paw	Approx. early 50s	Father in the family	Occupation: dock worker
Maw	Approx. early 50s	Mother in the family	Housewife, often the voice of reason
Hen	Approx. late 20s	Oldest son	Away at war in early 40s comics
Joe	Mid 20s	Second son	Also at war in early 40s comics
Daphne	Mid to late 20s	Oldest daughter	Works outside the house
Maggie	Early 20s	Second, prettier daughter	Also at work outside the house.
Horace	Approx. 14	Third son	Noted for being book smart
The Twins	Approx. 10-12	Youngest sons	Rarely if ever referred to separately
The Bairn	Approx. 4-5	Youngest daughter	Occasionally indulges in child speech

The 'child speech' that the Bairn indulges in is of the substituting *me* for *I* variety, such as 'Me eat a lot o' thae nice big sweeties!' (June 16th 1940).

Oor Wullie

Table 1.2. Oor Wullie

Name	Age	Relation to Wullie	Other
Wullie	Approx. 10	Is Wullie	Prankster, fighter, Scots icon. Known for dungarees and bucket.
Soupy Soutar	Approx. 10	Friend and classmate	
Fat Bob	Approx. 10	Friend and classmate	Once referred to as "Obese Robert".
Wee Eck	Approx. 6	Friend	
Ma	Mid-late 30s	Mother	
Pa	Mid-late 30s	Father	
P.C. Murdoch	Early 50s	Friend or foil	
Primrose	Approx. 10	Classmate, either annoyance or crush (depends on situation).	She speaks standard. Only appears in later comics.
Various teachers	Varying	Teachers. A number of Wullie comics are set in school	Male or female, usually female.

Soapy Soutar, Fat Bob and Wee Eck are just as often foils as friends.

Wullie is the undisputed solitary protagonist of these strips, often talking directly to the audience (especially in the cases when the opening and/or closing panel with Wullie on his upturned bucket has text in it).

1.4.1 Side characters who show up in comics that have been discussed:

The Broons:

August 28th 1938: Jessie, a girl both Joe and Hen are trying to ask out. She speaks Standard.

May 9th 1943: Two soldiers Maggie and Daphne are trying to impress. They appear to be upper-middle-class English.

November 3rd 1940: George Fitzgerald and his wife. She speaks Standard English, he speaks Scottish Standard English.

September 12th 1943: A door-to-door salesman who speaks working-class English.

July 30th and December 3rd 1944: Mrs. Jones, her son and daughter, and her father, Wullie Wilson. He speaks Scots at all times, while she code-switches between Scots and Standard. Her daughter sticks to Standard, while her son seems accent-confused.

July 22nd 1945: Mr. and Mrs. Fitzgerald (not the same ones as those from November 1940), Aunty Bella – who speak Standard English – and the band leader, who speaks Scots.

Page 38 in the 2003 book: A shoplady in a furniture store who speaks Standard to Hen when he is awake, and Scots after he has fallen asleep on the bed he was trying out.

Page 79 in the 2003 book: Daphne and Maggie's dates, Bob and Chic. Daphne thinks that Chic is a teacher at 'the posh school', while he is actually a janitor. He speaks Scots.

Page 80 in the 2003 book: A person only referred to as 'snobby neighbour' – in a textbox, no less – who speaks Standard English, but self-corrects from Standard Scottish English.

Oor Wullie:

May 12th 1938: Wullie's teacher, who speaks Standard, and Wullie's classmate Percy, who does not.

July 10th 1938: A boy called Fred, who is also referred to by his servants as 'your lordship' (upper class). He speaks Standard English, but tries to speak more like Wullie when they are playing.

January 11th 1942: Wullie's piano teacher. She speaks Standard English.

October 10th 1943: Four English children, two boys who speak something apparently supposed to be RP, and two girls, one of whom speaks a more working-class English accent (probably Cockney).

1.5 The structure of the thesis

This thesis has two parts. The first part, chapters 2-6, consist of an analysis of the language of the comics itself. After a chapter on how Scots has been used as a written language in other texts, there is a description of Scots, its status and well-known traits as well as which features of the language I have chosen to focus on. After that I describe the theory behind the observations made in the thesis, before two chapters dealing with the language in the comics.

The second part of the thesis is presented entirely in chapter 7. This chapter deals with code-switching, which is the sociolinguistic process most often shown in the comics. Because it does not fit with the rest of the thesis, I have chosen to make it a chapter in itself, describing the theory behind code-switching, former studies on it in Scotland and how it appears in normal Scots/Scottish English speech and how and to which effect code-switching is presented in the comics.

The code-switching is a very noticeable part of the language in the comics, and through analysing the situations where it appears it is possible to make conjectures about the attitudes towards language displayed in the comics. When I have chosen to make it a chapter of its own with theory, previous literature and results of the study all in one, it is because the code-switching chapter has very little to do with the rest of the thesis, although it fits in nicely with the aim and scope of the thesis. While I could have structured it differently, I believe that doing it like this helps to make the thesis more easily readable and accessible.

2. SCOTS AS A WRITTEN LANGUAGE: THE LITERARY TRADITION

2.1 Introduction

Scots has been used as a written language for centuries, in Early, Middle and Modern forms (much like English). This means that written Scots has been a very important source of information about changes in the language, especially prose, since 'prose has been claimed to retain vernacular Scottish features longer than verse' (Meurman-Solin 1997: 6). The Acts of Parliament of Scotland began to be recorded in the vernacular as early as 1390 (Corbett et al. 2003: 8). By comparison, English was first used in the English Parliament nearly two centuries after the Norman Conquest in 1360. At this time there were several languages in Scotland, but Scots had attained a higher status than any of the others.

The consolidation of the language happened during the Middle Scots period (1450-1700), to which the divergence from Northern English dialects towards a Scottish regional norm can be dated, and Scots as a written language had its heyday in the late 15th/early 16th centuries (Corbett et al. 2003: 9). However, like the English of the time, the language was not a homogeneous variety.

The Reformation and the Church helped drive anglicisation in Scotland from the mid-16th century. With the most popular version of the Bible in Scotland being written in the English of the time, English printers having a much larger output than their Scottish counterparts, and some Scottish printers shifting towards English, the decline of written Scots was an unavoidable fact (Corbett et al. 2003: 11). While Scots was still considered well-suited for law documents, many ambitious Scottish commoners and noblemen looked southward. Following the Union of Crowns in 1603, James VI (or James I) translated his own work into English. Anglicisation was present even at the highest levels of society, and the King's actions must have caused many to follow his example., However, letters from the 16th and 17th centuries show that the degree of anglicisation was not as high among women as among men (Meurman-Solin 2000: 313).

During the mid-17th century, Scots figures using something like Scots also appeared in Broadsides (street ballads) in London. The reaction of the composers of these ballads to the new political situation was to turn the Scots into the 'other', making them comical figures and thus less frightening. The largest indicator of Scottishness is the amount of Scots words and the names of the people who appear in the ballads, as well as some attempts at phonology (Porter 2000: 365-367).

Following the Treaty of Union in 1707 Scots largely disappeared from official documents. However, in a reaction to the unpopular Union, there was a revival of Broad Scots in literature, and many of the writers were from a different background than earlier – the literate people were no longer exclusively courtiers. Given the literary background of their audience, however, there appeared to be a necessity of adapting the spelling to something an English-schooled readership could easily understand (Corbett et al. 2003: 12).

At the same time, others tried to banish Scots both from their writing and their speech. In an era when the notion of 'Proper Language' was blooming, this way of thinking had a great deal of support. This marked the birth of the spoken variety 'Scottish Standard English' in the 18th century.

While Broad Scots disappeared from the aristocracy's speech, it remained in rural communities and among the urban worker population during the 18th century. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, the urban middle classes, as well, retained some of the features of Broad Scots, largely because they were in close contact with the working class (Corbett et al. 2003: 14).

Dictionaries and a great philological interest in Scots caused a great number of poets after the Second World War, following the example of Hugh MacDiarmid, to write poetry using a number of these often little-used words, covering a broad range of topics and genres. Others saw this as artificial, and preferred to use their own local speech as a base. As a consequence, modern Scots poetry counts a wealth of traditional dialects used by local writers from a variety of dialectally well-marked regions. Poetry of a more radical, socially, politically and literarily challenging type uses the language heard in the Glasgow area (McClure 2003: 211).

In schools, Scots generally has been treated as a lesser form of English, rather than a language in its own right. The Education Act of 1872 contained no mention of Scots, and as mentioned by Hendry, pupils are wont to snigger at the use of Scots in class (Hendry n.d: 21). In 1991, the Scottish Office Education Department treated Scots as a dialect of English, only to be spoken 'as appropriate' (Matheson and Matheson 2000: 217). However, the department also advocated the inclusion of the Scots language in schools (Murdoch 1995: 11), in a seemingly self-contradictory statement. The fact remains that, as of 2000, there was little Scottish literature used in schools, and to find anything written in Scots was even less likely:

It goes as far as the general lack of any Scottish literature used in schools, unless we count the Katy Morag stories and the Maisie the Cat stories which sometimes appear

in primary school. In fact, if it were not for the Broons and Oor Wullie comic strips which appear in *The Post*, a Sunday newspaper, then few Scots would ever see anything in print in any dialect of their native tongue (Matheson and Matheson 2000: 218).

James Kelman's prize-winning novel *How Late It Was, How Late* (1994) was criticized by London-based critics for being 'illiterate' (Matheson and Matheson 2000: 219), and while Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting* (1993) was written in Edinburgh Scots, the film version used English with an Edinburgh accent and occasional Scottish phrases (Matheson and Matheson 2000: 219).

While the political parties in Scotland all have a written policy of support for Gaelic, only the Scottish National Party mentions the word 'Scots' in respect to language, and then only in an addendum to their document on Gaelic (Murdoch 1995: 12-13), stating that Gaelic is intended as a supplement to the Scots language, not a replacement.

Scots used in academia is represented through the existence of programmes on Scots culture and literature at several Scottish universities, and some academics write in Scots (e.g. Horsbroch 2000).

2.2 Lallans

Lallans (Lowlands) Scots is a written Scots which was popularized by the poets following Hugh McDiarmid (Corbett 2003: 259). As a written language, it had the advantage that it was not closely related to any one variety of Scots, and as such did not give unwarranted privilege to any specific social or regional group. The major disadvantage of Lallans, however, was that it did not seem like a natural language. Many people (among them McDiarmid himself) referred (and probably still refer) to it as 'synthetic Scots'. The Lallans Society, founded in 1972, quickly changed its name to the less stigmatized Scots Language Society. The name *Lallans* remains as the name of their magazine, the primary vehicle for written Scots (Corbett 2003: 256, 259).

2.3 Scots as an academic language

While the Scots language has had a strong presence in poetry for a long time, and a lesser presence in prose, it has not enjoyed any particular status in non-fictional writing since before English started enjoying a higher status than Scots as a written language. The (most likely) first appearance of Scots in an international journal was a collection of essays in *English*

World-wide in 1981. As mentioned in a footnote earlier, some articles in the BSLCP's[4] *Linguistic Politics* series are written in Scots, and the journal *Lallans*, which is written entirely in Scots, includes non-fictional entries (McClure 1981: 3). Overall, however, the tendency is that Scots academics do not use the language in a scholarly context.

The main reasons for this situation are probably that the status of Scots as a language is still disputed, with many considering it a dialect. Another closely related reason is the desire to reach as broad an audience as possible. Unless the academic is writing for the like-minded, he or she runs the risk of not being taken seriously when writing in a variety whose status is disputed.

One other very important reason is the lack of a standardized orthography and grammar. In the collection of essays from 1981, no two essays follow the exact same language rules (McClure 1981: 3-4).

However, one last reason for writing in English as opposed to Scots is the simple fact that the readership is trained to read English (Macafee 1981: 29). While mostly understandable to a person literate in English, Scots remains much less accessible[5].

2.4 Poetry

Even though the comics would fit in better with *prose* fiction, I will have a short section on Scots poetry. This is because poetry has been a much more acceptable literary vehicle for Scots and language experimentation than prose fiction: 'Scots, during the last 600 years, has been fortunate in its poets' (Smith 2003: 198). Indeed, much of the information on older Scots comes from analysis of the language used in poetry. Robert Henryson's poetry from the latter half of the 15th century provides an example of Early Middle Scots (Smith 2003), as does William Dunbar. Their work and its context proves that this form of Scots was 'a highly flexible social instrument, capable of being used across a whole range of registers, and allowing the expression of philosophical notions of considerable subtlety' (Smith 2003: 208).

Three poets who were part of the patriotic backlash against the unpopular Treaty of Union in 1707 were Allan Ramsay, Robert Fergusson and Robert Burns. They wrote largely for an audience schooled in written English, which can be seen in choice of orthography and use of apostrophes (Corbett et al. 2003: 12). Burns is further discussed under a separate heading.

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[4] *Belfast Studies in Language, Culture and Politics.*
[5] Speaking personally as someone who is not a native speaker of either, but trained in English, I spent at least three times as much time on the Scots texts as I would have spent on the equivalent English (or so I estimate).

The Scots Renaissance in the 20th century is most closely associated with Hugh McDiarmid. McDiarmid's use of linguistic reference books (such as John Jamieson's *An Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language*) provided him with a wealth of lexical items, but resulted in a language which was far from an accurate depiction of any spoken dialect. This indulgence in lexical playfulness was continued and occasionally even elaborated on by some of his successors (McClure 2003: 213-214).

Recent poetry tends to incorporate the poet's own dialect, giving us poems in the dialects of Ayrshire, Fife (William Hershaw), the Borders, the Northern Islands (Rhoda Butler, Shetland), Glasgow (Tom Leonard) and Eastern and North-Eastern folk tongues (Violet Jacob and Sheena Blackhall) (McClure 2003: 211).

2.4.1 Robert Burns

Robert Burns gets special mention because he is referenced numerous times in the comics – everything from Wullie's class reciting his poetry (January 28th 1945), the Broon family celebrating 'Burns Nicht'[6] (January 25th 1948, 2003 collection p. 6), or Wullie comparing his own poetry to that of Burns ('Ach! I bet Rabbie Burns wid hae said it wis a'richt!', June 8th 1958, 'Who's this bloke Rabbie Burns?', April 19th 1959).

Burns was and is still one of the most well-known poets who wrote in Scots. He identified himself as belonging to the school of poetry 'the chief representatives of which are Allan Ramsay and Robert Fergusson' (Weston, Jr. 1960: 634). His poetry, along with that of Ramsay and Fergusson, provides examples of 18th century Scots. As Beal (1997) points out, though, while the usage might be fairly authentic, it is still poetic, and as such the language is subject to other concerns than accuracy with respect to contemporary usage.

Perhaps more important than the actual language is the fact that Burns' poetry is widely known and used. Wullie reciting Burns' poems in class has a basis in reality; literature and music classes were quite probably the only places where Broad Scots was permitted in school at the end of the 19th century, and his songs and poems are still widely used[7]. Popular appeal and being acceptable in a school context means that Burns would be better known to the writers of the comics than most other writers of Scots, even though his language, by the time the comics were written, would be somewhat antiquated.

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[6] Which is a big, popular event in Scotland and for Scottish people abroad.
[7] The song *Auld Lang Syne* is possibly the best known of his works, at least internationally.

2.5 Prose

In the Middle Ages, Scots Prose was mainly used in official documents, personal letters and journals. During the Reformation, historical writing and religious tracts were added to this, and a large corpus of popular journalism in Scots was produced during the late 19th century, but narrative prose was still largely unrepresented in the body of Scots writing (McClure 1993: 1).

The situation changed during the 20th century. Writing in Scots branched out into genres where it had not been present previously, such as more serious journalism and criticism, and imaginative prose. One monumental work was the translation of the New Testament by William Laughton Lorimer (published posthumously in 1983), but this has, despite its high status both scholarly and popularly, not had much influence on further writing of prose in Scots (McClure 1993: 3).

Robert McLellan (1907-1985) is the writer largely responsible for establishing short stories in Scots as credible literary forms. McClure writes that '[h]is language is differentiated from standard literary English at all linguistic levels' (McClure 1993: 5). McLellan provides examples of differences in orthography meant to represent phonetic features, morphological features and of course lexical features. Through choosing a setting for his stories in which the language question would not be an issue because the situation the characters are in is not one where the question would appear naturally, McLellan avoids making a firm political statement with his choice of language, and he 'is almost the only Scottish writer since the Union of the Crowns to use Scots simply as an Englishman uses English' (McClure 1993: 6). McLellan is also known for his many plays in Scots, two of which make use of the sociolinguistic situation in Scotland in the 18th century (*Flowers o Edinburgh* and *Young Auchinleck*).

Perhaps more closely related to the comics being analysed, in that their work is written in Glasgow vernacular, is the work of James Kelman and Alasdair Gray. In the preface to his 1976 short story collection *Three Glasgow Writers*, Kelman writes that 'I am always from Glasgow and I speak English always/Always with this Glasgow accent/This is right enough.' Kelman and Gray were part of the Scottish revival (or Renaissance) of the 1980s, which saw a great deal of output from Scottish urban writers (Toremans 2003: 564). Both Gray and Kelman, however, reject this term. As Gray put it:

> The estimate of myself as an "elder statesman of Scottish writing" is inaccurate. (...)
> The notion of a "Scottish renaissance" was first urged by the sociologist Patrick
> Geddes in the 1890s, so the idea has hovered around for quite a long time. It was

reused by the poet Hugh MacDiarmid in the twenties and by a French critic whose

name I cannot remember. (Toremans 2003: 569)

And Kelman remarks that 'I think the notion [of a Scottish Renaissance] indicates a lack of awareness of the Scottish tradition' (Toremans 2003: 569).

