The unpublished phonological material from the *Linguistic Survey* of Scotland (Scots Section)

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The Linguistic Survey of Scotland (LSS)

Conducted by the University of Edinburgh in the 1950s, consisting of two strands:

- Gaelic Section (Ó Dochartaigh 1994-1997)
- Scots Section, results published as *The Linguistic Atlas of Scotland* (LAS, Mather & Speitel 1975, 1977, 1986)

The LSS represents a huge achievement in the dialectology of Scotland, without which we would know much less about the traditional dialects of Scotland, many of which are extinct or have been subject to levelling

LSS: Scots Section

Lexical Questionnaires

 Two semantic questionnaires sent to locations across Scotland, Ulster and far northern England to school teachers, to be distributed to speakers of the local dialect; selection of results published in Mather & Speitel (1975, 1977; LAS1, LAS2)

Phonological Questionnaire

- A separate investigation, with data gathered by fieldworkers in faceto-face interviews, using the direct questioning method (relying on informants readily distinguishing between Scots and Scottish Standard English)
- How do you pronounce 'stone'? (example answer: [ste·n])
- Answers were transcribed phonetically in specially designed notebooks, these data forming the basis of Mather & Speitel (1986; LAS3)

LAS3: Contents

188 locations in Lowland Scotland, north Northumberland and east Ulster

786 (mostly monosyllabic) words for each location

- Phonemic transcriptions (by phonological environment) of stressed vowels
- Polyphonemic analysis of stressed vowel systems (don't ask...)
 Default consonant skeleton for each word across all locations (e.g.
- /d_g/ for 'dog')
 Notes for each location on any departures from the default consonant skeletons and selected phonetic features of consonants
- Symbol maps of number of vowel phonemes per environment, number of vowel phonemes per polyphoneme, and of the polyphoneme found in each word





Problems with LAS3

Even within the Scots-speaking area, the geographical coverage of LAS3 is patchy

• e.g. no locations in Argyll, Peeblesshire, Selkirkshire, parts of the Central Belt, Aberdeenshire, Shetland and Ulster

Only part of the survey wordlist was used in LAS3

 substantial sections covering unstressed vowels, deictics and pronouns were left out, and words not fitting the default consonant skeleton were excluded (e.g. any forms of gold with /l/)

The data were systematised in a subjective, idiosyncratic way, so that important phonetic information is lost, and very little information is given on the pronunciation of consonants

 e.g. LAS3 24.9 Newcastleton, Rox. great [grę*t] > /gre+*t/, part [pe*rt] > /pert/, tread [trɛ+d] > /træ+d/

What about the original data?

Held in the Celtic and Scottish Studies (School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures)

thanks to Cathlin Macaulay for access to the material

Fieldworkers' notebooks for the published locations, containing the original phonetic transcriptions and LAS3 phonemicisations

Fieldworkers' notebooks for a 105 locations, most not included in LAS3 $\,$

 many of these use a somewhat different wordlist and appear to constitute a parallel survey rather than rejected data collected for LAS3

Gathered together and catalogued by WM

Advantages of the original data

The notebooks which fed into LAS3 contain the full list of 982 words (786 in LAS3), including sections covering unstressed vowels, pronouns and deictics left out of LAS3

All 982 words are transcribed:

- phonetically, so that we need not rely on the idiosyncratic LAS3 phonemic interpretation of the data
- in full, including consonants and unstressed vowels

Data is available for many more locations, including from areas not covered in LAS3



yous

Like English, many Scots dialects lost the distinction between sg. and pl. for the 2nd person pronoun ('you/ye')

A new form, 'yous/yees', has developed and become widespread, and is suspected of originating in Irish English

The unpublished LAS3 data shows that it is present in Ulster and in traditional dialects in SW Scotland and around Glasgow, indeed suggesting a spread from Ireland (Maguire 2012a)





Pre-R Dentalisation

PreRD refers to the pronunciation of /t d n/ dental before /r/ and /ər/ (e.g. *try*, *better* 'more good')

Characteristic of Irish English, but of uncertain origin; probably from n. England rather than Irish, as many have assumed (Maguire 2012b)

The unpublished LAS3 data reveals for the first time that the feature is/was widespread in Scots too, confirming the British origin of this feature of Irish English (Maguire 2016)





References

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