"THE QUEEN'S FUCKIN ENGLISH, KEN?"

An analysis of the language of *Trainspotting*

Samuel Grip

Abstract

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Abstract: The novel *Trainspotting* by Irvine Welsh is a work that has been acknowledged and appreciated for its use of non-standard language since its publication. This essay seeks to find out if this non-standard language is simply Scottish English, or if it is Scots, a language different from English that is sometimes regarded as a dialect of the same. Through the use of a quantitative corpus stylistic analysis as well as a qualitative close reading focusing, among other things, on code switching, the essay shows that there is substantial reason to believe that the language used in the novel is in fact Scots. It also shows that code switching is often performed when the speakers of this non-prestigious variety are confronted with speakers of Standard English.

Keywords: Scots, Standard English, *Trainspotting*, Irvine Welsh, corpus stylistics, code switching

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1. Introduction

Non-standard language has been used in literature for almost as long as there has been literature to use it in. It allows the writer to explore the ways in which language is used by different people, and it can be used to create both solidarity with the characters and antipathy toward them, as well as simply building a more nuanced literary world (Taavitsainen, Melchers & Pahta 1999). However, when non-standard language is used in English-language literature, it is mostly used in dialogue, with Standard English being used for the narrative. One novel which has gone against this norm is *Trainspotting* by Irvine Welsh. Published in 1993, it follows a group of working-class heroin addicts in the Edinburgh suburb of Leith, and for many parts of the novel it uses what appears to be the relatively unknown language Scots, both in the dialogue and the narrative proper.

Scots is a language that is closely related and quite similar to English, and it is sometimes defined as merely a northern dialect of English. For the purposes of this essay, however, it is important to note that according to many accounts, it is defined as a language in its own right, considering for example that it has its own distinct dialects. This distinction between language and dialect is not easy to make, as there are many definitions of the difference between them. Famously, the sociolinguist Max Weinreich once quipped during a speech that "a language is a dialect with an army and a navy"[1]. This is to say that the distinction between a dialect and a language is often a political one as opposed to a linguistic one, and this political argument could quite possibly be made in favour of Scots being its own language rather than a dialect. As a comparison, one can take the two Scandinavian languages Danish and Norwegian, which are approximately as closely related as English and Scots, if not more so. To illustrate how similar the two languages are, despite being viewed as separate languages and not dialects of the same, a comparison can be made between textual examples of both languages, here taken from Wikipedia articles about the Danish critic Georg Brandes. The Norwegian reads:

> I 1877 forlot Brandes København og bosatte seg i Berlin. Hans politiske
> synspunkter gjorde imidlertid at det ble ubehagelig for ham å oppholde seg
> i Preussen, og i 1883 vendte han tilbake til København, der han ble møtt av en helt

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[1] Translated from the original Yiddish by Ellen Prince. From the notes of Language in Society 26: "the source of Max Weinreich's saying that A shprakh izadiy aleki mitan armey un a flot ['A language is a dialect with an army and a navy '] This is found in Weinreich's "YIVO and the problems of our time," Yivo-bleter, 1945, vol 25, no 1, p 13"

> ny gruppe forfattere og tenkere, som var ivrige etter å motta ham som sin leder (Georg Brandes 2017, Wikipedia, online).[2]

While the Danish reads:

> I 1877 forlod Brandes København og bostatte sig i Berlin, […] Hans politiske synspunkter gjorde dog at Preussen blev ubehagelig for ham at opholde sig i, og han vendte i 1883 tilbage til København, hvor han blev mødt af en helt ny gruppe af forfattere og tænkere der var ivrige efter at modtage ham som deres leder (Georg Brandes 2018, Wikipedia online).[3]

At first glance, the two excerpts seem to be almost identical, but upon closer inspection there are some differences. Some are spelling differences, such as Norwegian *bosatte* for Danish *bostatte*, or Norwegian *oppholde* for Danish *opholde*. Others are differences in vocabulary, for example Norwegian *imidlertid* where the Danish excerpt uses *dog*. However, these differences are by and large not more apparent or more marked than the differences between a Scots and an English text, supporting the argument for Scots being a language rather than a dialect. It also supports the argument that the reasons for it not being readily accepted as such are largely political.

While Scots is often (but not nearly always) accepted as its own language, there is also some debate as to whether it is the language used in the aforementioned novel, and there is a possibility that the language might also be an attempt to represent Scottish English through some type of phonetical approximation in spelling.

At the present time, there is little standardisation to the Scots language, following the unification of the United Kingdom in the 1700s. After the unification followed a period of devaluation of the work on Scots standardisation that had been carried out up until that point. Because of this, there are always going to be some elements of the text that can be argued to be Scots, despite them not being found in Scots dictionaries, grammars etc. On the other hand, because of the similarities of Scots to English, there will most likely also be elements that do not differ from the English variety at all, but that can still be said to be Scots.

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[2] English translation: In 1877 Brandes left Copenhagen and settled in Berlin. However, his political views made Prussia an uncomfortable place for him to stay, and in 1883 he returned to Copenhagen, where he was met by an entirely new group of writers and thinkers who were eager to receive him as their leader.
[3] See previous footnote.

1.2 Aim

The aim of this project is to find out what language variety other than Standard English is used in the novel *Trainspotting*, as well as when the novel switches between these varieties. When the novel was written, it was part of a revival of the Scots language being used in literature. However, as mentioned in the introduction, there is debate both as to whether the language used in the novel is in fact Scots and whether Scots is actually a language separate from English.