Both Kelman and Gray have received reactions to their choice of language. Gray relates that in the late sixties, he was approached by a BBC producer who wanted to commission a play, but asked that it should not be set in Scotland, as southern BBC viewers would be put off by the accent (Toremans 2003: 571). The primary focus of contention over Kelman's 1994 Booker Prize winning novel *How Late It Was, How Late* was that it was written in working-class Glaswegian, and as such 'inaccessible' to English readers (Pitchford 2000: 700). Kelman defended his choice of language, as well as his use of profanity: 'If the language is taboo, the people are taboo. A culture can't exist without the language of the culture' (cited in Pitchford 2000: 702). Another feature of the language of the novel was that Kelman did not make a distinction between the language of the dialogue and the language of narration, something which many working-class novels and Scottish novels have done (Pitchford 2000: 702). Instead, the protagonist Sammy's voice is indistinguishable from that of the narrator (who nonetheless refer to Sammy in third person), and the narrator has full access to Sammy's thoughts. The lack of quotation marks for the dialogue helps the effect of the two 'voices' blending in with one another (Pitchford 2000: 702-703).

Rather interestingly, Kelman's novel has also been rejected by a number of Scottish critics, who do not see it as representative. However, a number of these same critics have also held up works which are almost more English in language or works using the much more artificial literary Scottish 'Lallans' as examples of what they approve of (Pitchford 2000: 713-14).

Perhaps the most positive sign for the use of Scots in fictional prose is the success of younger writers such as Irvine Welsh, who writes in Edinburgh dialect. Their use of language is more self-confident than that of writers born forty-fifty years earlier (Toremans 2003: 571).

2.6 Summary

While Scots has a long history of being used in writing, the language's status as a written language suffered from the Union of Crowns and English's subsequent higher status. While Scots did not disappear entirely as a written variety, it was seen largely as a lesser form than

English. Poetry was one of the few literary vehicles where Scots has been acceptable over a long period of time.

In the classroom, students learn English and rarely, if ever, see Scots in print. This is despite the growing literature of Scots prose, some of it quite highly critically acclaimed.

In non-fictional prose, the use of Scots is a rarity. Some blame the lack of a standardized written form as well as lack of training in reading Scots among the intended audience.

3. ABOUT THE LANGUAGE

This chapter describes the language and dialects used in Scotland, which is approximately reproduced in the comics.

3.1 Standard English, Scottish Standard English and Scots

The easy way of differentiating between ScStE and Scots is to say that the former is an accent of British Standard English, while the other is a dialect (or, as some claim, a language). The difference between StE and ScStE is a matter of phonological sounds – very often vowels as well as some consonants. One very noticeable difference is that ScStE and Scots are both rhotic, while StE generally is not.

The speech of all Scotsmen in Scotland remained Scots into the 17th century (Aitken 1979: 90). However, after the Scottish Reformation in 1560 and following into the 17th century there was more contact with southern English, both oral and written. The Scottish landed gentry started having more contact with wealthy Englishmen, and there was much intermarriage (Aitken 1979: 91). As a result, the Scottish gentry became influenced by English speech, and a speech pattern more similar to southern English became a goal for the Scottish upper classes. The development continued into the 18th century, and in 1710 Sir Robert Sibbald could distinguish between three varieties: Broad Scots, Highland Scots and 'the refined language of the Gentry' (Aitken 1979: 93-94). Given the high status of southern speech, it is easy to assume that the language of the gentry was closer to StE than to ScStE. However, Rev Thomas Morer who visited Scotland in 1689 claimed that it was easy to distinguish Scotsmen by their speech, so the Scottish accent must have been still prominent (Aitken 1979: 95). He was referring to the gentry.

During the 18th century, it became increasingly important for the higher strata of society to speak 'proper', ie southern English. Lists of expressions to avoid were published, and children were sent south for school in an attempt to erase their Scottish accent. However, as Aitken points out, the success was limited (Aitken 1979: 96). However, while the attitude that Scottishness in speech was not something desirable continued into the 19th century, following the wave of patriotism and Scottish romanticism some people started regretting the loss of the Scottish accent and language (Aitken 1979: 97).

Today, 'educated' Scottish speech is something like ScStE, while Scots is a sign of less education or rural or urban lower class. The middle classes seem to have a combination of ScStE and Scots.

3.2 The English-Scots Continuum

The idea that there exists in Scotland a dialect continuum ranging from Broad Scots at one end to Standard English at the other was first suggested by Aitken in 1979. Aitken observed that while many could switch completely between varieties (code-switching or, as he put it, dialect-switchers), others would 'shift styles in a less predictable and more fluctuating way – these people we may call *style-drifters*' [emphasis original] (Aitken 1979:86). Aitken devised a table with words where which word the speaker chooses would help place them on the continuum. This was later elaborated on by Macafee (2003), and it is Macafee's model which will be used here (see appendix).

The notion of a continuum ignores regional and social influencing factors (Corbett et.al. 2003), but is useful for placing a variety within a regional or social context – while the continuum does not help to place a speaker as e.g. from Ayrshire or Dundee, it can help to determine whether the speaker from Ayrshire or Dundee is speaking ScStE or Scots. If, for the purposes of this thesis, we assume that the characters in the comics being investigated are speaking a Glaswegian or Dundonian urban variety (more on that later), it is then possible to place them relatively accurately on the continuum.

The 'Broad Scots' end of the continuum is characterised by not only a large number of phonological features, but also grammatical and lexical features. Many Scottish linguists argue that it is a language in its own right, not merely a dialect of English. Whether or not a linguist holds this position seems to depend more on political viewpoint than linguistic evidence[8]. At the middle of the continuum is Standard Scottish English, which grammatically and (mostly) lexically is the same as Standard English, but phonologically is more like Scots. Finally, at the far end from Scots is Standard English, which is here thought of as a southern English variety[9]. For the sake of easy reference, when I refer to StE in this thesis, I refer to the broadly-defined RP used in the Longman Pronunciation Dictionary (2000: xiii) as the model for British pronunciation.

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[8] This could be compared to how the very similar Scandinavian languages are counted as separate languages rather than dialects of one language due to historical and political reasons.

[9] Possibly the term "English Standard English" would be better to use, although this is not a very common term. "British Standard English" is much too vague, as Britain is much more than just England. English Standard English is different from the Scottish and Welsh standards (McArthur 1979: 50-51).

3.2.1 Where are the characters from the comics on the continuum?

First, it should be noted that among the main characters, there is no noticeable difference in which variety they choose. While this will be explored further under character headings later, the general tendency is that a word or word form chosen by one character could just as easily have been chosen by another character.

The general tendency is that the characters speak *Scots*. Macafee's model (based on Aitken) groups a number of words according to how Scots or English they are. The model lists words like *bairn*[10]*, ken, brae* (but spelled 'braw') and *mind* (in the sense of 'remember') as Scots group 1 (the broadest variety), and these are used consistently by all the characters. They also use words or word forms from group 2, which is still considered Scots, like *hame, puir, auld, coo* and *hoose*. They never use the English equivalents 'home', 'poor', 'old', 'cow' and 'house'.

3.3 Glasgow and Dundee dialect

Since *The Broons* and *Oor Wullie* take place in a city that's supposed to be an amalgam of Glasgow and Dundee, I will be assuming that the dialect they speak is supposed to be close to the dialects from these two cities as well. The protagonists of both strips are working class or lower middle class, set in an urban environment.

Urban Scots dialects were a largely ignored area of study for a long time, the pioneering studies of Glaswegian only appearing in the early 70's (Macaulay and Trevelyn 1973, Macaulay 1976) (Aitken 1994: 11). The comics predate the earliest of these studies by 37 years. The scriptwriters' primary source of information about the phonology, grammar and vocabulary their characters would be using would have had to be personal observation. If they were at all interested in using secondary sources when forming speech patterns, they would have had to use literature written on other dialects of Scots and dictionaries which often listed words that had fallen out of use. As there was something of a tradition for written Scots when the comics started being produced, it is possible that the writers tried to fit into this already existing written tradition. However, as these texts were often archaic, more poetic than prosaic and very often somewhat inaccessible, it does not seem likely that the writers of the comics have been trying to fit the language to them[11].

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[10] The word *bairn* is special because the youngest Broon daughter has no other name. She is consistently referred to as *the Bairn*, even by her only slightly older brothers or a playmate of the same age. However, the word is also used collectively to refer to all the younger Broon children, as well as occasionally to refer to one specific person who is not the youngest daughter.

[11] See chapter 4 for further discussion of Scots in literature.

Macafee (1994) describes the Glasgow Vernacular as a complex dialect. Added to a West Central basis is Modern Urban Scots, Standard Scottish English and Standard English. There is further influence from Irish English and Southern English, there is levelling towards Standard English, and there is traditional Scots lexis. A study by Hardie showed that ten Scots from Edinburgh had problems deciding whether a speaker from Glasgow should be classified as a speaker of Scots or Scottish English (Macafee 1997: 517).

Dundee has been the ubject of considerably less study. The only account available today is Mick McCluskey's *Dundonian for Beginners* from 1990 (described as "humorous, but authentic" (http://dinamico2.unibg.it/anglistica/slin/scotbiblio.htm#dundee)). The book mentions the differences in ease of understanding when listening to the conversation between a mother and child (easy) and 'twa ald wiyfeez' (very difficult) (McCluskey 1990: 10), indicating an age difference between speakers. The book also mentions the importance of the *eh* sound, which appears on its own as a substitute for 'eye', 'I' and 'aye', and as a component of a number of other words, both single-syllable (such as *beh* 'buy', *dreh* 'dry' and *fleh* 'fly') (McCluskey 1990: 12) and multi-syllable (such as *ehftirnain* 'afternoon') (McCluskey 1990: 17). Reading McCluskey, one gets the impression that this sound is at the heart of every Dundonian utterance.

Other than the account of the *eh* sound, McCluskey provides a glossary of basic Dundonian expressions. Some of them are mentioned in the Aitken/Macafee table as Scots words group one or two, eg *ken* and *-na/-nae* as well as some which are spelled slightly differently, eg *ald* (*auld*, 'old'), *haim* (*hame*, 'home') and *behn thi hoos* (*ben the hoose*, 'around the house').

3.4 Features explored

These are the features I have gone through all the comics looking for in order to make an overview of the Scots used in the comics. They are all features that occur in Scots. Some of the phonological features also occur in ScStE. Most of the information about these features is taken from various studies of Urban Scots, making them relevant for the language in the comics.

Figure 3.1: Different Scots features in *The Broons*, November 7th 1943.

3.4.1 Phonological features:

The phonemes in Scotland, especially the vowel sounds, are quite different from those of southern England. One of the most important aspects of Scottish vowels is the effect of the Scottish Vowel Length Rule (or 'Aitken's Law'), where vowels are long before voiced fricatives, /r/ and word-or morpheme boundaries (Stuart-Smith 2004: 56-57). Several of the lexical sets described in Wells (1982) have been merged into one lexical set (with differences between ScStE and Scots) (Millar 2007), and in some cases, other lexical sets have been added. This will be discussed in this chapter where it applies.

Abercrombie's 'Basic Scottish Vowel System' based on Lowland ScStE was so called because other ScStE vowel systems could best be described as departures from it (Abercrombie 1979: 73-74). Scobbie and Stuart-Smith (2006) reference this system, but occasionally use slightly different symbols. Stuart-Smith (2004) notes some different diphthongs, and Johnston (1997) is more thorough in his description of regional differences (I have focused on the Mid-Scots vowels, as it is most likely in that area the comics take place). The following table is an attempt to combine the different systems. I have not added Stuart-Smith's (2004) monophthongs, as they are the same as those in Scobbie and Stuart-Smith (2006). The dash means that the sound is not taken into account in the system developed by the researcher mentioned at the top of the column the dash appears in. It should be noted that the vowel Abercrombie uses in 'never' and Johnston uses in BIT is very difficult to define, and is not always noticed or even acknowledged (Bergs 2001: 9).

Table 3.1. The vowels of ScStE and Mid-Scots

Abercrombie (1979)		Scobbie Stuart-Smith (2006)		Stuart-Smith (2004)		Johnston (1997) (Mid-Scots)	
word	*sound*	*word*	*sound*	*lexical set*	*sound*	*lexical set*	*sound*
bead	i	pea	i			MEET/BEAT	i(:)
bid	ɩ	pit	ɪ				
bay	e	pay	e			MATE/BAIT (BOOT)	e(:)
bed	ɛ	pet	ɛ			BET	ɛ(:)
never	ɛ̈		-			BIT (BOOT)	ɛ̈
bad/palm	a	palm	a			CAT	a(:)~ ä(:)
not/nought	ɔ	paw	ɔ			COT	ɔ(:)
no	o	po	o			CAUGHT/COAT	o(:)
pull/pool	u	pooh	ʉ			OUT	ʉ(:)~ø(:)
bud	ʌ	put	ʌ			CUT	ʌ
side	ʌi	buy	aɪ				-
sighed	ae		-	PRIZE	ae	TRY	ae
now	ʌu	bow	au		-	LOUP	ʌu
boy	ɔe	boy	ɔɪ		-		-
				PRICE	ʌi/əi		-
				VOICE	oe	VOICE	oe
				MOUTH	ʌʉ		-
						BITE	ɛ̈i, ɛi, əi

3.4.1.1 Lexical set: OOT

Scottish English lacks the phoneme /ʊ/ which is used in FOOT, instead using /ʉ/ both for

FOOT and GOOSE. The FOOT-GOOSE merger is characteristic of all Scottish accents, no

matter which social or regional type the accent belongs to (Wells 1982: 402). However, the

quality of the vowel realisation varies sociolinguistically. The [u] realisation (in the back) is

considered more elegant than the more common [ʉ] (central) or [ʏ] (centralized front). Glaswegian accents have only slight rounding (Wells 1982: 402). Millar (2007) gives the lexical set BOOT as the ScStE equivalent to StE FOOT/GOOSE, but puts OOT as the equivalent lexical set in Scots. This means that in Scots, words which would in StE belong to the lexical set MOUTH (which has considerable sociolinguistic variety, ranging from high-status [au] or [ʌu] to [u+] (Wells 1982: 406)), have changed lexical sets. OOT is also subject to social differences, in that middle-class speakers will avoid the Scots vowel and working-class speakers will use it depending on the alternating vowel and the word (Stuart-Smith 2004: 59). As the characters are more Scots speaking than ScStE speaking, I will consider [ʉ] to be the pronunciation in words like *oot, aboot, oor* and *noo*.

3.4.1.2 Lexical set: DO

The lexical set DO uses the vowel sound /e/ in Urban Scots, sometimes alternating with /ʉ/, which is used in ScStE (Stuart-Smith 2004: 54 table 2). In the comics, words like 'do', 'to' and 'into' are written as *dae, tae* and *intae* to indicate this. Johnston (1997) refers to this as the BOOT class, and gives /u/ as the ScStE pronunciation. As for Mid- and Southern Scots, he illustrates a considerable amount of alteration: [e:] in long environments, and [ë ~ ɛ̈] in short environments, where some words may merge with BIT (see table 1) (Johnston 1997: 466-467). This pronunciation is the result of a very early purely Scots linguistic change (Johnston 1997: 465).

3.4.1.3 Lexical set: MEET/BEAT and KIT

Millar (2007) gives BUIT as a separate lexical set which has no equivalent either in Wells' lexical sets from 1982, or in ScStE. He writes that 'this lexical set is merged with other lexical sets in most varieties of Scots' (Millar 2007: 21). Most times, the merger seems to be with MEET or KIT (Millar 2007: 27 figure 2:14). There are two words which are spelled with <ui> in the comics: *juist* and *guid*, and of those, only *guid* is spelled that way consistently throughout all the comics – *juist* is also spelled *jist*, especially in the later comics. Due to this, as well as Millar writing about Northern Scots and the lexical set not being mentioned in works dealing with Southern or Urban Scots, I will treat *juist* and *guid* as part of MEET/BEAT and KIT. *Whit* is another commonly used word which would belong to one of these lexical sets. In the StE variety *what* is a LOT word, which in Scottish often has the same

realisation as CAUGHT/COT (Millar 2007) words, both being represented by the phoneme /ɔ(:)/, indicating a change in lexical sets. The <i> spelling is used with several other words as well, such as *ither*, *mither* and *brither* (other, mother and brother).

3.4.1.4 -ing to –in'

The feature where the *–ing* variable ends with an either velar or alveolar nasal, /ɪn/ instead of /ɪŋ/, is common in most lower-class accents, and has existed in the English language since Middle English (Wells 1982: 262). It is commonly represented with the spelling *–in'*, as in *spellin'* instead of *spelling*. This is also the case in the comics examined.

3.4.1.5 [x]

The sound which is orthographically represented with <*ch*>, is the voiceless velar fricative /x/ (although Stuart-Smith, Timmins and Tweedie note that a range of dorsal realisations are possible, and the sound may be merging with /k/) (Stuart-Smith, Timmins and Tweedie 2007). This is one of the sounds that are thought of as very typically Scottish (among monolingual English speakers, at least), and appears in Celtic words like *loch*, which means that the representation in writing is standardized enough to appear on maps. The spelled representation of the sound is also identical to how they represent the similar sound in German. Although one might expect the sound to be typical of Urban Scots, it is not clear how well the sound is maintained there. Stuart-Smith (2004) writes that the sound is generally maintained by middle-class ScStE speakers. The sound has a status as a shibboleth of the Scottish accents, and most working-class adolescents in Glasgow use /k/ instead (Stuart-Smith, Timmins and Tweedie 2007). Mostly, the sound is used in placenames, Celtic words like the afore-mentioned *loch*, and in some modern words spelled with <*ch*>, like *epoch*. The comics use the spelling <*ch*> in several words commonly spelled with <*gh*>, such as *right, might* and *thought*. I assume this is to approximate the /x/ sound.

3.4.2 Morphological features

3.4.2.1 -na(e)

Most Scottish dialects form negation with *no* (or, in its Scottish form, *nae*), rather than the StE *not* (Hughes and Trudgill 1987). This means that the enclitic negator is /ne/, written *–nae*, or /nʌ/, written *-na*. The standard English form is /nt/, written *–n't*. Examples: *dinnae* or *dinna*

instead of *didn't*, *cannae* or *canna* where StE would use *can't* or *cannot*. This negator is mainly to be found with auxiliary verbs (Anderwald 2002: 54). This means that *will* + *na* or *nae* could become *winna*, *willnae* or *willn't* (Bergs 2001: 37). There may be a difference between present and past tense, with the *nae* negator more common in past tense, although this is hard to find examples of in a comic, where the only written text is the dialogue which is mostly in present tense.

In StE, the introduction of periphrastic *do* caused *not* to be used much less after regular verbs (as opposed to auxiliaries). In Scots, *dae* was introduced as an operator as well, but the construction using a regular verb and *nae* has survived longer in Scots than in English (Beal 1997: 370).

There exists in Scots a difference between *no*, *nae* and *not*. Whether or not a Scots speaker will use *no* in place of StE *not* is dependent on social standing (Macaulay 1991: 51). The difference between *no* and *nae* seems to be one of emphasis, with *no* more emphatic and *nae* less so and mostly used in cliticisation (Beal 1997: 371).

3.4.2.2 Word order in negative sentences

'In negative declarative sentences, SUBJECT-OPERATOR cliticisation, where it is possible, is preferred over OPERATOR-NEGATIVE PARTICLE cliticisation in Scottish speech, e.g. *they'll no* rather than *they won't*' (Macafee 1980: 3). This is connected to the use of *no* or *nae* dependent on the social standing of the speaker, as middle-class speakers will prefer the *they'll no* construction over the *they willnae* (Macaulay 1991: 51).

Another form of word order in negative sentences are tag questions, which typically use *not* or *no*, as in 'That's tomorrow, is it no?' (Miller 2004: 51), as opposed to StE *isn't it*. According to Bergs (2001), the use of *not* in question tags is unusual, and the stressed form impossible (Bergs 2001: 35). *No*, however, is more common. Miller writes that educated speakers occasionally use *amn't I*, which Bergs reports is popular among prescriptive grammarians, but rarely heard in normal speech. He also reports that *in't* (or *win't* in past tense) can be used for all persons in tag questions.

3.4.2.3 Ken and know

(You) Ken and *you know* are quite similar (since *ken* is the Scots translation of *know*), with some differences in distribution. While *know* is usually preceded by *you*, *ken* may be used in isolation. Furthermore, *ken* is more likely to appear in sentence-final position. *You know* implies some shared knowledge or helps give more information on a vague point, and may be

declarative or interrogative. *(You) ken* performs the same functions, while reduced *ken* may function as a pause filler. In initial position, *ken* may introduce new information (Bergs 2001: 48-49).

Unlike *know*, *ken* is a regular verb and gets the morphological ending *–t* in past participle (Beal 1997: 353).

3.4.2.4 Progressive

In StE, stative verbs (*know, like, want*) do not occur in the progressive. In Scots, however, this is only true for *know*. It is more common for younger speakers to use the progressive in cases where older speakers would use the simple aspect (Miller 2004:54), as in actions that are habitual or repeated. Scots may also use double *–ing* constructions: 'They're not intending opening the bottle tonight' (Bergs 2001: 29-30). The feature was first noted by H. Mitchell in 1799, and has become more common over time. Beal (1997) suggests that it is gaining ground and occurring with more and more verbs (Beal 1997: 373).

3.5 Summary

Scots cannot accurately be called one dialect. If it is not a language in its own right, it is at least a collection of dialects, subject to great regional differences. Because all the characters in the comics come from the same area and as such would be speaking roughly the same regional variety, the regional differences are not very important to this thesis.

More important is the question of where on the Scots-English continuum the characters' speech is. Because of the comparatively high status English enjoyed over Scots, many of the gentry or other ambitious Scots people tried to adapt to a more Southern English variety, creating Scottish Standard English. The continuum describes the wide range of speech from Standard English to Scots, where many speakers shift along the continuum.

Most of my information about the various features I look at in order to get an overview of the Scots of the comics comes from studies done on Urban Scots varieties, Glasgow in particular. The five phonological features and four morphological features are all documented in literature written about actual Scots speech.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Orthography. Written texts as a source

Some of the challenges facing the linguist working with written texts are that the text is not as pure data as, say, a recording. The text may be somehow corrupted, and is certainly removed from the speaker themselves (Labov 1972: 100). The data may also be fragmentary. In the case of this thesis, the texts are fictional accounts written by a third party who primarily is an author and artist, not a linguist – while they may engage in lay linguistics, allowances should be made with respect to accuracy and consistency.

Furthermore, each collection is a selection of comics. The two modern collections seem to collect most of the strips for two years, but the anthologies are much more selective – for instance, the 1960s collection displays twelve comic pages per year, six for *Oor Wullie* and six for *The Broons*, while as a weekly feature there could potentially be 52 comics for each title per year. It stands to reason, then, that the anthology collections are fragmentary, and only represent a selection of the comics and by extension the linguistic features ocurring in them.

One advantage of using written texts, however, is that the text rarely was written with linguistic research in mind, and so avoids the problem often facing those who conduct their own interviews: the question of whether or not the informant is influenced by the interviewer when choosing which words, sounds and expressions to use (Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2003: 27).

This thesis relies in large parts on the assertion by Labov that 'texts can only be understood in their relation to the spoken language' (Labov 1972: 109). The linguistic features explored in this thesis, both the ones dealing with the internal structure of the language (e.g. phonological features) and those dealing with how the language functions in its speech community (the chapter on code-switching) take it for granted that these are features which also exist in the speech community which is the setting for the comics. A fairly large part of this thesis will consist of matching the written data with observations made of the spoken language.

When interpreting literary texts it is important to consider the relation between the writing system and the spoken language (Labov 1972: 102). Ideally, one grapheme is the equivalent of a phoneme (Hoenigswald 1960: 5), but this is subject to large variation when the writing system is imported from a different language (as in this case with the Latin alphabet),

and rules for spelling which are learned often triumph over instinct (Stockwell and Barrit 1961: 76).

Even though Scots has a long tradition as a written language, there is no definite standard of orthography or grammar. McClure identifies some causes of differences:

> Differences among the usages of individual writers are of various kinds: degree of fidelity to a spoken dialect, degree of innovation in vocabulary, degree of differentiation from English, degree of adherence to established conventions in spelling. (McClure 1981: 3)

The closest Scots has to a standard is the Scots Style Sheet of 1947, which was used by Lallans writers. Lallans, however, has been criticised as being artificial, and just how much influence the Style Sheet has had is not within the scope of this thesis. One indication that it has not had much influence, however, is the fact that I have not seen it referenced any other place than the two 1981 articles referenced in this chapter.

The Broons and *Oor Wullie* do not adhere to the Style Sheet in either the comics published before it was drawn up, or in the comics published afterwards. Regarding the language in the comics, Mackie writes: 'A depairtment whaur Scots comes intil play in the papers, dilutit a wee, [sic] is the comic section (...) Wha hasna heard o, and read, "The Broons" and "Oor Wullie" in *The Sunday Post*?' (Mackie in McClure et.al. 1981: 17)[12]. However 'diluted' it may be, Macafee refers to the Scots of the comics as the 'probably the most accessible and familiar to Scots speakers themselves' (Macafee 1981: 36). She points out that Scots speakers are predominantly literate in Standard English (Macafee 1981: 29). It would then follow that a text which is mostly Standard English with Scots elements would make for easier reading than a text more consistently Scots.

Some assumptions about writing practice must be made in order to work with written texts. These assumptions 'are axioms in the study of the phonemic or phonetic nature of the entities represented by the spellings' (Stockwell and Barrit 1961: 75). For the purpose of this thesis, the following assumptions have been made:

1. All standard spellings are meant to indicate standard pronunciation (whether "standard" here refers to StE or ScStE is unclear – the non-standard spellings are very

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[12] Mackie's contribution is entitled "The Scots language and the press", pp.15-17, within the article by McClure et.al. (1981).

prevalent and either could easily apply. I will address the issues of which I believe is in use below). An additional note to this assumption is that words that look like they have standard spelling do, in fact, have that. It is not a question of a situation where a non-standard spelling convention coincides with a standard spelling convention.

2. Non-standard spellings are meant to represent non-standard phonology and morphophonology.

3. Typological features such as underlining and boldface are meant to indicate emphasis.

4. The use of Scots is not meant to create a negative image of the characters, in an 'othering' fashion.

This last point needs some clarification. All too often, alternate spelling is used to create a distance between the character and the writer/reader. Because StE is not pronounced the way it is spelled, then by rights, non-StE should not need to be spelled differently. Some people might see this as a way of commenting on the intelligence of the non-StE speaker. However, there is nothing that indicates that this is the view being promoted in *The Broons* and *Oor Wullie*. This may be in part because Scots has a long written tradition, and can by rights be called a separate language, but it is also partly due to all the protagonists being Scots speakers, and none of them are portrayed as less sympathetic or intelligent for it. In fact, in a number of comics containing code-switching, the person using standard spelling (meant to indicate a standard language, either StE or, more likely, ScStE) is shown as somewhat ridiculous.

I will assume that the standard supposed to be in use is ScStE, not StE, unless otherwise indicated. My reasoning is partly based on where the comics take place, and how the characters' speech is represented, but also because there are some characters who speaks a sort of standard, but are clearly meant to be Scottish – one such character is Wullie's cousin on page 73 of the 2008 book, who apart from saying 'ectually' and 'drookit' speaks standard, but refers to herself as 'Scots on the inside as well as the outside'.

In addition to this, there are a few instances (especially in the older comics) where a more RP-like accent is indicated. One comic where this happens is the strip from July 24th 1938, further described in the chapter concerning code-switching.

4.2 Dialectology

Through simple virtue of being written in a non-standard variety, the comics are an account of non-standard dialect, and as such material for a dialectological study. A common folk belief

about dialects is that they are deviant, less valuable versions of a standard language. However, all varieties of a language are, in a way, dialects (Chambers and Trudgill 1998: 3).FigureF

Figure 4.1. Three different varieties in *Oor Wullie*, October 10th 1943.

A common problem in dialectology is how to distinguish a language from a dialect. The criterion of mutual intelligibility between dialects does not hold up to more thorough examination. Some languages (like German) have varieties which are not easily understood by speakers of other varieties, and some languages, like the Scandinavian languages, are to different degrees mutually understandable (often varying between which language the speaker is a native speaker of, and which language the interlocutor is a native speaker of, as well as the speaker/interlocutor's attitudes towards language) (Chambers and Trudgill 1998: 4). The somewhat flippant saying that 'a language is a dialect with an army and a navy' does not take into consideration languages like Kurdish or Basque, which are too unlike anything else to be called a dialect, but which do not belong to one specific nation-state.

Another distinction is between dialect and accent. The most common way of differentiating between the two is to say that 'accent' deals with phonology, while 'dialect' includes morphology and lexicon as well. All non-standard dialects involve a corresponding non-standard accent, but not all non-standard accents involve a non-standard dialect. Furthermore, '[d]ialects and accents frequently merge into one another without any discrete break' (Chambers and Trudgill 1998: 5). As mentioned in the section on the Scots-English continuum, this is most certainly the case in Scotland.

The question of whether Scots should be considered a language or a dialect (or, more accurately, a group of dialects) is quite central in Scottish linguistics. One tongue-in-cheek

response to that question could be that the answer depends on the individual linguist's political viewpoint. The Scottish population's view on the point is not clear, but the fact that no questions on Scots were included in the 1997 referendum indicates that the language question is not given too much consideration.

The language of the comics is interesting partly because, while most definitely an attempt at reproducing the dialectal features of Scots, it is an attempt taken on by laypeople. In a way, the comics are an example of what Scots sounds like to people who do not study it any further than it takes for them to reproduce it, more or less accurately, in a fictional account meant to amuse its readers. As pointed out (with respect to Black English, but applicable in similar situations to other varieties as well), writers tend to exaggerate the features of the variety in order to accentuate that which seems 'exotic' – whether or not they speak the variety themselves (Maynor 1988: 110).

Two important ways a variety can be introduced are through social factors (social variation, or sociolect) and geographical location (spatial variation, or geolect)[13]. A sociolect covers factors such as gender and social status. Because the comics' protagonists all come from the same social background, and are assumed to have lived and grown up in roughly the same geographical location, it will be assumed that they speak the same dialect[14].

4.2.1 Perceptual Dialectology

The study of what laypeople observe with respect to dialects and their opinions thereupon is called perceptual dialectology. Previous work has included methods like using hand-drawn maps to ask a respondent to indicate where they believe a line can be drawn between speech zones[15], studies of language attitudes through how a respondent would characterize a variety[16], and matched-guise tests[17] (Preston 2002: 69-81). I believe that the study of how a layperson reproduces a variety also falls under the heading 'perceptual dialectology', and that *The Broons* and *Oor Wullie* provide fine material for such study. An important aspect of how people perceive a dialect (and, consequently, how they reproduce it) is which features are

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[13] There are also ethnolects (depending on the ethnic background of the speaker) and idiolects (one person's personal way of speaking). Judging by the many researchers who have studied sociolinguistics and ethnic identity (Milroy and Gordon 2003: 33), ethnolects have been considerable more important in the USA than in Britain.

[14] Deviations are dealt with in the chapter on code-switching.

[15] Dennis Preston, the pioneer in the field, handed out maps of the USA and asked the respondents to draw a line where they thought the dialect boundaries were (Meyerhoff 2006: 66).

[16] The respondents would use adjectives such as "ugly", "pretty" and "unintelligible".

[17] The test uses a bilingual or bidialectal speaker who reads a text once in either language/dialect. The recording is then played for a respondent who is not aware that the two sound samples are provided by the same speaker. The respondent is then asked to characterize the speakers based on what they heard.

perceived as stereotypical of the dialect. Because stereotypes are commonly associated with a variety and often exaggerated, often in popular culture, they are easily recognizable by a large number of non-linguists. At this stage, not only native speakers are aware of a variant within a variety, but other people are aware of it as well, and the variant becomes associated with the variety (Chambers and Trudgill 1998: 75).

4.2.2 Structural Dialectology

Structural dialectology concerns the comparison between one dialect and one or several others (Chambers and Trudgill 1998: 33). The reason I compare the Scots of the comics with Standard (British) English as opposed to Standard Scottish English in this thesis is mainly that I am dealing with written sources, and most writing published in Britain is in StE. (Scots has a number of notable exceptions, which are explored in the chapter dealing with Scots as a written language.) While the comics follow a long tradition of writing in Scots, it is an undeniable fact that most readers are schooled in and used to reading StE.

4.3 Summary

The factors I will be looking for based on the theory, then, are how well the text corresponds with the spoken language, and which features are the most commonly remarked upon and/or exaggerated. Through doing it in this fashion I will be allowed an opportunity to judge the authenticity of the comics as an account of Scots. A close correspondence between the written language of the comics and the real spoken language indicates a high degree of authenticity. The most commonly exaggerated features are an indication of which features people associate with Scots.

5. THE SCOTS OF THE COMICS: OVERVIEW

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the results that came from going through three collections of comics – the 1940s anthology, the 2003 *The Broons* book and the 2008 *Oor Wullie* book – looking for the features I have described in chapter 3. The purpose of doing this was to get an overview of any potential differences between the comics due to several factors – whether there was a difference between the characters, or whether there was a difference between the older comics and the newer ones. For this purpose, I focused on three characters: Paw Broon, Maw Broon and Wullie.

Another reason for doing this is that *The Broons* and *Oor Wullie* are, as mentioned in earlier chapters, very widely read and in some cases the only access many Scottish persons have to written Scots. Through examining the features, it will be possible to get an impression of how written Scots appears to work in the eyes of the readers of the comics. Ideally, perhaps this should have been done with every Scottish feature that appears and with every collection of comics as well as every character. However, because the text of the comics is not digitalized, all feature extraction had to be done by carefully reading each comic and making note of what was in them. Due to time restrictions I have also chosen to stop after sampling 30 tokens per feature, and rather make a note of how many pages it took to collect that many tokens in order to give an impression of the feature density. In the cases where there are more than 30 tokens it is because I always finished sampling the page before stopping. When there are fewer than 30 tokens it is because even going through the entire comic collection did not yield enough tokens.

It has not proven profitable to look for standard variants of the features in question in order to conduct a variant analysis. In the case of most of the features, the standard variant only appears when the character is code-switching (see chapter 7). In the case of the progressive, the opposite is true – the standard variant is the one mostly used, while the progressive in situations where StE would not use progressive is barely used at all.