Ultimately, the goal of this study is to identify if the sections where a language/dialect other than Standard English is used are written in Scots, or if they simply are a phonetic representation of Scottish English. If the language used in the novel can be reasonably identified as Scots, the authenticity of this language is also something that will be explored. Potentially, the essay might bring insight into how non-standard language is used in literature, and in this case, how authentic that language is. This study attempts to bring some clarity to the linguistic situation in the aforementioned novel, as well as the geolinguistic context in which it was created.

To help reach the goals of this essay, some research questions have been formulated, which are:

- Is the non-standard language in the novel a phonetic representation of Scottish English, or is it Scots?
- Is there an identifiable pattern to the lexical, grammatical, syntactical etc. features of the language used that can be reliably identified as being Scots?
- When is a language other than Standard English used in the novel *Trainspotting*? Is there code switching in certain situations?

2. Background

2.1 History of Scots

According to McClure, Scots (or as he puts it, Lowland Scots), has a common origin with Standard English, being ultimately derived from Anglo-Saxon through the Northumbrian dialect of the same. It shares some features with Northern dialects of English, and was in fact scarcely distinguishable from the same until some point during the 15th century, although it was evolving away from them (McClure 1995: 6). From this followed a period when Scots quite rapidly developed its own identity, greatly helped by the status of its literature and poetry, even outside the Scottish borders. However, this development would soon come to

somewhat of a halt. In another publication, McClure explains that "in the pre-Union period literary Scots was at least approaching a degree of orthographic and grammatical standardisation comparable to that of other contemporary vernaculars" (1993: 3). However, the loss of the Scottish court in 1603 led to a rapid fragmentation of the increasingly standardised written Scots, and by the end of the 17th century it had nearly been entirely displaced by Standard English (McClure 1993: 4).

Since then, the language has been going through a process of attrition, meaning that successive generations adopt more and more features of Standard English, leading, by the end of the 20th century, to the language being almost extinct except for in literature (Corbett, Mcclure & Stuart-Smith 2003). Today, however, efforts are being undertaken to heighten the status of the language and revitalise it, and it is now a part of the national school curriculum of Scotland (Education Scotland 2017, online).

2.2 Scots and Scottish English: Differences and Similarities

Firstly, it must be mentioned that this summary of the similarities and differences between Scots and Scottish English is not exhaustive, as such a review could very well be the subject of a PhD dissertation or something even lengthier. Therefore, this summary is necessarily a short sketch of the features that are shared and not shared between the two languages.

On the bipolar linguistic continuum of Scotland, broad Scots is on one end of the spectrum, with Scottish English on the other (Stuart-Smith 2008). Scottish English may be influenced to a varying degree by Scots, with for example loan words appearing with often high frequency. However, many of these words might be products of the two languages coexisting and codeveloping, instead of being genuine borrowings from one language to the other. In Scottish English, there are also borrowings from Scottish Gaelic, such as *glen* and *loch*.

2.2.1 Phonology

There are many elements that make Scottish English distinct from other varieties of English. Some of these are phonological; for example, Scottish English, as opposed to most English varieties spoken in England, is a rhotic accent, meaning /r/ is pronounced in virtually every position in a word, unlike in the English dialects south of the border.

Another distinct element of Scottish English phonology is the Scottish vowel length rule, which also affects Scots. The rule describes how the vowels are affected by the phonetic environment around them. /ə/, /ɪ/, /ɛ/, /ɑ, a/, /ɔ/ and /ʌ/ are usually short.

/i/, /e/, /o/, /u/, /ø/ and /ju/ are usually long in stressed syllables before voiced fricatives (v, ð, z, ʒ), before /r/, before another vowel, and before a morpheme boundary. Elsewhere, they are short. The long realisations of /ɑ:/ and /ɔ:/ (/ɑː/, /ɒː/ or /ɔː/) occur in all environments in final stressed syllables. /i:/ and /e:/ are usually long. There are also parts of the rule that apply to diphthongs; /əi/ usually occurs in short environments and /əi/, when it occurs stem final, is always short. /aɪ/ occurs in the long environments as described for /i/, /e/, /o/, /u/, /ø/ and /ju/. Lastly, the diphthong /ʌu/ is usually short (Aitken 1981, 2015).

As mentioned earlier, Scots also follows the Scottish vowel length rule, meaning that the length of most vowels is the same as in Scottish English. However, there are some differences in the spelling and realisation of different phonemes. As there is no universally accepted orthography for the Scots language, the following spellings are the most common. "Ai", "ae", and "ay" are used to represent /e/, but "ae" is also sometimes used to represent /ø/, for example in the words "tae" and "dae". /ei/ has generally merged with /i/ or /e/, and /i(:)/ is usually spelled "ee". Before /k/ and /x/, /ø/ is written as "eu", but otherwise it is written as "ui". /əi/ and /aɪ/ are usually written as "ey". /ɔ/ is written as "o", but in some dialectal writing, as in *Trainspotting*, "oa" is used, such as in *oan* for *on*. "Oa" is also used to represent /o/. For /oe/, the spelling "oi" or "oe" is most often used. For the diphthong /ʌu/ "ow" is used, or "owe" in final position (Dictionary of the Scots Language, online).