5.2 Results in general

I very quickly found that there was no real difference between the characters. At first glance, it seems as though Maw Broon has fewer Scottishisms in her language than the other two characters. However, Maw does not have as large a role in the comics as the other two

(although she is the female character with the largest amount of speaking panel time). Because of this, an analysis based on common sociolinguistic factors such as age and sex became irrelevant to the study, as it requires actual differences. The two exceptions are when Maw has a higher density of features than the other two characters, or when Paw has considerably higher density than Wullie (who is the solitary protagonist of his comic, as opposed to the ensemble cast of *The Broons*, and as such has much more dialogue than the other two characters). However, as this requires looking specifically for aberrations it is not, in my opinion, a fair basis for analysis. I have made a note where it happens, but will not use it any further[18].

The other factor which may influence the features was difference between the older and the newer comics. In this case, there were some differences with a few of the features, although most kept remarkable consistency over the sixty-year time period.

The following tables illustrate the feature tokens of each separate character. The [p] column stands for how many pages it took to collect the tokens – in other words, the feature density.

Table 5.1. Paw Broon

	i	ae	oo	ui	in'	ch	V+P+N	P+V+N	Vna	know	prog
1940 no.	36	30	30	19	32	30	3	2	30	7	0
p.	27	13	38	63	25	33	63	63	46	63	63
2000 no.	31	32	30	14	31	30	2	5	30	15	0
p.	21	12	28	95	14	37	95	95	28	95	95

Paw never has any occurrences of the progressive in either decade.

Table 5.2. Maw Broon

	i	ae	oo	ui	in'	ch	V+P+N	P+V+N	Vna	know	prog
1940 no.	30	30	32	15	32	31	5	7	20	6	3
p.	37	13	40	63	44	63	63	63	63	63	63
2000 no.	31	31	30	7	32	9	1	2	18	3	3
p.	90	64	94	95	72	95	95	95	95	95	95

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[18] The only way to fairly judge the amount of features used by the characters would be to count all the words uttered by them in all the comics I have gone through. Due to time restrictions I have not done this.

Please note how high the page count for all the 2000s features are. Maw Broon does not have a large speaking role in these comics.

Table 5.3. Wullie

	i	ae	oo	ui	in'	ch	V+P+N	P+V+N	Vna	know	prog
1940 no.	31	30	30	30	32	31	4	6	33	29	0
p.	13	4	11	57	13	22	63	63	25	63	63
2000 no.	32	33	33	20	33	31	2	6	33	27	1
p.	30	9	12	95	9	34	95	95	24	95	95

By and large Wullie has the highest token density on all features, with only three exceptions: V+P+N in the 40s, P+V+N in the 40s and <progressive> in both decades.

Table 5.4 Features in total

	1940s	2000s
Paw	219	220
Maw	180	167
Wullie	256	251

Paw has the least change in the total number of tokens for the features for the two decades, with an increase of 1. Maw experiences something of a drop of 13, while Wullie has a smaller drop in token numbers, 5 tokens less in the 2000s. Regardless of the drop in numbers, however, Wullie still has more tokens than any of the other two characters.

Figure 5.1. Four features in one panel. *Oor Wullie,* 2008 (page 12).

5.3 Features: Paw, Maw and Wullie

The first feature examined here is <i>. There are some differences in which words the feature occurs in between the older and the newer comics. The words containing the feature which are common for both periods are *whit, wis, rin, wid* (as well as *widna*) and *pit*. In addition to these, the token *wiz* shows up once in a 2000s comic in the same context as *wis*. Due to there not being any noticeable contextual differences, I will consider it a printing error.

Some words refer specifically to the story they appear in, and as such, it is not surprising that they do not appear in other comics. These words are *jiner* ('joiner', someone who was going to repair a door) in a 1940s comic and *hingin'* ('hanging') in a 2000s comic.

More interesting are words which are common, but still do not occur in both decades. *Ither, anither* and *wir* are unique to the 1940s comics, while *jist* and *whitever* only appear in the 2000s comics. While this result might have been different if I had not stopped at 30 tokens, it is worth noticing – especially in the case of *jist*, where the orthography has actually changed – in the 1940s, it was written *juist*.

Table 5.5. <i>

	1940s		2000s	
	no.	p.	no.	p.
Paw	36	27	31	21
Maw	30	37	31	90
Wullie	31	13	32	30

The most startling difference between the decades here is how much the feature density has decreased for Wullie, who uses <i> considerably less in the 2000s comics than in the 1940s.

The most frequent feature, if one looks at the low number of pages it took to collect 30+ tokens, is <ae>. It appears in a large number of words, the most common of which is *tae* ('to'). Other words with <ae> are *hae, thae, dae* (also as *daein'*), *frae, intae* and *sae*. One token which appears in the 2000s comics but not in the 1940s comics is *fae*.

Table 5.6. *<ae>*

	1940s		2000s	
	no.	**p.**	**no.**	**p.**
Paw	30	13	32	12
Maw	30	13	31	64
Wullie	30	4	33	9

As can be seen, the token density has decreased dramatically between the 1940s and the 2000s comics for Maw Broon. Even taking into consideration that she does not have as large a speaking role in the later comics, this result is rather remarkable.

Another feature is <oo>, which occurs in a large number of words. *Hoose, oot, about noo, oor* (as well as *oors* and *ourselves*), *doon, withoot* (also spelled *wi'oot*) and *roond* occur in both the 1940s comics and the 2000s comics. In addition to these, there are less common words which occur in specific situations, such as *coo* in the 1940s comics and *troot* and *toon* in the 2000s comics. Other words which may have shown up in both decades had I looked further are *hoo* in the 1940s comics and *around* and *doot* in the 2000s comics.

Table 5.7. *<oo>*

	1940s		2000s	
	no.	**p.**	**no.**	**p.**
Paw	30	38	30	28
Maw	32	40	30	94
Wullie	30	11	33	12

Paw uses these words more in the 2000s comics, but otherwise there is not much to take note of.

The <ch> feature shows up in a very large number of words. *Och, micht* (and *michty*), *nicht* (and *nichts*), *richt* (and *a'richt), ach, thocht* are all used in both decades. In addition to

these words, *brocht, licht, ticht* and *fecht* (as well as *fechter* and *fechtin'*) are all used in the 1940s comics, while *sicht* is used in the 2000s comics.

Table 5.8. *<ch>*

	1940s		2000s	
	no.	**p.**	**no.**	**p.**
Paw	30	33	30	37
Maw	31	63	9	95
Wullie	31	22	31	34

The feature is fairly common, but less so with Maw than with Paw and Wullie. Maw's result for the 2000s is particularly startling, especially since there is no immediate reason that her feature density should have dropped so much further than even her smaller speaking role can account for.

The <ui> feature shows a sharp drop in token density, largely because the spelling *juist* has been changed mostly to *jist* in the 2000s comics. The 1940s comics uses *juist, guid, puir* and *muir* (although the last one only occurred once and was largely situational). In the 2000s comics, almost all the tokens were *guid* and *puir. Juist* was used once, but as the word was spelled *jist* everywhere else in the two collections for the 2000s, it seems it was most likely an error.

Table 5.9. *<ui>*

	1940s		2000s	
	no.	**p.**	**no.**	**p.**
Paw	19	63	14	95
Maw	15	63	7	95
Wullie	30	57	20	95

As can be seen from this table, only Wullie in the 1940s used the feature enough to fill the required 30 tokens, and even in that case it took almost the entire collection. Despite there being 32 more pages in the 2000s collections, Maw Broon's instances of using <ui> has halved, and Wullie's has been reduced by one third. This can be largely attributed to the changed spelling of *juist/jist*.

<in'> is used consistently with both verbs and nouns ending in –ing, as as such it would be rather pointless to list all the different words it occurs with.

Table 5.10. *<in'>*

	1940s		2000s	
	no.	p.	no.	p.
Paw	32	25	31	14
Maw	32	44	32	72
Wullie	32	13	33	9

As can be seen, it is one of the more common features.

Of the grammatical features, only V+na(e) fills the required 30 tokens. This feature shows up with a large number of words. The biggest difference between the decades is a change is spelling – the 1940s comics use the *–na* ending exclusively, while the 2000s comics mostly use the *-nae* ending, although *–na* does show up a few times (and the *–nae* ending is always used with the same word as well). The most common expressions are *dinna, canna, havena, shouldna, widna, doesna, wisna* and *didna*, with all of them occurring in the 1940s comics and, with appropriate spelling adjustments, in the 2000s comics as well. *Dinna, canna* and *widna* show up in that form in the 2000s comics, but not nearly as often as their *–nae* counterparts. The 1940s comics show occurrences of *needna* and *winna*, while the 2000s comics have *wouldnae, couldnae, wasnae, isnae, arenae* and *hadnae*.

Table 5.11. *<Vna(e)>*

	1940s		2000s	
	no.	p.	no.	p.
Paw	30	46	30	28
Maw	20	63	18	95
Wullie	33	25	33	24

In general, it seems like the <na(e)> frequency is higher in the later comics, which is indicated both by the larger number of words combined with the ending in the list above and the higher feature density indicated in the table (especially for Paw). Note, however, that Maw does not have enough tokens in either decade.

The features <V+P+N>, <P+V+N> and <progressive> are a rarity in this study, because they are the only features where Maw occasionally has more tokens than either of the other two. However, none of the features have anywhere near the required 30 tokens.

<V+P+N> occurs in the form of *did ye no* (once *did you no), did I no, dae we no, dae ye no* (or once *do ye no), are ye no, can ye no, can we no* and *could ye no*

Table 5.12. *<V+P+N>*

	1940s		2000s	
	no.	p.	no.	p.
Paw	3	63	2	95
Maw	5	63	1	95
Wullie	4	63	2	95

Maw has more tokens than the other two in the 1940s comics, but not in the 2000s comics. However, considering her largely reduced speaking role in the 2000s this is not surprising.

<P+V+N> shows up as *I'm no, ye're no, it's no, pa's no, I've nae, ye've nae, we've nae, I'll no, ye'll no, ye'll nae, he'll no, it'll no* and *we'll no*. There does not seem to be any correlation between which auxiliary verb is used and whether *no* or *nae* is used.

Table 5.13. *<P+V+N>*

	1940s		2000s	
	no.	p.	no.	p.
Paw	2	63	5	95
Maw	7	63	2	95
Wullie	6	63	6	95

Again, Maw has the most tokens in the 1940s collection, but not in the 2000s.

The progressive is shown in the constructions *we're wantin', paw's needin', I'm needin', lyin' aboot needin', we were jist needin', I was needin'* and *is no' wantin'*.

Table 5.14. *<progressive>*

	1940s		2000s	
	no.	p.	no.	p.
Paw	0	63	0	95
Maw	3	63	3	95
Wullie	0	63	1	95

Maw uses the progressive more often than the other two in both decades.

The last feature is <know>. In the 1940s comics it only shows up as *ken, kens* or *kent*, while in the 2000s comics *know* and *knew* occur once each in the 2008 collection.

Table 5.15. *<know>*

	1940s		2000s	
	no.	p.	no.	p.
Paw	7	63	15	95
Maw	6	63	3	95
Wullie	29	63	27	95

Wullie is the only speaker who even comes close to having the required number of features, and even he falls short.

5.4 Alternately spelled words

Throughout the collections, there are a number of words which are not spelled according to the rules of StE, and as such indicate a non-standard pronunciation, but which do not fall under the chosen features. What follows is a list of these words from all the collections (including the 1950s and the 1960s which were not included in the token search), ordered alphabetically after which letter is the one marking the different spelling. The second item on the list, *xa*, means that the <a> is in the second syllable in the word.

a-

aff, afore, ane, anes

xa

alane, alang, barra, barra', blaw, blawn, blawin', brak's, drap, drapped, hale, hame, lang, saft, sassidges, snaw, stane, stanes, tanner, tap, wha, wha'd, wrang

ae

claes, tae, windaes

ai

ain, baith, caird, craiturs, fairmer, faither, mair, maist, pair, pairty, sair

au

cauld, gaun', haud, haudin', hauf, haund, haunds, whaur

aw

maw, naw, paw

c

sic

d

smiddy

e

denner, efter, mebbe, pent, pented, penter, picters

ee

freend, lees, meenister, meenit, peety, sweem, weel

ei

heid

eu

deuk

ie

bankie, clubbie, mannie, photie, swallie, sweepie, tentie, tinkie, wifie, windie

it

drookit

o

ony-

This spelling shows up with several words, such as *onything* or *onybody*.

oa

oan

ow

fower, fowk, gowf, sowel, sowl

u
bunnet, dug, shullin',

dropped letter
a'body, awa, fitba, masel', ta'en

other
ah, een, fae, gies/gie's/gie's, hunners, ingin, janny, mistook, ower, pitten aboot, polis, sossidge, swallie/swally, syne, th'day/th'gither, wokkened, wops, yin

Further commentary on a few of these words will be given in the next chapter.

5.5 Conclusion

There are some differences between the number of tokens, especially between the decades. However, often there are not enough tokens to perform a proper analysis, and because the characters have such differently sized speaking roles, any analysis which does not take this into consideration would be flawed.

However, there are some things which can be said about the results that have been found. For one thing, there is a clear difference between phonological and morphological features, with many of the phonological features having a large number of tokens, but only <Vna(e)> having any substantial amount among the morphological features, especially with Wullie and Paw. <know> comes close to filling the required 30 features with Wullie, but is still under the set amount.

There are some differences over time, especially with the phonological feature <ui>, but also with <ch> for Maw. The differences between the characters are largely accounted for by the size of their speaking roles, but it is noticeable that Maw, who has the smallest speaking role of the three analysed characters, has the highest amount of progressive in both decades, as well as both V+P+N and P+V+N in the 1940s.

The rather long list of alternately spelled words gives a number of other features that could be explored in an analysis of the phonology represented by spelling in the comics. Some of the less frequent phonological features, like <ui> and <ch>, as well as the less typical Scottish feature <in'> could be exchanged for one of the features which appears in a

large number of words (<xa>, <ai> and <au> being the three in the largest number of words on the list).

When judging the 'Scottishness' of the comics it is important to note that all the features looked for here correspond to studies made of actual Scots speech. When looking at the Aitken/Macafee table (see Appendix 1) and also taking the list of alternately spelled words into account, it becomes clear that the language of the comics, at least in terms of phonology, is quite Scots indeed: from the two first groups of words in the table, which are the most 'Scots', the comics have examples of *ken, een, hame, hale, puir, cauld, auld, coo, hoose, no* and *–na, -nae*. If the list of Scots words and expressions is added in as well (see Appendix 2), *bairn, brae, birl* and *mind* can be added to the list of words from the comics which appear in the table.

Figure 5.2. Phonological and lexical features, *The Broons* July 30th 1944.

CHAPTER 6. THE SCOTS OF THE COMICS: A CLOSER LOOK

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will look more closely at eight selected comics, one of *Oor Wullie* and one of *The Broons* for each decade: The 1940s, 1950s, 1960s and 2000s. The comics have been chosen completely arbitrarily – I have purposefully avoided ones with code-switching or non-Scots speakers in them, but otherwise, I merely opened the books at random places and picked the comic I happened upon.

The purpose of the following analysis is to look more closely at how the language is represented in one comic and take a more in-depth look to supplement the more general overview of earlier chapters. When I in the following chapter refer to eg 'the comic from 1941', unless otherwise specified, I am not referring to all comics from 1941, but rather the specific one which has been subjected to analysis here.

The analysed comics are as follow:

1. *Oor Wullie* from January 26th 1941. Speaking roles: Wullie, two adult men.
2. *Oor Wullie* from April 30th 1950. Speaking roles: Wullie, his parents, P.C. Murdoch, a neighbour, Fat Bob, Wee Eck, another child friend.
3. *Oor Wullie* from April 30th 1961. Speaking roles: Wullie, his Ma.
4. *Oor Wullie* from the 2008 collection, personal pagination page 26. Speaking roles: Wullie, Soapy Soutar, Wullie's Ma, three adult men.
5. *The Broons* from November 7th 1943. Speaking roles: Granpaw, Paw, Maw, Daphne, Maggie, Horace, one of the twins, a neighbour Mrs. Smith.
6. *The Broons* from May 6th 1951. Speaking roles: Paw, Maw, Hen, Daphne, Joe, Maggie, Horace, the grocer, two shop assistants (both of them young ladies).
7. *The Broons* from April 7th 1963. Speaking roles: Granpaw, Paw, Maw, Hen, Daphne, Maggie.
8. *The Broons* from the 2003 collection page 2. Speaking roles: Granpaw, Paw, Maw, Hen, Daphne, Joe, Maggie.

6.2 Phonological features and orthography

These are the phonological features which occur in the chosen comics. Occasionally, one word may exhibit both phonological features and either morphological or lexical features, in which case the morphological or lexical feature will be discussed under that heading.

Table 6.1. Phonological features

	1941	1943	1950	1951	1961	1963	2003	2003
dropped	5	21	30	22	10	8	8	7
mak/tak		1	1	2				
in'	2	7	15	6	5		6	
oo	1	5	6	11	2	1	1	1
i	6	4	6	6	3	3	4	
ae	15	17	17	11	4		10	4
au	1	7	2	1	1	1		1
ch	1	2	2	2	2		3	
ui	2	2	3	2			1	
ai		2			1		1	1
e	1		1	1	1			
ee	2	2	2				2	
hame/ane		3		2	2			1
ow	3	2					1	1

This table does not show the features which only occur in one strip, nor the features which have only been listed at the end as 'other words'. As can be seen from the table, only the features <dropped letters> and <oo> appear in all the selected comics. <i>, <ae> and <au> appear in all but one, and <in'> and <ch> appear in all but two. The number of tokens varies between features, but also between years or decades. In general, there are fewer tokens for the comics from the 1960s and the 2000s.

6.2.1 Dropped letters

The heading 'dropped letters' is somewhat misleading, as this is not strictly a phonological feature, but rather an orthographic convention representing a number of phonological features.

In several words, a letter has been dropped from the orthography in order to denote that a sound is not being pronounced. The use of apostrophes to show that a letter or sound has been removed is a convention taken from English non-standard[19] writing, and is as such not native to Scots writing (Corbett et. al. 2003: 12). This feature is one of two phonological features which show up in all the selected comics, and represent a number of phonological processes.

Table 6.2. The various words with dropped letters

	1941	**1943**	**1950**	**1951**	**1961**	**1963**	**2003**	**2008**
wi'	2	2	3	2	1	1		
ba'			1					
fitba'			1					
a'		6	7	1		1	2	1
fu'							1	
ca's								1
an'	1	8	8	5	5	5		
o'	1	3	6	13	3	1	1	1
s'long	1							
masel'								2
no'		2	3	1			4	1
awa			2		1			1

θ/ð-dropping occurs in the comics when the preposition 'with' has been replaced by *wi'*. This occurs twice in the comics from 1941, 1943 and 1951, three times in the comic from 1950 and once in the comics from 1961 and 1963.

   l-vocalisation is represented with *ba'* for the noun 'ball'. The word is used once in the 1950 comic, twice if *fitba'* ('football') is counted with it. A more common expression with l-vocalisation is *a'* for the adverb 'all'. It is used six times in 1943, seven times in 1950, twice in 2003 and once in 1951, 1963 and 2008. The 2003 strip has an instance of the adjective *fu'* ('full'). Interestingly enough, this does not occur in dialogue, but in the short text above the strip itself: 'Number Ten's no' fu' o' laughter – As the Broons face a mornin' after!' The final word with l-vocalisation occurs in the 2008 comic, with only occurrence of a shortened verb,

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[19] It also occurs in contractions in Standard writing, such as *I'm* or *you're*, but that is beside the point in this case.

complete with third person singular plural –s after the apostrophe: *ca's* ('calls') in the sentence 'Gansie's what my granny ca's a jumper!'

Cluster simplification is the process wherein the conjunction 'and' is reduced to *an'*. This is a very common feature which occurs five times in 1951, 1961 and 1963, eight times in 1943 and 1950 and once in 1941. Cluster simplification can also be the explanation for the preposition 'of' being reduced to *o'*, especially since *o'* usually is unstressed. This is the only dropped letter word to occur in every one of the here analysed comics. In the 1951 comic it is used a grand total of 13 times. The other comics do not have as high a frequency of the word; six times in 1950, three times in 1943 and 1961, and once in 1941, 1963, 2003 and 2008. Cluster simplification is also the most likely reason for *s'long* for 'so long' (as in 'goodbye' in 1941.

Exactly which process is at work with *masel'* for 'myself' is not certain. The 'ma' part of the word is a result of how Scots pronouns work, as seen with the pronouns later in this chapter. The loss of the /f/ could be yet another cluster simplification. The word is used twice in the 2008 comic.

No' and *awa'* are discussed with *mak'* and *tak'* under the next heading. *No'* is used four times in 2003, three times in 1950, twice in 1943 and once in 1951 and 2008. *Awa'* is used twice in 1950, once in 1961 and once in an example in 2008 where Wullie has written a sign saying 'Skint awa looking for a job', where he neither writes the word *away* in its standard form nor uses an apostrophe to signify the dropping of one letter.

6.2.2 Mak' and tak'

The verbs *mak'* and *tak'* ('make' and 'take') are not included with the other words that have dropped letters, because in these words' cases it is not a question of not pronouncing a letter (which is mute anyway), but rather one where the lack of the letter at the end of the word is meant to represent a different vowel quality in the preceding vowel. In other words, the word *tak'* would not normally be pronounced /teɪkə/ in southern English, but /teɪk/. Removing the <e> from the end of the spelled word is most likely to indicate the pronunciation [tĭk] or [tæ̆k], but it could also be because of the context the word is found in, where it precedes a vowel: '- or I'll tak' a red face!'. The feature shows up once in the *The Broons* strip from 1943 (where the example is from), once in the *Oor Wullie* strip from 1950 and twice in the *The Broons* strip from 1951 .

It is possible that the preposition *awa'* ('away') and the negator *no'* ('not') should be classified as the same as *mak'* and *tak'*, because rather than the apostrophe representing a sound which is not being pronounced, the loss of a letter in the orthography represents a change in vowel quality. Rather than with a diphthong as in /əweɪ/, *away* is pronounced as /əwa:/. In *no*, StE has a diphthong, /nəʊ/ in British and /noʊ/ in American, while the ScStE or Scots pronunciation would be more like /no(:)/.

6.2.3 -in'

The feature of writing *–in'* at the end of a word which would normally be written to end in *–ing* is a common feature of non-standard writing, and meant to denote the pronunciation /ɪn/ rather than /ɪŋ/. This sound feature is very common in non-standard English all over the world. Due to it representing a change in phoneme rather than the exclusion of one, it is treated separately from other dropped letters signified by the insertion of an apostrophe. As this is one of the features described in chapter 3, I will not go any further into it here.

The feature shows up in the *Oor Wullie* strip from 1941 twice, in the verbs *workin'* and *tryin'*. In the *The Broons* strip from 1943, the feature occurs seven times, both for verbs (*lookin'*) and nouns (*mornin'*). It occurs fifteen times in the *Oor Wullie* strip from 1950, six times in the *The Broons* strip from 1951, five times in the *Oor Wullie* strip from 1961, and six times in the *The Broons* strip from 2003. While the feature does not show up in the *Oor Wullie* strip from 2008, it should be noted that this is not due to the lack of words ending in *–ing*. Wullie writes *looking* on his sign, and *–ing* is used in the dialogue as well.

6.2.4 <oo>

The only feature other than the dropping of letters which occurs in every one of the chosen strips is the substitution of <oo> for <ou> or <ow> in words like *oor* or *doon* ('our' and 'down')[20]. It is used once in 1941, five times in 1943, six times in 1950, eleven times in 1951, twice in 1961, once in 1963, once in 2003 and once in 2008. It is another feature which is described further in chapter 2.

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[20] I have not counted the times *Broon* is used, as that is the name of the family (even though other strips make it clear that the name really is *Brown*.

It is also possible that the word *fut* for 'foot', which occurs in the 1941 comic, is supposed to represent the same sound, although that could also be to represent the shift /ʌ/ ~ /ʉ/ or /ï/ ~ /ɛ̈/.

6.2.5 <i>

The next feature is the sound denoted by <i> in orthography. The interesting part about this feature is that the /ɪ/ sound has replaced two different vowel sounds from StE: /ɒ/ and /ʌ/, and is also described in chapter 2. In the 1941 comic, six instances of the feature has been spread over three words: *whit, ither* and *wis* for 'what' 'other' and 'was'. In the 1943 comic there are four occurrences with three words: *whit, ither* and *wid* ('would'). In addition to this there are five instances of the word *wir* for *our*, but that will be discussed further under the section on morphology.

In the 1950 comic the feature occurs six times with the words *whit, wis, rin* ('run') and *fitba'* ('football'). The feature occurs six times in the 1951 comic as well, but only three times in both comics from the sixties. Finally, it occurs four times in the 2003 comic and not at all in 2008.

6.2.6 <ae>

One of the features which show up most often in the strips is the use of <ae> instead of <o> to denote the /e/ sound. This is another feature which is described in chapter 3, and it shows up in very common words like 'do' and 'to', or *dae* and *tae*. Altogether in the 1941 strip, those two words are used fifteen times in fourteen panels. 'Do' and 'to' are never used.

In the 1943 strip the feature is also very much used. A total of seventeen instances are spread over four different words: *dae, tae, frae* ('from') and *thae* ('those'). The last one will be discussed further in the section on morphological features. For someone unfamiliar with Scots, it could, in context, easily be taken for a non-standard form of *the*.

The feature is used seventeen times in the 1950 strip, with the words *tae, hae* ('have') and *intae* ('into'). In the 1951 strip there are eleven instances, one in writing, with the words *tae, dae* and *thae*. At one point, Daphne Broon uses the word *to*. This is possibly an instance of code-switching, as there are no specific 'Scots' features in that particular sentence when she speaks.

There is a sharp drop in frequency of use in the sixties strips, with only four occurrences in 1961 and none in 1963. However, the frequency of use is high again in the 2003 strip, which has ten instances, while in the 2008 strip it is back down on four. It should be noted that none of the standard versions were much used in those strips either, but they did occur in the 1963 strip, unlike the <ae> version.

6.2.7 <au>

The use of <au> instead of <o> or <a> in words like *auld* and *haunds* ('old' and 'hands') shows up in all but one of the comics, but is not used extensively. The orthographic <au> is meant to represent the vowel sound /au/ to /ɔu/ (Johnston 1997: 488) as opposed to /əʊ/ or /æ/. It is used once in 1941, seven times in 1943, twice in 1950, once in 1951, once in 1961, once in 1963, never in 2003 and once in 2008. The most common word, by far, is *auld*, but the words *haunds*, *gaun* ('going'), *cauld* ('cold'), and *whaur* ('where') are used as well. *Gaun* is rarely used in the comics as a whole – it only shows up in the 1941 comic out of those analysed here. In the other comics, *going* is represented as *goin'*, a trend which continues in all the collections.

6.2.8 <ch>

The use of <ch> instead of <gh> to signify the phoneme /x/ has been discussed in chapter 3, and will because of this not be explained further here. The feature is used in six of the eight selected comic strips, with the words *michty* ('mighty', see also under the section for lexical features), *nicht* ('night'), *richt* ('right'), *thocht* ('thought'), *fechts* ('fights''), *brocht* ('brought'), *sicht* ('sight'), *ach* and *och* ('ah' and 'oh', see also under the lexical section), as well as in the fictional place name *Auchtentogle*. Despite all the words featuring the feature and the fact that only two of the selected comics do not contain it, the frequency of use is rather low. The feature is used once in 1941, twice in 1943, 1950, 1951 and 1961, three times in 2003 and not at all in 1963 and 2008.

6.2.9 <ui>

Yet another feature which is described in chapter 3 is the use of orthographic <ui> instead of <oo> or <u>. This happens with the words *juist* ('just', in some other comics written *jist*), and *guid* ('good'). This is a vowel sound that belongs to a lexical set which is unique to Scots, and does not exist in ScStE (Millar 2007: 21). In most varieties of Scots, it is merged with another

lexical set. It is not a feature which is used frequently, only once in 2003, twice in 1941, 1943 and 1951 and three times in 1950.

6.2.10 <ai>

<ai> replaces the orthographic <a> and <o...e>, and is meant to indicate that another sound than /ɑ:/ or /ɔ:/ is being used, most likely [ɛɪ], although this feature is more common in northern Scots (Stuart-Smith 2004: 55 table 3). The feature shows up in words such as *fairmer* ('farmer'), *mair* ('more') and *gairden* ('garden'). These words are most likely part of the *air* subset of the lexical set BAIT, and as such merges with *more* in Southern Scots (Johnston 1997: 465). The feature is used once in 1961, 2003 and 2008, twice in 1943 and 1950, and never in 1941, 1951 and 1963.

6.2.11 <e>

With the words *efter* ('after') and *denner* ('dinner'), <e> has replaced <a> and <i> respectfully. *Efter* occurs one time each in the strips from 1941, 1950 and 1951, while *denner* occurs once in the strip from 1961.

6.2.12 <ee>

The words *weel, peety* and *freend* ('well', 'pity' and 'friend') are most likely part of the MEET/BEAT lexical set (the ScStE/Scots equivalent to StE FLEECE) (Millar 2007: 22), and use the phonological sound [i:] (Johnston 1997: 454). *Weel* occurs twice in the comics from 1941, 1943 and 2003, while *peety* and *freend* both occur one time each in the 1950 comic.

6.2.13 <hame>

According to Millar (2007), the lexical set FACE (Wells 1982) in southern English has the ScStE equivalent MATE/BAIT lexical set, which in Scots has been separated into MATE-HAME and BAIT. The lexical set MATE is much larger in Scots than in ScStE, as many GOAT words have merged with it (Millar 2007: 21). In Mid-Scots (where Glasgow, and most probably the fictional Auchtentogle belongs), this set uses the sound [e(:)] (Johnston 1997: 461). *Hame* occurs once in the comic from 1943.

6.2.14 <ane>

The words *ane, anes, nane* and *stane* ('one', 'ones', 'none' and 'stone') might follow the same pattern as *hame*. They appear in comics from 1943 (*anes*, twice), 1951 (*ane* and *nane* once each), 1961 (*ane* twice) and 2008 (*stane* once).

6.2.15 Ower

The word *ower* is used in two different ways in the strip from 1941. Twice it is used as a preposition: 'I want tae shift this anvil *ower* tae the ither side o' the door!' [emphasis mine], and once as an adverb instead of *too*: 'It's *ower* heavy even for a strong man!' [emphasis mine]. This second use will be discussed under lexical features. *Ower* is also used for 'over' in the strip from 1943. Most likely, it is meant to represent the diphthong [au] as in *bow* (Scobbie and Stuart-Smith 2006: 8; Millar 2007: 21). The word *fowk*, which appears one time in each of the comics from 2003 and 2008, most likely follows the same pattern.

6.2.16 <haw>

At one point in the 1941 comic, the smith laughs: 'Haw, haw!' Very often, laughter is written 'Har, har!' Writing it as *haw* puts the word in the same category as *maw* and *paw* with the sound /ɔ/, making it more 'Scottish' than *har* with the sound /aː/. This is more commonly used in comics when the speakers are supposed to be southern English.

6.2.17 <smiddy>

The use of the word <smiddy> in the 1941 strip indicates that rather than being pronounced /smɪði/, the pronunciation is supposed to be [smɪdi]. This is the result of a process called /θ ð/-stopping, where the dental fricatives are replaced by the stops /t d/. This feature is more common in Ireland than in Scotland (Johnston 1997: 506), but can be found in, among other Scottish locations, Glasgow, possibly due to influence from Irish (Stuart-Smith 2004: 62).

6.2.18 <picters>

The word *picters* occurs in the comic from 1950, indicating the pronunciation /pɪkters/ rather than the StE /pɪktʃəz/. The difference in pronunciation here is most likely due to rhoticity. While ScStE tends towards being rhotic, r-vocalization is becoming more and more common among young people speaking Urban Scots (Stuart-Smith 2004: 62-63). However, as the

comic is from 1950, a young person then would be middle-aged now, and so, processes happening with young people today should not be applied to young people in the 1950s.

6.2.19 \<ah\>

The Scottish Vowel Length Rule works on diphthongs such as the lexical set PRICE, which the word *I* belongs to, with quantity and quality differences (Stuart-Smith 2004: 57). In the 2008 comic, Wullie switches between using *I* and *Ah* as a personal pronoun. As it only appears in the most recent collection of comics, and is not used consistently, it remains to be seen whether or not it is a feature which has come to stay. Both Bergs (2001) and Macafee (1980) note *ah* as the first person singular personal pronoun; however, Bergs notes a difference between stressed and unstressed uses. This will be explored further in the section on morphological features.

6.2.20 Other words

Other words with a spelling which indicates a different phonological sound, which will not be investigated further as they only affect one word and have no immediate further significance, are *awfy* ('awful', used consistently in every comic except the ones from 1950, 1961 and 1963. As an intensifier considered a 'vulgarism' of Central Scots urban working-class speech (Aitken 1979: 109)), *aff* ('off', used in the comics from 1950, 1961 and 2003), *ony* ('any', used in the comics from 1950, 1961 and 2003), *gie* ('give', used in the comics from 1941 and 1950) and *twa* ('two', used in the comics from 1951 and 1961).

6.3 Morphological features

These are the morphological features which occur in the selected comics. Most of them have been explored in chapter 3, and will hence not be described in-depth here.

Once again, the features with only one token have been left out. The *–ie* token count for the 2008 comic has been listed as 8 (4) because half of those tokens were with the word *gansie*, which has been listed under the lexical features rather than with the other *–ie* words in morphological features.

Table 6.3. Morphological features

	1941	**1943**	**1950**	**1951**	**1961**	**1963**	**2003**	**2008**
ye	11		18	6	3	2	10	2
ma	2	2	3	1				1
oor	1		1	5				
yer		3	2	1		1		
thae		6		1	1			1
-ie	4		1	4	2			8 (4)
-it		1					1	
ken		2		1				
-na(e)		3	2	2	3		5	
changed contraction	1		3				1	

Here, *ye* comes the closest to being represented in all comics, only the 1943 comic has no examples of *ye*. *–nae* and *–ie* are two other common features.

6.3.1 Pronouns

The personal pronouns in the nominative case which are interesting are *ye* and *ah*. *Ah* only occurs in the comic from 2008, and then interchangeably with *I*. Macafee (1980) gives *ah* as the only nominative first person singular personal pronoun, while Bergs (2001) has a note on [ʌi] (*I*) being emphatic and [a:] (*ah*) being the regular form (Bergs 2001: 17).