Lastly, there are many phonological similarities between Scots and Scottish English, and by extension the English varieties of England. Most consonants in Scots are pronounced as in Scottish English, but there are certain exceptions: the combination "ch" is pronounced as /x/, gn is pronounced as /n/, and ng is always /ŋ/. "Wh" is usually pronounced /hw/, meaning the /h/ sound is more articulated than in English (Johnston 1997: 499).

2.2.2 Grammar

Grammatically, there are elements that are more frequent in Scottish English than in other varieties of Standard English. For example, the progressive verb forms are used more frequently than in other varieties, such as "I'm wanting to sleep" instead of "I want to sleep" (Graddol, Leith & Swain, 1996). The contraction *amn't* is also common, as it is in Irish English, e.g. in a phrase such as "I amn't invited" (Oxford Dictionaries 2018, online).

Furthermore, there are several grammatical differences between Scots and Scottish English. One area where the two languages differ is the use of determiners. While the definite article is allegedly used more in Scottish English than in other varieties of English, it is used even more frequently in Scots. According to the organisation Scottish Language Dictionaries,

"it is used before times, places and institutions, jobs and games, and diseases, e.g. *see ye the morn, she's at the scuil noo, playin at the gowf, comin doon wi the cauld"*. The indefinite article is the same as in English: *a* before consonants, and *an* before vowels. However, using *a* before a vowel is also quite common in Scots (Scottish Language Dictionaries 2010, online).

For negation, *nae* or *no* is used, and with some auxiliary verbs they are used as particles, such as in *wisnae* (was not) or *cannae* (cannot) (SLD 2010, online).

When it comes to pronouns, they differ in spelling and pronunciation from English, but their function is mostly the same. However, possessives are used where they would not be used in English, such as in the example that SLD gives: "*Whit're ye gettin for **yer** Christmas?"* (SLD 2010, online, emphasis mine).

Lastly, there are multiple ways in which Scots verbs differ from Scottish English ones. One feature of Scots verbs is that plural subjects can have the same verb ending as singular subjects, except when a pronoun is next to the verb. In present participle forms of verbs, the ending *-in* is usually preferred over *-ing*, and the past participle is usually formed with *-t* or *-et*, as opposed to English *-d* or *-ed.* When it comes to auxiliary verbs, *to be* is often dropped after *here* or *there*, and *can* might be used to express possibility after *will*, *must*, *yaised tae*, among others, as in the SLD's example "he must can be able to afford it" (SLD 2010, online).

3. Previous Research

Trainspotting has been the subject of quite a large amount of scholarly research. However, this research has mostly revolved around the literary qualities of the novel, and the scholars who have carried out linguistic research using the novel as a source have mostly done it from a translation theoretical point of view, see for example Martin (2014) and Priimets (2017). Therefore, there is not an abundance of work on the topics that this essay has set out to analyse.

One scholar who approaches the text from a somewhat linguistic perspective, albeit without completely abandoning the literary angle is Williams (1999: 233) who describes how the "new Scottish writing", which *Trainspotting* is a part of,

> … 1) eschews the quotation marks which have traditionally set off Scots as a largely oral and non-authoritative medium of communication, to occupy the narrative proper; and 2) it expands the use of Scots in narrative beyond a mere "exoticizing" of an otherwise Standard English (which usually confines Scots usage to "colourful" adjectives and "unusual" nouns), instead employing it as a workable medium for narration generally.

Williams also briefly touches on the debate as to whether Scots is to be seen as its own language or a variant of English, but does not elaborate much on his stance in the question.

A group of scholars who have carried out a linguistic analysis of *Trainspotting* is Herrmann, Møller Jensen, and Myrup Thiesson (2017). They argue, through a discourse analysis of the novel, that it foregrounds place through the linguistic repertoire used, and that "the unique nature of the vernacular language used in *Trainspotting* emplaces the characters and novel solidly in Scotland through the indexical nature of language" (Herrmann, Møller Jenssen & Myrup Thiesson 2017: 32).

Pollner (2005: 196) writes about the language of *Trainspotting,* and describes the language that is interspersed with and that marginalises Standard English as Scots. He posits that "whether or not you call it 'Scots' is a moot point" but goes on to quote several different scholars, for example Brussel, who calls the language used "heavy Scots dialect" (2003: 1036, quoted in Pollner 2005: 196) and Görlach, who describes it as "only marginally Scots, the impoverished language leaving a few distinctly urban Scots elements in prepositions, negations and the like" (2002: 279, quoted in Pollner 2005: 196). Interestingly, both scholars quoted by Pollner avoid describing the language used as just that, a language, instead opting to describe it as a dialect or simply elements used within another language. Pollner concludes that "Welsh's Scots is certainly not 'heavy', nor can it, strictly speaking, be described as 'dialect'" (2005: 196).

Turning from *Trainspotting,* and toward research into the state of Scots today, and its spelling and lexicography, there are several scholars who have studied this extensively. McClure writes of Scots that "there has never been a fully standardised form of the language" (1993: 3).

McClure continues to detail some contemporary writers who have utilised Scots in their writing, including James Kelman and Sheena Blackhall, and describes how the fact that there is no standardised Scots orthography or grammar has made the task of incorporating the language in their works somewhat complicated. For example, he describes how Stanley Robertson "varies erratically and unpredictably between Scots and English norms" (McClure 1993: 15), something which he explains by saying that Robertson simply writes the way he, along with many other Scots speakers, speaks. Had there been a standardised orthography and grammar, this tendency might have been less pronounced.