However, if the same distinction is made within the comic itself, it is not easily apparent. Wullie says 'I hope they give me a tip' and 'Ah prefer this to pizza', with nothing from the context indicating that the 'I' is supposed to be stressed. Indeed, when other emphasized dialogue is presented in boldface, it would be safe to assume that the writer has not intended the two forms to be in complimentary distribution.

Bergs (2001) gives *you; du; tu; thou* and *thee* as the second person singular nominative personal pronouns (*thou* and *thee* are used only rarely). The second person plurals are *ye; youse; you* and *yiz.* He marks a difference between nominative and accusative (the latter only has *you* in plural) (Bergs 2001: 17-18). It is possible that this marks a change from when Macafee wrote that "the distinction between nominative *ye* and accusative *you* has not

survived in Modern Scots" (Macafee 1980: 26), although it could also mark a regional difference. Macafee further notes that *ye* occurs in stressed form in either function.

Again, there is no distinction made in the comics. In one sentence from the 1950 comic, *ye* occurs in both the nominative and the accusative: 'I'm tippin' ye aff – ye're gettin' oor Wullie'. In this particular example, *ye* could be either stressed or unstressed; it is not clear from the context, and is left up to the reader. Furthermore, *ye* is used here in the singular. In fact, while *ye* occurs a total of eighteen times in the comic from 1950, seventeen of those occurrences are in the singular, which none of the grammars on Scots list as a pronoun used in the singular. Only once does *ye* occur in the plural, and then it is in the accusative case.

In the 1951 *The Broons* comic, *ye* is used both in the plural and in the singular, more often in the plural – four times versus twice in singular (one of those in a written note). In this comic, *you* occurs twice in spoken dialogue (and four times in a written note), once in the singular and once in the plural.

The use of *ye* in both singular and plural continues. In the 1941 comic, *ye* is used eleven times, all in the singular (as well as the one occurrence of *you*). In the 1961 comic, it is used once in singular, once in plural and once in a general sense: 'Wid ye credit that?'. In 1963, it occurs twice in the singular. In 2003, it occurs four times in the plural and six times in the singular, with *you* being used once each in singular and plural. In 2008, both times *ye* is used it is in the singular (*you* occurs four times, also in the singular).

The possessive pronouns which show up in the comics are *ma*, *yer* and *wir* or *oor* (my, your and our). *Ma* is the common possessive for first person singular, *my* being the emphatic form (Bergs 2001: 17). It is used twice in the 1941 comic, twice in 1943, three times in 1950, once in 1951, and once in 2008. *My* is used twice in 1961.

Yer is by Bergs given as the pronunciation of *your*, but not mentioned by Macafee. It is used three times in the comic from 1943, twice in 1950, once in 1951 and once in 1963. *Your* is used once in 1951.

Wir is the unstressed form of *our*, while *oor* is the stressed form (Macafee 1980: 26). It only shows up in one of the comics analysed here (although it is used in other strips from all the collections). In the comic from 1943, *wir* is used except in one case, where *oor* is underlined to indicate emphasis. *Oor* is used once in 1950 and five times in 1951, as well as in the title *Oor Wullie*.

6.3.2 Demonstratives

The demonstrative *yon* is used once in the comic from 1951: 'Well, we did oor best wi' yon blonde –'. *Yon* is used very often in Scots, referring to something very distant in time or space from the speaker, whereas *that* is used to refer to something closer, although not as close as *this* (Beal 1997: 351).

Thae is the Scots form of 'those'. In the comic from 1943, it is used six times, in a way which adds to the text if the reader is aware that *thae* means 'those' and not 'the': the Broon family refer to 'thae Smiths' while they are competing with the other family and distancing themselves from them, while the moment they are more level, they refer to the other family as 'the Smiths'. *Thae* is also used once in 1951, once in 1961 and once in 2008.

In vernacular Scots, *thae* is largely being replaced by *them*, which is common in many varieties of non-standard English (Beal 1997: 251). This development has not reached the comics yet. Also, the use of *thae* and *them* is commonly a characteristic of the working class, while the middle classes use *those* (Macaulay 1991, quoted in Beal 1997: 351).

6.3.3 Suffixes to nouns

Macafee writes that 'the suffix –*ie* is used freely to form nouns from monosyllabic adjectives and other monosyllabic nouns' (Macafee 1980: 24). In the comics, the adding of the suffix to monosyllabic nouns shows up in the 1941 comic as *mannie* and *laddie*, and in 1951 as *lassie* (with a plural -s, *lassies*). It is also possible that *grannie*, which shows up in 2008, is another example of this, although that could be another spelling for *granny*, which is used in the strip as well.

However, the –*ie* ending is used in other contexts as well, as when the words *window* and *catapult* are reduced to *windie*[21] (in 1950) and *cattie* (in 1961). Furthermore, in the 2008 comic, Wullie uses the expression *roastie toastie* to mean *warm*, most likely formed from *roasted* and *toasted*.

6.3.4 Ower

The word *ower* is used in two different ways in the strip from 1941. Twice it is used as a preposition: 'I want tae shift this anvil *ower* tae the ither side o' the door!' [emphasis mine], and once as an adverb instead of 'too': 'It's *ower* heavy even for a strong man!' [emphasis

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[21] It is possible that *windie* represents an older pronunciation.

mine]. In the 1943 comic, it is only used as a preposition, but both uses continue through all the comic collections. Both uses are mentioned in the Scottish National Dictionary.

6.3.5 Verb inflections

The old form of the Scots past-tense morpheme was –*it*. The [ɪt]-sound is maintained after word-final plosives, but otherwise reduced to [t]. However, this is dependent on the speaker, interlocutor and situation (Beal 1997: 351ff; Bergs 2001: 24). This feature is never used with regular verbs in the comics analysed here.

However, it is used with a verb which is irregular in Standard English. Once in the 1943 comic and once in the 2003 comic, 'told' is represented as *telt*. In Macaulay's 1991 study, *tellt* and *sellt* alternate with StE 'told' and 'sold' (Macaulay 1991; cited in Beal 1997: 353).

6.3.6 Ken

This feature is discussed in chapter 3, and will not be discussed further here. It is used twice in the 1943 comic: 'An' I ken why!', 'Naebody will see wis that ken's wis' [sic], and once in the 1951 comic: 'Ach, nane o' ye ken how tae go aboot it.' *Know* is never used in any of the comics analysed here.

6.3.7 -na(e)

Another feature which is mentioned in chapter 3, the use of negation is one of the most easily recognisable features of Scots grammar. In the 1943 comic, *canna* is used once for 'can't' and *dinna* is used twice for 'don't'; the 1950 comic has two instances of *dinna*; the 1951 comic has one instance of *dinna* and one of *widna* ('wouldn't'); in the 1961 comic *widna* is used twice and *wisna* ('wasn't') is used once; and in the 2003 comic *dinnae* is used twice, and *couldnae* ('couldn't'), *cannae* and *willnae* ('won't') are used one time each. Note that in this latest comic, the spelling has changed.

The *n't*-ending is used in two of the comics that do not have any formations with –*na(e)* in them: *won't* in the 1963 comic, and *don't* in the 2008 comic. In the 1941 comic neither –*na* nor *n't* appears.

6.3.8 Changed contractions with negation

This last feature is also described in chapter 3, and as such I will only list the appearances of the changed contractions in the comics.

I'll no, as opposed to 'I won't', appears in the comic from 1950: 'I'll no' be botherin' ye ony mair'.

Ye're no instead of 'you aren't' or 'you're not' is used in the comics from 1941: 'Ye're no strong enough'; and 1950: 'Aw, ye're no', Wullie!' Especially the latter instance could be one where 'you're not' would have been used in StE.

We're no is used in the comic from 1950, rather than 'we aren't': 'We're no' flittin' – it's yer auntie Alice.'

Ye've nae is used in the 2003 comic instead of 'you haven't (any)' or 'you've no': 'You young fowk the day – ye've nae stamina!'

In the 2003 comic, the tag question *wis it no'* is used where StE would use 'wasn't it': 'That wis some party last night, wis it no'?'

6.4 Lexical features

All of these definitions are taken from the Scottish National Dictionary (SND) published in 1968. More Scots expressions and words which are used in the comics can be found listed in Appendix 2.

6.4.1 Nouns

Bairn: Alternate spelling *bearn*, pronounced [bern, bɛrn]. While the word can be a verb as well, meaning 'to render pregnant', it is used as a noun in the comics – more specifically to mean 'a young child, male or female' (SND, s.v. *bairn*, n.). In addition to being used as a proper noun as the name of the youngest Broon daughter, there is this sentence from the comic from 1950: 'Here, you bairns – here's some presents tae ye.'

Close, the: As a noun, this word is chiefly used in Edinburgh, but also in Caithness, Aberdeen and Lanark. The meaning used in the 1943 comic is 'A courtyard; an enclosed space adjoining a house' (SND, s.v. *close*, n.). (For quote see 'gang' under the 'verbs' heading.)

Gansie: Alternate spellings *gansey, ganzy, -ie, genzie, -y, gensy, gensee, guenzie* (interestingly enough, the spelling used in the comic is not listed in the SND), pronounced

[gɑnzi] in Scots. A jersey worn by fishermen, or a blue-striped cotton shirt (SND, s.v. *gansey,* n.). Wullie gives it a slightly different meaning in the 2008 comic: 'Gansie's what my granny ca's a jumper!'

Jessie: An expression for effeminate men, used contemptuously (SND, s.v. *jessie*, n.). Other places is the comics, it is used in connection with *claes*, being used as an adjective or part of a compound noun to mean 'fancy clothes'. In the 1961 comic, Wullie uses it about three calves which licked him: 'Thae big jessies wis kissin' me!'

Lad: Just as in English, *lad* means a 'youth, a young male, usually of adolescent age or in early manhood' (SND, s.v. *lad*, n.). However, at least in the comics, it is used consistently when referring to young males, with no equivalent term being used. It may be used to refer to someone who is not present, as in the 1961 comic: 'A lad here found a lucky four-leaved clover...', or when directly addressing someone as in the 1950 comic: 'I'm sorry tae hear it, laddie'. The suffix *–ie* will often be attached.

Lass: The same as *lad*, used as in English but to greater extent to mean 'girl', addressing either young girls or adult women in a familiar or jocular tone (SND s.v. *lass*, n.). The suffix *–ie* is common with this word as well. It appears in the 1951 comic: 'Nae wonder that wee lassie gave Horace extra groceries'.

The day, the morn, the nicht: With the definite article, these words take a slightly different meaning. *The day* means 'today' (SND, s.v. *day*, n.), and is used in the 2003 comic: 'You young fowk the day – ye've nae stamina!' *The morn* means 'the following day, tomorrow' (SND, s.v. *morn*, n.), and is used twice in the 1943 comic: 'It's a' fixed for the morn!' *The nicht* means 'tonight' (SND, s.v. *nicht*, n.) and is used in the 1943 comic as well: 'We'll need tae look oot wir auld anes the nicht!'

6.4.2 Verbs

Feared: To be *feared*, or *feart* or *feartit*, is especially used in Glaswegian and means to be 'afraid' (SND, s.v. *feart*, v.). It is used in the 1943 comic: 'We wis feared some o' ye wid see wis in wir auld claes!'

Flittin': The intransitive form of the verb 'to flit' means 'to change one's dwelling place' (SND, s.v. *flit*, v.). It is used nine times in the 1950 comic, when Wullie thinks that 'We're flittin' tae Groundfield!'

Gang: This verb means either 'to go, move, depart' or 'to walk, go on foot' (SND, s.v. *gang*, v.). It is used in the second sense in the 1943 comic: 'We'll no' gang oot the front way by the close'.

Gassin': Spelled *gash*, this means 'to talk volubly, to gossip' or 'to talk freely, to prattle' (SND, s.v. *gash*, v.). The 1943 comic gives us the line 'Stop gassin' get on wi' yer job!', while the two being addressed have the words 'Gossip! Chatter!' written over them rather than having their dialogue written out.

Greetin': The intransitive form of *greet* ([grit]) means 'to weep, cry, whimper, lament; to complain, grumble in a helpless trifling manner' (SND, s.v. *greet*, v.). It is used in the 1950 comic: 'An' gettin' us a' near greetin'!'

Kid: The meaning that fits the context best is the one when the word is used as slang: 'to hoax' (SND, s.v. *kid*, v.). It appears in the 1950 comic: 'Kid us on ye're leavin', eh?'

Licked: As in slang English, *to lick* may mean 'to wallop, thrash' or 'to beat, surpass, overcome' (SND, s.v. *lick*, v.). It is in the second sense that it is being used in the 1951 comic: 'Horace has licked the lot o' ye!' (In some other comics not analysed here, it is being used in the first sense.)

Mind: The transitive verb *mind* is used with the same meaning as in archaic or dialectal English, to mean 'to remember, recollect, call to mind' (SND, s.v. *mind*, v.). In the 1951 comic it is used in the sense of 'call to mind' or 'remind': 'They're sweet an' they'll mind me o' you!'

Skedaddle: The Scots and Northern English dialectal usage is in the sense of 'to spill, scatter from a container' (SND, s.v. *skedaddle*, v.). However, in the 1961 comic it is used in the American sense 'to clear out hastily' (SND, s.v. *skedaddle*, v.): 'Go on! Skedaddle!'

Skint: The meaning that fits the best with the context is the generally reflexive or imperative 'to hasten, hurry' (SND, *skint*, v2.). It is written on a sign in the 2008 comic: 'Skint awa looking for a job'.

6.4.3 Adjectives and adverbs

Bonnie, bonny: Pronounced [bɔnɪ, bonĕ, bɔnɪ, buni] (the last in Southern Scots), it is used as both an adjective and an adverb to mean 'beautiful, pretty, fair' (SND, s.v. *bonnie*, adj.). It is used in the 1951 comic: 'She wis tellin' us aboot the bonnie blonde in the grocer's!'

Muckle: Pronounced [mʌkl], it is used as an adjective, adverb and noun. It is as an adjective that it is used in the 1961 comic: 'A muckle field – packed wi' clover!' As it refers to size or bulk, it means 'large, big, great' (SND, s.v. *muckle*, adj.).

Wee: A noun, adjective and adverb, it is pronounced [wi:] or, in Southern Scots, [wəi]. It is used as an adjective meaning 'small, tiny, little, restricted in size' (SND, s.v. *wee*, adj.) in the comics from 1941 ('There's that wee laddie again'), 1951 ('...to my wee apprentice lassie'), 2003 ('Whit ye need is a wee hair o' the dog') and 2008 ('It's no' the job centre you want, wee man').

6.4.4 Interjections

Ach: 'An exclamation of impatience, disappointment, contempt, remonstrance etc.' (SND, s.v. *ach*, int.). Alternate spelling *augh*, it is pronounced [ɑx]. It is used once in the 1950 comic ('Ach – it's juist the bill for the film next week!') and once in the 1951 comic ('Ach, nane o' ye ken how tae go aboot it.').

Crivvens: 'Gen. used as an excl. of surprise' (SND, s.v. *crivvens*, int.). It is used in the 1943 comic ('Crivvens! There's that wee laddie again –') and twice in the 1961 comic ('Crivvens! Look!').

Jings: The Scottish equivalent of *by jingo*, it is a mild expletive (SND, s.v. *jings*, int.). Used in the comics from 1941 ('Jings! Ma fut!'), 1950 ('Jings! We're flittin''), three times in 1961

('Jings! I'm in luck!'), twice in 1963 ('Jings! Is it that time again?'), 2003 ('Jings! I've got the heartburn somethin' awfy') and 2008 ('Jings! The very dab!').

Michty (me): 'An exclamation of astonishment, surprise or exasperation' (SND, s.v. *michty*, int.). It is used in the 1941 comic ('Michty me! Wha shifted it?') and the 1961 comic ('Michty! Look at this!')

Och: 'An exclamation, orig. of sorrow, pain or regret, now mostly of exasperation, peremptory dismissal of a subject, or weariness' (SND, s.v. *och*, int.). Also spelled *oich, oigh*, it is pronounced [ox]. It is used three times in the 2003 comic: 'Och, weel', 'Och, maw' and 'Och, ye try tae help some fowk'.

6.4.5 Fixed phrases and expressions

Help m' (ma) boab: In the dictionary written as *help ma bob*, it is 'used as an ejaculation expressing astonishment or exasperation' (SND, s.v. *help*, 2 Phr.). It is used in 1961 ('Help m' boab!') and 2008 ('Help ma boab! Replenishment executive? Delivery skivvy mair like!')

6.4.6 Not in the SND[22]

Bags o': It seems to mean 'plenty of' in the 1961 comic: 'There'll be bags o' clover in there!'

Dab, the very: The meaning seems to be 'the very thing' in the 2008 comic. Share (2008) identifies it as Scottish slang for 'expert'.

Look oot: It appears to mean 'find' or 'look for' in the 1943 comic – see the quote for *the nicht* under nouns.

Rake oot: The apparent meaning is 'bring out', 'dig out' or 'uncover' in the 1943 comic: 'That's the thing, rake oot a' wir auld tacketty boots, an' auld skirts an' coats!'

Rare: While the word itself appears in several dictionaries, none of the definitions seem to fit the context in the 1950 comic ('He's a rare lad') and the 1951 comic ('There's a rare blonde in the shop'). The first seems to mean 'special' or 'good', while the second means 'pretty'.

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[22] Or, for that matter, in the OED

Share (2008) gives the meaning 'exceptional', which rather fits both cases where it occurs in the selected comics.