Regarding Scots orthography and lexicography, Macleod writes in *Some Problems of Scottish Lexicography* that "to a degree the Central dialect, especially that of Edinburgh, has come to be regarded as some kind of literary standard" (1993: 122). Despite this, Macleod

concludes that the main problems in Scots lexicography are the same as those of literary Scots: the lack of a standardised orthography and grammar, and the significant variation between regional varieties (Macleod 1993: 123). McClure writes that "chaotic mingling of [Scots and English] conventions characterised Scots spelling until the present century" (1995: 38). Further, he writes "that Scots has a faulty spelling system is an understatement: the fact is that it has no spelling system" (McClure 1995: 27), and that it is written with an erratically and inconsistently modified version of the English spelling system. However, in recent years there have been strides made toward a standardised Scots orthography, as evidenced by the system proposed by McClure in the same publication (1995: 32-35).

In addition to this review of previous research, a summary of the theoretical framework must be made, but before doing this it is necessary to define and discuss some of this study's key concepts. These concepts include, for example, the ideas of dialect and variety.

According to McArthur (1998), a dialect is "[a] general and technical term for a form of a language", and although it is usually used to describe regional varieties, it can also be used to describe, for example, socially and occupationally differing varieties. Dialects are usually defined in relation to a norm, or a "standard" language, and have their own grammar, vocabulary, idioms, etc. (McArthur 1998). Although the standard language is also derived from a dialect, it is seen as the norm. Dialects that deviate from the standard language are occasionally viewed as "wrong" or "improper", although as most linguists would agree, this is not the case.

Variety, on the other hand, is a broader term, that most often carries the same meaning as dialect, but is considered by some to carry less emotive and judgmental connotations (McArthur 1998).

Code switching is a sociolinguistic term used in this essay's research questions, and is an important part of the qualitative close reading included as part of this project's method. A "code" in this case means a form of language, such as a dialect or variety, and the switching occurs when a speaker changes between several of these codes in conversation (Matthews 2014). For example, one common situation where code switching occurs is when someone who speaks a less prestigious variety switches to the more prestigious one when conversing with an authority figure, or someone with a higher social rank.

Moving on to the theoretical framework of the project, the corpus stylistic part of the method is, as Mahlberg writes, still "searching for a theoretical underpinning" (2013: 4). What this means is that there are several different approaches to this new field, with their starting point either on the linguistic end of the spectrum, with more focus on method, or on

the literary end, with more emphasis on questions based in literary stylistics (Mahlberg 2013: 4). This project is decidedly more on the linguistic end of the spectrum, and although it is not strictly identifiable as corpus stylistics, that is the closest descriptor one can give to its methods.

The theory behind the identification of the Scots elements of the text draws on the work of A. J. Aitken, who defines Scots as a language in its own right (Aitken 1985). This is an important distinction to make in this project. If Scots were to instead be viewed as a dialect of English, the process of distinguishing the Scots elements would be made more difficult, as some of them could be seen as merely dialectal variants of Standard English elements represented in writing.

4. Material and Method

4.1 Material and Selection

Trainspotting is a 1993 novel by Irvine Welsh, focusing on the lives of a group of heroin addicts in the Scottish capital of Edinburgh. It is written alternatingly in Standard English and what appears to be Scots. However, it is not entirely clear whether the language used throughout the book is actually the language Scots, which is distinct from but closely related to English, or if it is simply a phonetic representation of Scottish English. Non-standard language in literature has been studied extensively, for example by Blake (1981), who looks at non-standard language in English literature, and Sanchez (2009), who looks at how it is translated into Spanish. However, these studies are most often made from a literary point of view, as opposed to a linguistic one, which is what the present study aims to address.

Regarding Scots specifically, there are some other contemporary authors that could be of interest for further linguistic research, including James Kelman and Sheena Blackhall. However, it can quite reasonably be argued that Irvine Welsh is the most well-known modern writer who regularly utilises some form of the native Scottish languages in his works. This, coupled with the attention, both scientific and general, that *Trainspotting* as a novel has garnered over the years for its use of non-standard language, makes it a good subject for this kind of analysis, as there is some theoretical foundation on which to base it. Furthermore, the question of the language used in *Trainspotting* is not simply a question of how non-standard language is used, as there is substantial reason to believe that the language represented is in fact a separate language from English, and not a variant of the same. This means that, in contrast to for example the previously mentioned works of James Kelman, the novel is most

likely a multilingual work and not one written in a non-standard variety, or even one written in a different language than English, and should be regarded as such. This makes the work an especially interesting object of analysis, as this analysis is not limited to *if* and *how* non-standard language is used, but it can rather be concerned with answering the question of *what* language is used.

For the corpus analysis part of the method, a reference corpus is needed. For the purposes of this essay, a corpus of fiction written in English, preferably British English, would be ideal. For this, a condensed version of the *British National Corpus* (BNC), dubbed the *British National Corpus, Baby edition*, has been selected (Oxford University Computing Services 2005). The corpus consists of texts from four genre-based subsets, which are academic, fiction, newspaper and conversation, with one million words in each category. For reasons that should be logically apparent, the genre that was selected as the reference corpus was the fiction section of this corpus. The corpus was created between 1991 and 1994, around the same time as the novel being analysed was written, which makes it suitable as a snapshot of British English fiction at the time of its creation.