Togged: While this word does not appear in the SND or any other dictionary, it seems to mean 'dressed' when it appears in the 1943 comic: 'They're a' togged up awfy posh!'

Figure 6.1. Phonological, grammatical and lexical features in one panel, *Oor Wullie* April 30th 1950.

6.5 Summary

The phonological features are clearly the ones most used, and in general, the phonological features are represented in actual spoken Scots as well. The morphological features, one the other hand, are less frequently used, and do not always fit actual practice. This is most apparent with the pronouns, where expressions usually used in plural are used in the singular, especially *ye*. *Oor*, as well, is used more often than its function as the stressed form of the possessive second person plural pronoun would account for – a higher frequency of *wir* would have been more accurate.

With the demonstratives, *yon* is underused, while *thae* is overused and has not been replaced by *them* the way it is being replaced in vernacular Scots.

Finally, the verb inflection –*it* is hardly used at all.

In general, the grammar of the comics appears to be Scots, but not 'too' Scots. The lexical features largely fit the definitions given in the SND, with a few items where the definition does not fit the context the word appears in, and a few items which do not appear in the SND at all. Most of the lexical features are common in Scotland (and some also in Northern England), but there are a few rarities, such as *skedaddle*.

7. CODE-SWITCHING

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on code-switching: what it is and which forms it takes, how it relates to Scots and to which effect it is used in the source material. This is the only section where I have also used the 60 year anthology *The Broons and Oor Wullie: 1936-1996* as a source. Towards the end of the chapter, I look at whether or not there is a difference in the attitudes towards and the effects of code-switching in the different decades.

7.2 Code-switching: a definition

Code-switching refers to the practice of moving between two or more different varieties of language, whether different languages or different dialects, according to the context the language is used in. It differs from diglossia in that diglossia is more institutionalised, whereas code-switching occurs dependent on the speaker's own choice and discretion. Generally, the switching tends to occur between a high-status variety and a low-status variety. Some reasons for code-switching which are general enough that they show up in several different forms (as will be demonstrated further in this chapter), are the professional identity of the listener or the nature of their relationship with the speaker, and the situation the speaker is in.

7.3 Code-switching in Scots

The characters in the comics go quite far in their code-switching. Not only do they avoid the sort of expressions and grammar typical of the Scots that they normally use, the spelling also indicates that they try to avoid their normal accent. This rather extreme type of code-switching occurs quite often in the comics, while in real life, most Scots speakers will switch between Scots and StScE, or something between the two extremes. There is one example of a milder form of code-switching: George Fitzgerald, who in the strip from November 3rd 1940 appears to switch between Scots when he is talking to Paw and Grandpaw Broon, and StScE when he is talking to his wife. There are two possible reasons for this: the wife does not speak StScE, but StE, and she is quite clearly intended to be the dominant member of the household. The code-switching, then, is both a convergence and a way of showing deference.

It is also possible that the characters are switching to a mild form of StScE when they code-switch. In the strip from July 24th 1938, Hen, Joe and the Twins are all affecting something approaching an *RP* accent. This is, however, the only time the spelling indicates

that the characters have gone quite so far in their accent-change. Noticeably, this happened very early in the comics' run, and could be indicative either of the scriptwriters not having quite found their feet yet, or of a contemporary attitude towards accent – no-one truly posh would be using an accent that was even slightly Scottish.

Aitken wrote that some speakers code-switch between Scots and English, and are fairly consistent in their choice of words, expressions, grammar and pronunciation. Others, however, mix the two systems. Aitken referred to the latter as 'style-drifting'. More of this can be found in the chapter on the Scots-English continuum. Aitken also observed that the clean switch 'seems to be most common with speakers from the most conservatively-spoken regions ... but some working-class speakers from all regions possess [the ability] also' (1984: 523).

Code-switching in Scots has only really been investigated in fictional representations. Generally, the tendency in code-switching and code-drifting seems to be towards intelligibility, keeping grammatical and phonological features, but letting the Scots lexis fall out of use (Macafee 1997: 520).

7.4 Code-switching: accommodation (convergence)

The central idea of accommodation theory is that the speaker wishes to reduce the differences between themselves and the listener in order for the listener to regard them more favourably (Giles and Powesland 1997), or for the speaker to make themselves better understood. If the listener does not belong to the same speech community as the speaker, the speaker may switch to another, more widely used variety in order to include the listener. In the *Oor Wullie* comic published on January 11th 1942, Wullie has a brief moment of code-switching when speaking to his piano teacher, who uses StE: 'Oh no, miss – er- really, I couldn't!' Normally, Wullie would say 'I *couldnae*'. As he uses his regular dialect immediately before, when speaking to a police constable who also uses Scots, it is quite apparent that Wullie is adapting to his interlocutor.

In the *Broons* strip from July 22nd 1945, both Paw and the Bairn adapt their speech to the people they're talking to. When speaking to each other or other people who speak dialect, they use dialect: The leader of the marching band says 'Onything wrang, Mr. Broon?', and Paw responds with 'Na! Na! It's a'richt!' However, when speaking to people who use StE or ScStE, they try to use one of the two standards: Mr. Fitzgerald's[23] 'How nice to see you

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[23] It should be noted that this is not the same Mr. Fitzgerald as the one who will show up in a later example.

again!' is answered with the comment 'Oh, yes – **delighted** to see you!' [original emphasis changed from underline to bold to make it more visible].

Code-switching may occur as a result of unevenness in the perceived power of the varieties (Jørgensen 1998: 237). Language very often functions as an expression of power or dominance. By using a more prestigious variety, the speaker either tries to assume a position of power over the listener, or, if the listener is in a position of power over the speaker, the speaker tries to even out their perceived status.

In the 2003 *Broons* book (p. 79), Daphne is going on a blind date with someone who works at 'the posh school on the hill'. Thinking that she will have to put in some effort to impress this fellow, Daphne speaks not only in an accent unlike her regular one, but also in an entirely different register, using words that cause her sister to think that 'Daphne's swallowed a dictionary!' Daphne is clearly trying to make a favourable impression on her date, but ends up looking ridiculous, largely because her date never gets a word in. It is also a point that her date looks uncomfortable during the entire dinner. In her effort to try to be included in what she believes is her date's speech community (it turns out that it is not, as he is also a Scots speaker), Daphne rather ends up alienating him. Completely unintentionally, she creates a divergence.

7.5 Code-switching: we/they[24] (divergence)

Other reasons for code-switching are present in the comics as well, such as identification of which social or language 'group' the speaker belongs to. The idea of language as a part of a group identity is closely linked to the idea of 'we' and 'they'-codes, although this is a somewhat problematic way of thinking, as identity and social role are never that easily defined (Sebba and Wootton 1998: 263). The 'we' and 'they' distinction may not even be relevant in all bilingual/bidialectal speech communities. In the *Oor Wullie* strip from October 10th 1943, there is one instance where Wullie is dressed up in a kilt, and speaking much broader than he normally does, to assert his pride in front of a group of English children (who, incidentally, speak different dialects: one of the girls says 'ain't 'e sweet', while the boys neither use 'ain't' nor drop their aitches). This appears to be an example of Wullie reinforcing the we/they mentality.

In the *Broons* comic from September 12th 1943, Maw Broon code-switches in her interaction with a door-to-door salesman selling trick toys. After he's made fun of all her

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[24] A more common way of referring to this phenomenon is us/them.

children, Maw puts up a sweet face and says: 'Pardon me, but your tie's all squint and your hat is bashed! Allow me to put them right!' Immediately afterwards, while choking the man with his tie and pulling the hat down over his head, she says: 'That's yer tie sorted – an' that's yer hat fixed!' Maw switches to another dialect/accent in order to come across as more sympathetic to the salesman, who apart from saying *tellin'* and *goin'* instead of 'telling' and 'going', which is a feature used extensively in non-standard accents all over the English-speaking world, appears to speak StE. In this example, Maw switches to another variety of speech in order to cause the salesman to think that they are on the same 'side'. She makes the salesman believe that she is sympathetic to him, largely through her word-choice and by appropriating his way of speaking, but the moment she does not need to pretend to be nice anymore, she switches back, creating an additional barrier between the two of them.

7.6 Domain-based code-switching

Formal situations are more likely to cause the speaker to use a widely used, high-status variety than private situations. This is referred to as domain-based code-switching, with *domain* referring to the physical and social setting of the speech act. In the 2003 book for *The Broons*, there is a shop-lady who code-switches (p. 38). She speaks in StE (or ScStE) when speaking to Hen Broon, but after he's fallen asleep, she allows herself more of a non-standard accent: 'I'll leave this cup o'tea for him when he wakes up – seein' as he's out for the count!'

Wullie's mother has a brief moment of code-switching in the comic from August 4th 1940, when she is in a shop selling what she describes as a 'genteel cap for a boy' and the salesman is standing near her, listening. The moment she and Wullie are outside the shop, she switches back to a heavy Scots dialect when telling Wullie that he has no choice, he is going to wear that cap.

In the *Oor Wullie* strip from May 22nd 1938, Wullie and his friend are told not to speak 'slang' by their teacher – 'A well brought up boy should speak properly!' Wullie spends the rest of the day switching between StE (more likely, here, than ScStE) when commenting on the displays at the exhibition they are visiting, and dialect when scolding his friend for not bothering to code-switch. It should be noted that Wullie's idea of 'not slang' apparently includes a different sort of vocabulary. He uses words like 'marvellous', 'magnificent' and 'splendid specimen', which normally do not enter his speech. In addition to this, while Wullie's friend keeps on speaking in dialect throughout the strip, his essay on the exhibition is written in StE. Wullie, on the other hand, made an effort not to speak dialect, but wrote his essay in Scots, to the displeasure of his teacher. Apparently, there is no point in putting in an

effort to avoid 'slang' as Wullie's teacher put it unless someone who will appreciate that effort is there to observe it. There is also the possibility that Wullie is deliberately making that point, by consciously avoiding 'slang' in his speech but not in his writing.

7.7 Pretence: taking on another role through code-switching

A very common type of code-switching is the one that children indulge in when they are playing. If a child is pretending to be someone who they assume would talk differently from themselves, they may try to appropriate that person's way of speaking for themselves. In addition to this, children may code-switch even when they are not trying to be one specific person, but rather trying to not sound like themselves. There are a number of examples of this in the *Oor Wullie* and *The Broons* comics. Wullie and his friends code-switch in the comic from June 21st 1942, when they are play-acting pretending to be swordsmen like the ones they had seen at the pictures. The challenge to a fight from Wullie and his two friends to the rival gang from Smith Street is delivered in Scots, though, and the moment they actually start fighting they speak Scots again. Later on, when they are pretending to be the best of friends to fool their parents, they are also speaking Scots. The code-switch to a different accent/dialect was solely when they were pretending to be someone else. Everything they say that requires any amount of sincerity is spoken in Scots.

Wullie has another brief moment of code-switching in the comic from November 21st 1954, when he has donned a wig and is pretending to be a judge.

Rather interestingly, in the 2008 *Oor Wullie* book, Wullie does not code-switch in a situation where one would expect him to. On page 12, Wullie is pretending to be James Bond, but he keeps speaking in Scots (and refers to himself as '*Scotland* and Britain's superspy' [emphasis mine]).

Similar to this is the switching adults may partake in when they are trying to make an impression different from their regular one. In the *Broons* strip from July 24th 1938, Hen, Joe and the Twins all code-switch, with Joe (and maybe Hen, it is not clear to whom the speech bubble belongs) even trying to affect an RP accent – 'Our guv'nor's down *heah*', 'do you darnce much'. One of the twins adds an <r> where it normally would not be in an effort to sound especially 'posh' as well: 'Maybe it was on that pleasure cruise round Norway larst week'. It should be noted that the reader has to be familiar with the Southern English non-rhotic accent and how it is represented orthographically to realise that the insertion of an <r> where it would not be normally is meant to indicate a long vowel.

In this situation, the twins are impersonating two pretty girls, and Hen and Joe are trying to chat up said pretty girls. It is clear that the two older *Broons* sons are trying to give the impression that they are well off – their guv'nor owns a yacht, they think they may have met the girls at a pleasure cruise only a week earlier, and are planning a 'continental tour'. The twins, on the other hand, are trying to fool their older brothers into buying them ice-cream by impersonating a pair of girls that they believe their brothers would want to spend money on.

Hen Broon has another instance of trying to impress a pretty girl, in the strip from August 28th 1938. In this case, there is one instance where he says *nicht* instead of 'night', but otherwise there is no non-standard spelling to indicate non-standard pronunciation. Interestingly, when Joe Broon talks to the same girl, he does not bother to code-switch. It would also appear that the girl knows that Hen and Joe are brothers, and as such would know that Hen normally speaks Scots. The reason Hen still code-switches is that he is trying to look better than Joe (he also comments on Joe's dungarees, while Hen himself is dressed in a suit). Interestingly, 'looking good in front of a girl' apparently involves not speaking Scots.

In the *Broons* strip from May 9th 1943, Maggie and Daphne have met two soldiers at a dance – the location given is *At the Palais*. It is even specified that Daphne is 'talking posh' in her speech bubble, and Maggie gives her name as 'Margaret'. The two of them speak of having a place in the country where their father goes fishing and their brothers go shooting. The accent they code-switch to is apparently meant to fit the higher-class life they are pretending to live.

In the *Broons* comic presented on November 3rd, 1940, Paw and Grandpaw Broon both code-switch to an accent closer to StE. In this comic, Paw and Grandpaw are trying to fool the rather domineering wife of a friend of Grandpaw (George Fitzgerald[25]). By pretending to be part of the museum committee, they try to fool her into letting her husband go out with them, while they're actually intending to go to a wrestling match. Their plan falls apart when it turns out that Maw and the Broon daughters are there visiting Mrs. Fitzgerald. Both Maw and the two older Broon daughters code-switch when they're playing along with Paw and Grandpaw's charade. Daphne illustrates it quite well: 'Cheerio, just now, Mr. Watkins[26] [Grandpaw's alias]! (Whispers) An' we'll see ye after the lecture, ye auld twisters!' The 'cheerio' is for the benefit of Mrs. Fitzgerald, but when Daphne whispers a comment to Grandpaw, she switches back to her normal dialect.

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[25] A different Fitzgerald from earlier.
[26] We know that Daphne is speaking Standard English here, because she says 'just' and not *jist*.

Rather interestingly, George also code-switches to a certain degree in this particular comic strip, speaking in broader Scots when addressing Paw and Grandpaw than when he talks to his wife, who seems like she uses StE (in this case, George seems to speak StScE). This is an example of convergence.

In the *Broons* comic from July 30th 1944, the Broon family have gone to visit the Jones family, who are rather posh. Interestingly, at first glance, daughter Maggie is the only one who code-switches here. Both Maw and son Horace speak in their regular dialect. However, in the strip from December 3rd 1944, the Broons are visiting the Jones family again, and this time Mrs. Jones speaks Scots, whereas she spoke StE in the earlier comic. The same is true for her son, who says *tae* instead of 'to', but still self-corrects from *Broon* to 'Brown'.

While the differences in these two strips may be a slip-up on the part of the scriptwriter, they may also be an indication that the Jones' family are more familiar with the Broons family now, and feel more comfortable using dialect around them. Given that Mrs. Jones uses dialect when scolding her father, it is clear that she has command of both varieties, and chooses one of the two standards when speaking politely to friends, and Scots when speaking harshly to her father.

7.8 Code-switching as a literary device

Finally, because these comics are a fictional, literary account, there are cases where code-switching is used simply to facilitate telling the story. There may be no logical reason for the switch, except to drive home a point. An interesting example of this comes in the comic from November 17th 1957. Wullie's inner conflict is symbolised by his 'bad self' and his 'good self' in the form of a devil and an angel with Wullie's face that appear sitting on his shoulders (referred to in discourse on comics as 'shoulder angels'). His bad self speaks in dialect and calls him Wullie, his good self speaks in StE and calls him William – except at the end, when the bad self's plan has caused Wullie to get punished for supposedly making fun of the teacher, and the good self punches the bad self in the face and says: 'Tak' that! Dinna you tempt Wullie again!' The reason for the code-switching here is unclear, but may be tied into the representation of Wullie's conscience as an angel and a devil, and how out-of-character it would normally be for something with a halo and wings to punch anyone in the face.

In the same strip, Wullie has a moment where he code-switches when apologising to the teacher. The teacher speaks StE and calls him William, but more than that, dialect would be less acceptable in a school setting. In other words, there is an example of institutionalised code-switching in the very same strip as the one where it was used as a literary device.

Code-switching as a literary device has a long history in Scots, especially in private correspondence. Despite his description of Scotticisms as 'Negligences of Style' and 'Vices of Expression', David Hume occasionally used Scots expressions and lexis for added emphasis in his communication in the mid-18th century (Dossena 2002: 105). In the 19th century, Scots lexis became increasingly used in poetry (Dossena 2002: 107).

7.9 Self-correction

A feature which often shows up as an indication that someone may be attempting to code-switch is self-correction, when the speaker says a word in a manner not consistent with the other words with those phonemes, and immediately corrects themselves. In the *The Broons* comic from May 7th 1944, Maw Broon self-corrects: she begins to say *skelt*, and corrects it to 'spilt'. The reason for this is unclear, as she otherwise speaks in her normal dialect, and the interlocutor speaks in the same dialect. It might be because she is apologising, and is trying to sound nicer.