Lastly, to identify if the parts that deviate from the norm of Standard English are indeed written in Scots, some type of authoritative work on the matter must also be selected. For this, three primary selections have been made: The *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (DSL), the research organisation *Scottish Language Dictionaries'* grammar site and *The Online Scots Dictionary* (OSD)[4]. The DSL consists of the two major historical dictionaries of the Scots language*: A Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*, which covers the period from the 12th century up until the 1700s, and *The Scottish National Dictionary*, covering Modern Scots from the 18th century onwards. The OSD website contains, in addition to the dictionary, descriptions of Scots dialects as well as orthography and pronunciation. *Scottish Language Dictionaries*, the same organisation that maintains the DSL, also maintains a grammar website which explains the grammar of the Scots language, including articles on determiners, nouns, verbs and more.

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[4] The OSD is more difficult to find a publisher for than the other reference works. However, the Scots Language Centre have it listed as a recommended resource on their website, making it safe to assume the legitimacy of the material found there.

4.2 Method

4.2.1 Corpus Stylistics

In literature, "style" refers to authors' variable use of different forms of language to achieve certain results, perceived or real. One field that tries to combine the more quantitative approach of linguistics with the more theoretical approach of literary scholars, through the analysis of style, is corpus stylistics. Mahlberg writes that "corpus stylistics brings together approaches from corpus linguistics and literary stylistics. It is concerned with the application of corpus methods to the analysis of literary texts by relating linguistic description with critical interpretation" (2012: 1). The field is a rather new one, emerging, according to Mahlberg, mainly in the first decade of the 21st century. Lindquist also describes corpus stylistic methods, albeit without specifically labelling them corpus stylistics, instead opting to characterise them as electronic text analysis or quantitative stylistics. He posits that even for already accepted literary interpretations of a text, corpus analysis can be used to "prove" such interpretations, by adding a descriptive basis to them (Lindquist 2009: 66).

One popular method of corpus stylistics is called "keyword analysis" and involves comparing a text or multiple texts to a reference corpus. The corpus tool (in the case of this essay AntConc)[5] finds words that are more frequent (positive keywords) or less frequent (negative keywords) in the text that is being analysed, as compared to the reference corpus (Lindquist 2009: 67). This is used to show patterns in the author's language and how those patterns differ from other writers' texts. Quite often the texts analysed comprise all an author's works, but given the relatively small scope and aim of this project, this essay's analysis is limited to one text. The keyword analysis helps identify what elements of the text differ from the Standard English corpus, and thereby what linguistic items need to be cross-referenced with the Scots dictionaries and grammars mentioned earlier. If Standard English is seen as the norm, then the Scots (or Scottish English) of *Trainspotting* deviates from that norm. According to Mahlberg, "primary deviation" is "deviation from norms of the language as a whole, [and] it can be described by comparing a textual example to a general reference corpus" (Mahlberg 2012: 2). This comparison is what has been carried out in this project, and the norm that the language in *Trainspotting* primarily deviates from is Standard English, and the way in which it differs is the use of Scots vocabulary, grammar and so on.

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[5] A brief explanation of AntConc as a piece of software is included in the next subsection of the methods section.

As corpus stylistics is most commonly concerned with style markers, for example vagueness or the use of irony, the method of this essay is not strictly corpus stylistic. However, as the methods used clearly resemble those of corpus stylistics, it is the field that best describes this part of this study's method.

4.2.2 AntConc

AntConc is a freeware corpus analysis toolkit developed by Laurence Anthony, first published on his personal website in 2014. However, the software has been available since at least 2007. It consists of several different tools, all pertaining to different ways of conducting electronic text analysis. These tools include for example a concordance tool, a tool for searching for collocations, and a tool for creating word lists and seeing which words are most frequent in a text. However, as mentioned, the tool this essay utilises is the tool for creating keyword lists. This is done by loading the reference corpus in the software, and thereafter loading the source text before finally letting the software do the necessary comparisons and calculations to determine which words are more frequent in the source text than in the reference corpus.

4.2.3 Close Reading

Corpus analysis is somewhat of a blunt tool if not coupled with a more qualitative analysis, and it is most likely not possible to identify every element that sets the language of *Trainspotting* apart from literature written in Standard English through this method. Therefore, part of the method used in this project also includes a close reading of sections of the text, where close reading techniques are employed to see in what ways the text differs from Standard English, as well as when those differences are present in the text. For this, two sections of the novel were selected that exhibit both the non-standard language used in the novel as well as the code-switching that is to be analysed, making them suitable for this analysis. The close reading techniques used include annotating the elements of the text that appear to differ from Standard English, and thereafter examining if they are actually different, and in that case, what makes them differ. These differences can, for example, be words that seem to differ from those found in the Standard English lexicon, or grammatical constructions that appear to be different from those that might be found in English. This close reading also includes an analysis of *where* in the text a language other than Standard English is used, and if there are any passages where code switching occurs, as per the third research question of this essay. Furthermore, the analysis of the non-standard elements found naturally

does not cover all deviating words and constructions found in the text, as that would not be possible in an essay of this scale.

A close reading complements the corpus analysis in that it helps identify the more nuanced differences between English and Scots that a purely quantitative study would not be able to find. It also helps answer the research questions about where the language changes between Scots and English as well as when code-switching between Scots and English occurs. Furthermore, the results from both methods can be compared, analysing if there are any discrepancies between them.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Corpus Analysis

As stated in the methods section, for the corpus analysis part of the study, the whole of the novel was run through the concordance tool AntConc, and compared to a reference corpus of some one million words of British fiction from the 1990s. This generated a list of keywords, which are more frequent in the text of *Trainspotting* than in the reference corpus. This list was comprised of 7767 words that were to some degree more frequent in the source text, from the very marginally more frequent *pulled* with a log-likelihood of 0.001 to the significantly more frequent *ah*, with a log-likelihood of 6624.37. Because of the scope of this essay, it would not be possible to analyse every word that appears to differ from the English lexicon, and because of this, the top 100 words according to keyness were selected. Thereafter, the words that have the same spelling and meaning as English words were ignored in the analysis, along with names of people and places. Perhaps surprisingly, many of the function words found in the keyword analysis appeared to differ substantially from their English counterparts, which is why they were left in the final list of words to be analysed. Ordinarily, in this kind of study, function words do not add anything to the analysis, and are therefore ignored. However, in the present study they instead add to the analysis, by expanding the list of words that differ from English and therefore facilitating a more thorough analysis. What was left after this selection were 64 words of seemingly Scots origin, which will be analysed in the following section.

Out of these 64 words, 45 can be conclusively found in either one or both dictionaries consulted (the OSD and the DSL). As an example, table 1 shows the first ten words in the Keyword list, sorted by keyness. Out of these ten words, one (*cunt)* has been excluded from

the analysis as it does not differ from English, but the other nine are all found in either one or both dictionaries.

Table 1: Summary of the first ten words in the Keyword list

Keyword	Rank in AntConc	Frequency	Keyness
Ah	1	2345	+ 6624.37
Tae	2	1519	+ 4478.68
Fuckin	3	972	+ 2865.89
Ay	4	906	+ 2611.87
Ma	5	711	+ 1936.9
Cunt	6	592	+ 1731.23
Ye	7	547	+ 1587.39
Wis	8	458	+ 1350.39
Wi	9	453	+ 1335.65
Oan	10	401	+ 1182.33

The 64 words analysed include pronouns, such as *ah* for English *I*, *ye* for English *you*, *masel* for English *myself*. Prepositions, such as *fae* for English *from*, in this case a variant spelling of the more common Scots spelling *frae*, and *ower* for English *over*. Verbs, for example *ken* for English *know* and *dae* for English *do* are also present. Identifiably Scots adjectives are to be found as well, such as *wee* for English *small* and *auld* for English *old*.

There are also several words in the text that although they are not to be found in the dictionaries consulted can still be argued to be Scots words. Some alternative spellings might not be found in the dictionaries, because of the fragmentation of the Scots orthography. Other words are present as alternative spellings in said dictionaries, and can therefore be argued to be Scots. These include *goat* for English *got* and *oan* for English *on*. Both words would traditionally be spelled the same in Scots as in English, but as mentioned in the backgrounds section, some dialectal Scots writing substitutes *o* for *oa*, which appears to be what Welsh has done in this case. Furthermore, there are examples such as *thit* for English *that* and *yir* for English *your* that are not present in either of the dictionaries. However, although *yir* is not found in the dictionaries, *yer* is, with pronunciation examples listing [jɪr], which makes yir a perfectly acceptable spelling. In the case of *thit*, it is harder to find an explanation for the choice of an "i" vowel to represent the vowel sound in this word. However, the OSD lists

[ðət] as a pronunciation for *that*, and the unstressed vowel /ə/ or schwa can often be substituted by practically any vowel in written form. This might be one explanation for this choice by Welsh. Furthermore, *thit*, although not listed in a dictionary entry in either dictionary, is present in several examples in the DSL, there with the same meaning as in the novel, proving that it has been used as a variant spelling of *that* in the past. This is the case of several of the words that are not found in either of the dictionaries, meaning that they can also be regarded as Scots words.

Furthermore, there are some words in the list that could be argued to be Scottish English, due to their acceptance in Standard English (the dominant language of the area), such as *wee* meaning *small* or *lassie*, a diminutive of *lass*, meaning *girl*. However, the origins of these words are undoubtedly Scots, and their presence in the Scots dictionaries make them readily identifiable as Scots words.

Grammatically, there are several features of Scots that differ from English grammar that are marked as frequent in the keyword analysis. This despite the fact that the the software only searches for single words and not constructions made up of several. The Scots system for negating verbs, by using the particle *-na* or *-nae* is found in several words, for example *cannae* for English *cannot*, *dinnae* for English *do not* and *didnae* for English *did not*. These examples somewhat differ from the spelling found in the dictionaries, which systematically list the negating particle of these verb forms as *-na*, but according to the OSD, *-nae* is also an accepted spelling of this particle.