In the 2003 *The Broons* book (p. 80), a character identified as 'snobby neighbour' self-corrects: 'I haven't seen anything like **that** for a lang...I mean, **long** time!' [emphasis original]. This neighbour normally avoids Scotticisms, but slips up once. Given that she is identified, not by the characters but by the author, as 'snobbish', this slip-up is probably included to make her appear more silly and ridiculous.

Figure 7.1. Self-correction, *The Broons* 2003 (page 80).

In the 2008 *Oor Wullie* book, Wullie self-corrects when he is pretending to be an MSP[27]: 'Ma party wull, I mean will, be brilliant!' In addition to putting on a different accent when playing, Wullie is making a pun: his name is Wullie, his party is 'Wull's Party'.

In addition to this, the speaker may not actually speak the variety they are trying to switch to, and so self-correct in an attempt to use the phonemes, grammar or expressions they can actually identify. The *Oor Wullie* comic from July 10th 1938 has an example of this, when Wullie meets a young boy who has come to 'live here for a while'. This boy, who is later referred to as 'your lordship' and as such is meant to be from a high social class, speaks StE, but self-corrects to sound more like Wullie as they play: 'Watch out – *oot*, Wullie, the game-keeper's coming!' and 'My house – *hoose* is up here' [emphasis original].

7.10 Differences between the decades and/or types

The first thing that comes to attention is that there is a large difference in how much code-switching happens in the different decades. Out of the fifteen comic pages containing code-switching which have been selected for the collections I use as a source, ten are from the 1940s. Two are from the 2000s (both from the 2003 *The Broons* book), two are from the 1930s (more specifically 1938, although since the comics began to be published in 1936, that number is still quite high), and one is from the 1950s. In the 1960s there were no instances of code-switching.

The intended effect of the code-switching can be separated into two categories: whether it is intended to make the character(s) look good or neutral, or if it is intended to make them look foolish. Generally, the intended effect follows type of code-switching rather than decade.

Accommodation, or convergence, generally shows the code-switching character in a positive light. The one exception is Daphne in the 2003 comic, where she does not let her date say enough for her to realise that he is a Scots speaker himself – where Daphne's attempt at convergence ends up being a case of divergence instead.

Divergence is used to show some hostility on the part of the code-switching speaker, but they are still shown largely positively. Domain-based code-switching, as well, shows the characters in a positive light.

The only case of code-switching where the character is generally ridiculed or shown negatively in the text is code-switching based on pretence, or the character trying to sound

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[27] Member of Scottish Parliament

differently in order to impress or take on another persona. This mostly applies to adults, as both Wullie and his friends in 1942 and the Broon twins fooling their older brothers in 1938 are presented positively. However, all the adults, whether Hen, Joe, Daphne or Maggie trying to impress someone or Paw and Grandpaw trying to fool someone, are ridiculed by the end of the strip.

Where exactly the one case of code-switching as a literary device fits in with this dichotomy is harder to say. Since it is Wullie's shoulder angel, his good conscience, who code-switches, it would indicate that code-switching is a good thing. However, the angel code-switches in order to punch the shoulder devil in the face, so it could be that the message is that code-switching allows a person to get away with something they normally would not do (or be punished for). Whether that is a positive message or not is left up to the reader.

7.11 Summary

The code-switching taking place in the comics is more extreme than the code-switching taking place in real life. In normal Scots dialogue, style-drifting is more common, whereas in the comics the characters switch between extremes.

Depending on the situation, code-switching may make the character look good or foolish. Code-switching was much more common in the earlier strips than the later ones, to the extent that there are no examples of it from the 1960s or the 2008 *Oor Wullie* book, where Wullie actually refrains from code-switching in a situation where doing so would have looked quite natural.

The largest number of cases of code-switching happens when the character is trying to impress or fool someone. Accommodation or convergence is also quite common. There are a few cases of divergence and a few of domain-based or institutionalised code-switching, as well as one used purely as a literary device. Given how often the pretence-set code-switching ends up making the character look foolish, it could be said that in these cases as well, the code-switching is used as literary device towards setting the character up for a fall. The general impression is that code-switching to include someone or in certain settings is a positive thing, but when trying to 'put on airs' (to use a colloquialism) it is foolish.

8. CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have looked at Scots as it is presented in the *Oor Wullie* and *The Broons* comic strips. The strips' action takes place in a city that is intended to be similar to Glasgow and Dundee, and as such, the Scots used for reference in this thesis is Urban and/or Mid-Central Scots.

The language of the comics is closer to Scots than it is to ScStE. A number of the expressions described as group one or two Scots (the most 'Scots' sets of words in the continuum) in the Aitken/Macafee table (see Appendix 1) are represented in the comics – eg *ken, een, hame, puir* and *auld*, as well as others. The largest difference between ScStE and StE is phonology. While the phonological features dominate the comics in terms of frequency of use, there are many grammatical and lexical features as well.

Because the phonology is represented through regular orthography, the reader has to assume which sounds are meant to be represented by the non-standard spelling of words. All the most common phonological features have basis in the actual spoken language, as per the studies performed on spoken Scots. As could be seen from table 3.1, the vowel sounds of ScStE (after Abercrombie) and mid-Scots (after Johnston) correspond closely to one another, with the mid-Scots vowels occasionally being longer. Johnston (1997) reports differences in the lexical set DO, with ScStE having the vowel sound /u/ and Mid-Scots having the sound /e:/ or /ë ~ ë̈/. Words belonging to the set are spelled <ae> in the comics, eg *tae* instead of 'to'. Instinctively, the spelling hints at a fronted intended pronunciation.

The sound /x/ is, per Stuart-Smith (2004), more common among middle-class ScStE speakers than among Urban Scots speakers. In the comics, however, the sound (represented by <ch>) is used all the time instead of the standard <gh>, or a spelling meant to represent /k/, which is the sound which is replacing /x/.

The use of <ch> to represent /x/ is a common writing practice. Scots has a long history as a written language, but it lost most of its high status with the Union of Crowns and the subsequent high status of English in the country. For a long time, the most accepted place for Scots in writing was poetry, which was often archaic. The closest thing to a Scots written standard, Lallans, is often characterised as obsolete, not similar to anything actually in use. While Scots has become a more acceptable literary vehicle in later years, the fact remains that most Scottish people are trained to read in English, not Scots. The language of the comics,

while not as rigid or pure as much other written Scots, may actually be easier for the average reader to understand.

The language of the comics has remained remarkably consistent over the seventy plus years the comics have been in print. The two biggest changes was the change from *–na* to *–nae* (as in *canna* versus *cannae*), and the change of spelling in the word for 'just' from *juist* to *jist*. The change from *juist* to *jist* accounts for the sharp drop of tokens for the <ui> feature between the 1940s and the 2000s. Otherwise, the phonological features stay much the same between the two decades.

The morphological features are much less represented than the phonological features. Apart from the *–na/-nae* feature, there was very little in the way of the features I had chosen to focus on. The more in-depth look on selected comics, however, revealed that non-standard pronouns were very common in the comics. However, they do not always match reports of actual spoken language (eg *ye* being used in singular, when it normally is plural).

Code-switching is used in the comics both as a realistic effect (convergence, divergence, domain-based, self-correction), as a literary effect, or a combination of the two (pretence). The realistic cases of code-switching are largely shown to be positive, with one exception where an attempt at convergence ended up being a case of divergence instead. When a child is playing the code-switching is innocent, but when an adult is trying to impress or fool someone through code-switching, they end up being ridiculed. The message seems to be that pretending to be someone else will lead to looking foolish, but trying to accommodate a person or situation is a good thing.

Perhaps the comics' attitudes towards language are best summed up with the one case of code-switching as a purely literary device: the 'devil' speaks Scots, and the 'angel' speaks StE (or ScStE), except when punching the 'devil' in the face. Once people (or manifestations of a character's conscience) are brought down to earth, they speak Scots.

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Appendix 1

A model of modern Scottish speech

Macafee, Caroline (2003) in Corbett et al.: 52

——Scots——				——English——
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
bairn	hame	name	home	child
brae	hale	hole	whole	slope
kirk	mare	before	more	church
ken	puir	soup	poor	know
darg	muin	room	moon	job of work
cuit	yuis (n.)	miss	use (n.)	ankle
kenspeckle	yaize (v.)	raise	use (v.)	conspicuous
birl	cauld		cold	spin
girn	auld	young	old	whine
mind	coo	row	cow	remember
sort	hoose	London	house	mend
	loose	winter	louse	
	louse	feckless	loose	
ay	pey	bite	pay	always
gey	wey	tide	way	very
kye		tie		cows
een	deed	feed	dead	eyes
shuin	dee	see	die	shoes
deave	scart	leave	scratch	deafen, vex
gaed	twaw, twae	agree	two	went
ben the hoose	no	he	not	in or into the inner part of the house
	-na, -nae	his	-n't	
		they		
		some		

Appendix 2. Scots expressions in the comics

These are the Scots expressions that were found in the comics. I have noted the page number in the collection where, chronologically, the expressions first appeared, as well as which other decades the expressions appeared in. The definitions here are taken from Grant and Murison (1968): *The Scottish National Dictionary*.

Expression	Decade	Page	Other decades	Word Class	Meaning
a'body	2003	96		pron	everybody
ach	1940	6	2003, 2008	interjection	of impatience, disappointment
ain roads	1950	35			own way
aye	2008	12			
ayeways	2008	2			
awa'	2003	13		adc. & int	expressing incredulity
bairn	1940	7		n.	child
baith the three	1940	82			all three
beezer	1940	6	2008	n.	something very good (child speech)
belter	2008	96		n.	
birl	1960	23		n.	a turn, twist
blame	1950	17		n.	
bletherin	2003	13		v,	speaking foolishly
blethers	1940	108		n.	foolish talk
bonnet	1940	18		n.	men's cap
bonnie, bony	1940	7		adj.	pretty
brae, the	1950	133		n.	hill or hillside (near riverbank)
braw	1950	102	60, '03, '08	adj.	good
breeks	1940	14	1960	n.	
burn, the	1960	22		n.	water (brewing or washing)
canny	1940	41		adv.	carefully
chappin	2003	65			strike a bargain with; select; cheep
close	1940	117		n.	entry to tenement house (Glaswegian)
coopered	1940	8			injure, spoil
couped	1940	15		v.	upset, overturned, capsized
crivvens	1940	6			
dab (the very)	2008	26		n.	
daft	2008	11		adj.	
diddled	2003	12		v.	fooled
drochle	2003	16		n.	short, dumpy person
drookit	1940	115		v	drowning
een	1950	69		n.	eyes
fair blazin' at	1950	17			angry with
fakin'	1940	137			
fash	2008	15		v.	
feardy-gowk	1950	50		n.	scaredy-cat
feart	1940	113			afraid

Word	Year	Num	Other years	POS	Meaning
fecht	1940	36			fight
fell (tired)	2003	51		adj./adv	very much
fetch us back	1940	75			take us back
fettle	2003	6		n.	strength, vigour, condition
fleg	1940	118		n.	blow, fit, rush about
flittin'	1950	10		v.	moving (away)
fly	1940	35	1950, 1960	adj.	shrewd, cheeky
footer	1940	97		n.	activity
forenoon	1940	8		n.	after morning
fowk	1960	109	2003, 2008	n.	people
frock	2003	8		n.	dress
galluses	1940	125	2008	n.	trouser braces
gansie	2008	26		n.	
gassin'	1940	65			
gey	1940	131		adv.	very much
glaikit	2003	52	2008	adj.	stupid/shifty
good job	2003	47			good thing
gowk	1940	21	1960, 2003	n.	cuckoo; fool
grand	1940	8		adv.	great
greet	1940	66		v.	cry
greetin'	1940	8	1950	v.	crying
grippy	2003	86		adj.	greedy
giusers	1940	63		n.	masqueraders
hale	1950	35			whole
half roads	1940	64			halfways
haverin'	2003	72			to toast
help ma bob	2003	50	2008		exp. Of astonishmen (bob=God)
help m'ginger	1960	39			
help m'kilt	1960	49			
hirplin'	1940	33		v.	hobbling
in the road	1940	41			in the way
jessie claes	1940	16		adj.n.	girly clothes
jessies	1960	28		n.	effeminate boys
jings	1940	6	2003, 2008		
just about ower	1950	79			almost asleep
kail	1940	11		n.	vegetable soup
keek	1960	16		n.	look
kid on	1950	20		v.	pretend
laddie	1940	9		n.	boy
laldy	2003	10		n.	thrashing; punishment
leerie	1950	55		n.	sea fowl
let's awa' hame	1940	6			let's go home
lick	1940	46		v.	beat
lum	1940	23		n.	chimney
malkie	2008	83		v.	
mauser	2003	43		n.	moustache
mealie pudden	1940	25		n.	sausage-shaped pudding of oatmeal and fat
midden	2008	26		n.	

mind	1940	133	2003	v.	remember
mings	2008	92			
muckle	1940	22	1950, 2008	adj.	large, big
neep	1940	11		n.	turnip
nyaff	2003	5		n.	fool
och	2008	13			
oot the way	2008	3			
oot o' ma road	2003	42			out of my way
oot o' the road	1940	28			out of the way
orra	1940	83	2003	adj.	shabby
orry	1940	81		adj.	shabby
ower	1940	10	2008		too
pan	1950	56		n.	
pech	1940	49			pant (with exhaustion)
peely-wally	1960	122			sickly, feeble
(tae) pot (wi')	1940	6			
powrie	1950	106		n.	
prannie	1950	56		adj.	
puckle	1950	95		adj.	
romped	2003	4			
sark	1950	107		n.	man's shirt
scaredy bams	2008	16		n.	
scunner	1940	12		n.	pest, nuisance
sham	1940	78		v.	cheat, delude
shooglin'	1960	38		v.	sway, move unsteadily, rock
skelp	1950	112		n.	a stroke, blow
skelpin'	1950	95		v.	hit
skelt	1940	71		v.	spilled
slopin'	2008	45		v.	
sook	2008	44		n.	
speug	2008	48		n.	
sticklebacks	1950	56		n.	pristly back; hedgehog
stoor	2003	22			
stooshie	2003	58			
stovies	1940	25		n.	
syne	1940	58		adv.	ago, since
tatties	1940	12	2003	n.	potatoes
the day	1950	76	2003, 2008	adv.	today
the morn	1940	65		adv.	tomorrow
the nicht	2003	41		adv.	tonight
thon	1940	49	1960, 2003, '08	adj.pron.	that, yon
tinklers	1940	89			
tony (and perjink)	1940	81			
trim (in)	2008	11		n.	
wabbit	2008	38			exhausted
weans	1950	97		n.	wee one (little ones)
wee	1940	7		adj.	little
wheesht	2008	8			hush

Expression	Decade	Page	Word Class	Meaning
wifie	1950	102	n.	woman
wops	1950	27	n.	wasp
yon	2008	9		
youse	2008	24		

These expressions had a definition in Graham (1977): *The Scots Word Book.*

Decade	Page	Other decades	Expression	Word Class	Meaning	Alternate spelling
2003	96		a'body	pron		aabody
1940	6	2003, 2008	ach	interjection	impatience, disappointment	
1960	23		birl	n.	dance	
1940	6		crivvens			criffins
2008	15		fash	v.	disturb; trouble; fret	
1940	36		fecht	n.	battle, struggle	
1940	118		fleg	n.	scare	
1940	97		footer	n.	bungler	fouter
1940	65		gassin'		talk animatedly	gashin'
1950	35		hale		whole	
2003	50	2008	help ma bob	interjection	expressing surprise	
1950	55		leerie	n.	lamplighter	
1960	38		shooglin'	v.	dangle; quake; swing	
2008	48		speug	n.	sparrow	
1940	25		stovies	n.	potatoes stewed with onions	
1950	76	2003, 2008	the day	adv.	today	
1940	65		the morn	adv.	tomorrow	
2003	41		the nicht	adv.	tonight	
1940	81		tony and **perjink**	n./adj.	nicety; fastidious	
1950	102		wifie	n.	woman	wife
2008	9		yon	adj.	that, those	

These expressions had a definition that fit the context and/or was marked as used in Scots in the Oxford English Dictionary (accessed 2009):

Expression	Decade	Page	Other decades	WC	Meaning	Location
belter	2008	96		n.	heavy blow or series of blows	NE and Sc.
blame	1950	17		n.	fault (archaic)	
brae, the	1950	133		n.	river bank	mostly NE and Sc.
breeks	1940	14	1960	n.	garment covering loins and thighs	NE and Sc. variant
burn, the	1960	22		n.	spring, fountain, river	now Northern

Word	Year	No.	POS	Definition	Region
daft	2008	11	adj.	dumb	now chiefly NE and Sc.
flittin'	1950	10	v.	moving	now chiefly NE and Sc.
jessie	1960	28	n.	effeminate man	NE and
keek	1960	16	n.	peep	Sc.
midden	2008	26	n.	dung heap	now chiefly NE and Sc.
peely-wally	1960	122		pale; sickly; think; feeble	chiefly Sc.
					NE and
sark	1950	107	n.	garment worn next to the skin	Sc.
					NE and
skelp	1950	112	n.	a blow with flat hand	Sc.
					NE and
skelpin'	1950	95	v.	strike, beat, slap, smack	Sc.
sook	2008	44	n.	a calf, a cow	Sc. (but rare)
stoor	2003	22	n.	thick place (in cloth)	Sc. Doesn't fit context
stooshie	2003	58			
tinklers	1940	89		tinker, metalworker; gipsy	last in Sc.
yon	2008	9		now archaic and dialectal	
youse	2008	24	pron.	you	dialectal