Another grammatical element that is common in the text according to the corpus analysis is the Scots way of creating the present participle and verbal nouns, namely the addition of the suffix *-in*, as opposed to the English version, *-ing*. While it is quite probably true that few others than overly enunciating individuals actually pronounce the /g/ sound in this ending, the language analysed here is written rather than spoken, which is why this differentiation is accepted in the present study. This verb ending is present in several words that will be covered in the close reading section of this essay (5.2), but most of them are outside the top 100 keywords analysed here, and the only word using this Scots spelling which is marked as frequent enough to be part of this top 100 is *fuckin*, a word which curiously enough appears on the list one more time, but this time as *fucking*. This might seem like a surprising inconsistency, but the reason for this is quite probably the fact that in both the sections of the novel written in English as well as the sections written in Scots, this vulgarism is markedly more common than in the reference corpus.

Lastly, the third grammatical element that is frequent in the text according to the corpus analysis is the use of determiners, more specifically the definite article *the* before certain words. However, this construction did not show up in the keyword analysis, seeing as the keyword analysis only searches for single words and not constructions. Therefore, this had to be manually searched for through the concordance tool. In keeping with the information from the SLD, which states that *the* is always used before words such as *school* and *morn*, the search showed that these collocations are indeed found in the text. In the case of *morn,* the word always appears in collocation with *the.* In the case of *school,* however, this collocation is not always used. However, in several of the cases where *the* is not used in collocation with *school,* it is grammatically impossible to do so. Because of this, these cases do not greatly detract from this strengthening of the argument that the language used is in fact Scots.

5.2 Close Reading

According to Myers-Scotton, the choice of code in code switching is "always indexical of the social relationship between speaker and addressee" (1989: 334). This is evident in *Trainspotting*, where code switching most often occurs in the exchange between one of the main characters and someone who is seen as "above" them, be it linguistically, educationally or in some other aspect of the social strata.

The first situation that is analysed in the close reading section of this project is the chapter *Speedy Recruitment* (Welsh 2008: 63-68), in which two of the main characters, Mark Renton and Daniel "Spud" Murphy both attend respective job interviews. When addressing the professionals conducting his interview, Renton has no issues switching to the Standard English code employed by his interviewers. In addition to switching to Standard English grammar and pronunciation, he utilises vocabulary that he does not otherwise use; for example, in response to the interviewer mentioning the prestigious school his application claims he has attended (an obvious lie), Renton answers "Right… ah, those **halcyon** school days. It seems like a long time ago now" (Welsh 2008: 64. Emphasis mine). This is immediately followed by his inner monologue, represented in Scots: "Ah might huv lied on the appo, but ah huvnae at the interview" (Welsh 2008: 64). As evidenced by this excerpt, Renton code switches from colloquial Scots to Standard English with apparent ease. Spud on the other hand, has considerably more difficulty doing so. When he is asked the same question about his educational background in his interview, his reply is "Actually man, ah've goat tae come clean here. Ah went tae Augie's, St. Augustine's likesay, then Craigy, eh Craigroyston, ken. Ah jist pit doon Heriots because ah thoat it wid likes, help us git the joab"

(Welsh 2008: 65). Here, Spud does not conform to the Standard English code employed by the interviewers and instead maintains his normal vernacular, suggesting that he either does not have the ability to do so, or that he refuses.

Turning now from the code switching performed in this section of the text to a more linguistic analysis, there are also lexical and grammatical elements of this chapter that speak in favour of it being written in Scots. Apart from the top 100 keywords analysed in the corpus analytic part of the study, there are other words found in the close reading that are still distinctly non-English in appearance and/or origin. These words include for example *huvnae* which uses an alternative spelling of *have*, which is in its standard form spelled the same in Scots as in English, but adds the distinctly Scots negation particle of *-nae*. Another word present in this part of the text is the Scots *aboot* for English *about*. The novel's pattern of writing *of* as *ay*, which is most probably a phonetic representation of the alternative pronunciation of Scots *o* for English *of*, namely /e/, is also present in the excerpt, with *sortay* being used for English *sort of* in several instances.

However, there are also some inconsistent spellings, for example *goatay* for English *got to*. If the conventions of Scots in general, and even the rest of the book in particular, were to be followed here, the spelling should instead be *goatae* or perhaps *got tae*. In a literary work, one of course cannot expect everything to follow strict conventions, but when it comes to spelling, it is difficult to find a compelling argument for inconsistencies of this nature. On the other hand, the idea that we understand each word in someone's speech isolated is indeed an illusion, as we only hear the tone differences between words and interpret them as breaks between them (Esser 2011: 47). Thus, this contraction is probably a fairly close approximation of how a Scots speaker would pronounce these words together.

The second section of the text to be close read is part of the chapter *Courting Disaster* (Welsh 2008: 165-177), where the characters Renton and Spud stand before a court, accused of stealing books from Waterstone's, a British chain of bookstores. More specifically, the pages that will be focused on are pages 165 through 167. As in the section previously analysed, Renton has no apparent difficulty to adapt to the Standard English he is expected to use in the court proceeding. The only real mixing of codes he performs is the first word of his response to the magistrate's question about whether he stole the books intending to resell them: "Naw. Eh, no your honour. They were for reading" (Welsh 2008: 165). He then effortlessly makes the switch to Standard English for the remainder of the exchange, adapting to the educated vernacular expected of him in such a situation. Spud, on the other hand, once again has considerably more difficulty to adapt his speech to the Standard English code

expected of him, responding to the same question with "That's spot on man… eh… ye goat it, likesay" (Welsh 2008: 166). In addition to not conforming to Standard English, distinctly Scots words are used (*ye*, *goat*), making it possible to identify his speech as Scots and not Scottish English.

As the characters (mainly Renton's) thoughts are represented in Scots, there are other elements that help with pinpointing the language as Scots. For example, the present participle is represented by *-in* instead of English *-ing* as in *dealin*, *tryin,* and *sellin*. According to the SLD, this is the most common way of creating the present participle, as well as verbal nouns, in Scots.

6. Conclusions

To reiterate the scope and aim of this project, the goal was to find out what language, apart from Standard English, is used in the novel *Trainspotting* by Irvine Welsh, through the use of corpus analysis methods as well as close reading techniques. The research questions covered both the quantitative and the qualitative aspects. The first and second question asked if the language used can be identified as Scots, and from what patterns, while the third question covered the inquiry into potential codeswitching.

Upon starting the work with this project, it was not clear what outcome to expect when it came to the linguistic classification of the language of *Trainspotting.* There was a not insubstantial possibility that the conclusion would be that there is no reason to believe that the novel is written in anything other than English, but with non-standard words and spelling to suggest a Scottish dialect. However, the corpus analysis provided a clear indication that the language used in the parts of the novel not written in English is in fact Scots, and not a phonetic representation of a Scottish English dialect. When the keywords uncovered in the corpus analysis were then referenced with the Scots dictionaries and grammar repositories, this picture of the language as Scots became even clearer. This, along with the close reading of certain sections, that provided additional indications to the nature of the language, points to a very high probability of the language used being Scots. Not only are there many certifiably Scots words to be found, but there are also grammatical constructions along with clues as to how words would be pronounced that all point toward the sections that are not written in English instead being written in Scots. Despite the problems that exist regarding Scots spelling and standardisation, there seems to be little doubt that the language in the novel can be reasonably classified as Scots, and most of the inconsistencies found in this study can be

attributed either to attested dialectal variations, or to being phonetic representations of regular variations in pronunciation.

The two different sections of the analysis have complemented each other, with elements discovered in the close reading section adding to the findings of the corpus analysis, instead of contradicting it, as well as providing additional examples of the words and constructions found in the corpus analysis.

Furthermore, the close reading of certain sections of the text has added a qualitative sociolinguistic aspect to the analysis, something that would not have been possible with a quantitative method alone. It provided some interesting insights into the few cases where the main characters switch linguistic codes to Standard English, mainly to accommodate to or appease authority figures, and showed that the instances where the characters do switch codes are tackled differently by different characters.

To sum up, there is little doubt that the language used in addition to English in this novel is in fact Scots, which has been supported by the use of corpus analysis as well as a more qualitative close reading. Although there are some inconsistencies in the Scots used, and despite it not always being very dense, instead mixing Scots and Standard English to some degree, there is substantial reason to believe that the language used is Scots, and not a variant of English.

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8. Appendix

The 64 words analysed in the corpus analysis section

Keyword	Rank in AntConc	Frequency	Keyness
Ah	1	2345	+ 6624.37
Tae	2	1519	+ 4478.68
Fuckin	3	972	+ 2865.89
Ay	4	906	+ 2611.87
Ma	5	711	+ 1936.9
Ye	7	547	+ 1587.39
Wis	8	458	+ 1350.39
Wi	9	453	+ 1335.65
Oan	10	401	+ 1182.33
Aw	11	333	+ 949.11
Fir	12	276	+ 801.05
Oot	14	251	+ 740.06
Sais	16	248	+ 718.70
Ken	17	270	+ 697.35
Aboot	18	234	+ 689.94
Jist	20	209	+ 616.23
Wee	24	198	+ 571.73
Git	25	200	+ 568.29
Goat	26	198	+ 554.17
Yir	28	166	+ 489.44
Thit	29	164	+ 483.54
Intae	30	159	+ 468.8
Fae	31	157	+ 462.91
Doon	33	148	+ 436.37
Hud	36	130	+ 383.3
Auld	37	130	+ 372.08
Nae	38	124	+ 365.61
Dae	40	120	+ 353.81
Huv	41	116	+ 342.02

Thir	42	116	+ 342.02
Dinnae	43	114	+ 336.12
Whae	45	99	+ 291.9
Whin	48	98	+ 288.95
Ower	50	94	+ 277.15
Um	52	102	+ 275.06
Cannae	53	93	+ 274.21
Wir	54	95	+ 269.5
Aye	55	90	+ 265.36
Kin	57	97	+ 254.41
Whit	58	85	+ 250.62
Oaf	59	83	+ 244.72
Thair	60	83	+ 244.72
Heid	61	79	+ 232.93
Bairn	64	71	+ 209.34
Nivir	65	71	+ 209.34
Mair	66	70	+ 206.4
Didnae	68	67	+ 197.55
Gaun	69	67	+ 197.55
Sortay	71	64	+ 188.7
Masel	73	59	+ 173.96
Awright	75	58	+ 171.01
Gie	77	56	+ 165.11
Naw	79	63	+ 162.9
Eftir	80	55	+ 162.16
Wey	81	55	+ 162.16
Gaunnae	82	54	+ 159.22
Ain	84	54	+ 149.74
Ur	86	50	+ 147.72
Ya	87	71	+ 140.57
Lassie	89	46	+ 135.63
Pish	91	46	+ 135.63

Radge	95	41	+ 120.89
Whair	96	41	+ 120.89
Mibbe	99	40	+ 117.94