1. Introduction
Speakers in Scotland use a range of syntactic structures varying from Broad Scots at one end of a continuum to Standard English at the other. Different speakers make different choices in different situations. This paper focuses on structures towards and at the Broad Scots end of the range. Broad Scots is essentially a spoken variety and spontaneous spoken language has its own structures and properties. (See the references to the work of Blanche-Benveniste, Chafe, Crystal, Halliday, Sornicola, Zemskaja and others in Miller and Weinert [1998].) The structures and properties are found in all non-standard varieties of English, but also in spontaneous spoken Standard English (and other languages) and must be included in a compendium of structures used by speakers of Broad Scots. Properties of spontaneous spoken language apart, many (morpho-)syntactic structures used by Scottish speakers occur in other varieties. The structures are described here as Scots, which is not to be read as ‘unique to Scots’.

The data is from various sources: a 220,000 word digitised body of conversations collected in Edinburgh and East Lothian (the Edinburgh Corpus of Spoken Scottish English or ECOSSE); a 12,000 word subset of a body of task-related dialogues produced by West of Scotland speakers—the Map Task corpus or MTC; data from Macaulay (1991), which analyses a set of narratives collected in Ayr; excerpts from narratives in Bennett (1992), excluding the narratives from Highland speakers; data in Häcker (1999); and data obtained by elicitation tests. Murray (1873), and Wilson (1915) were consulted for structures used or recognised by the oldest speakers. The audio tapes contain about 90 hours of conversation.

The paper steers clear of the question of literary Scots and focuses on current spoken language in the Central Lowlands. (Treating this as Scots is controversial but it is essential to avoid the myths and wishful thinking that vitiate some ‘grammars of Scots’.) Examples from the Buchan area are excluded, as are examples from dialogue in nineteenth and early twentieth century novels set in various areas of Scotland. This approach yields a more coherent set of data than found in, e.g., Häcker (1999). Older constructions are cited from Murray (1873) and Wilson (1915); they might still be used or recognised by the oldest speakers but are otherwise now extinct.

The structures described here are part of the everyday language of many speakers in Scotland but differ greatly from the structures of standard written English. They form a different system – see Häcker (1999: 11–12, 241) on this matter. Their survival is worth recording, their role in the construction of Scottish identity and the identity of individuals is central even if sadly neglected by researchers, and they bear directly on education, employment and social exclusion. (This point is ignored by politicians and many educators).

2. Morphology
2.1 Irregular verbs
A given verb may have different irregular (strong) forms in Scots and Standard English – seen (Scots) vs saw (Standard English). A given verb may be strong in Standard English but weak in Scots – compare sold (Standard English) and sellt (Scots). The following lists of words are illustrative, not exhaustive.

2.1.1 Past tense forms of verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scots</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>brung</td>
<td>‘brought’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>driv</td>
<td>‘drove’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seen</td>
<td>‘saw’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>killt</td>
<td>‘killed’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sellt</td>
<td>‘sold’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tellt</td>
<td>‘told’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>run</td>
<td>‘ran’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sunk</td>
<td>‘sank’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>writ</td>
<td>‘wrote’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1.2. Past participles

beat ‘beaten’  feart ‘frightened’  gave ‘given’  saw ‘seen’
blew ‘blown’  fell ‘fallen’  gotten ‘got’  stole ‘stolen’
broke ‘broken’  forgot ‘forgotten’  knew ‘known’  took ‘taken’
came ‘come’  froze ‘frozen’  rose ‘risen’  went ‘gone’

Sellt and tellt indicate that irregular verbs can be made regular. Sellt is simply sell + ed (ed → t after l and n). Went occurs as a participle in Dunbar’s poem Celebrations (late fifteenth century). Gave and knew are ‘incomers’; the original verbs are gie, with past tense gied and past participle gien, and ken, with kent as past tense and past participle.

2.2. Plural nouns

Plural forms such as een (‘eyes’), shin (‘shoes’) are vanishing. The author last heard shin in West Lothian in 1963, een can still be heard, and treen is long gone. Note the widely used wifes, knifes, lifes, leafs, thiefs, dwarfs, loafs, wolfs, all in a regular relationship with wife, etc.

2.3. Pronouns

Scots has a second person plural yous or yous yins, avoided by educated speakers. Us is informal but widespread instead of me, particularly with verbs such as give, show, and lend: e.g. Can you lend us a quid? The possessive pronoun mines is analogous to yours, his, etc.; and hisself and theirselves are analogous to yourself, etc. In me and Jimmy are on Monday our two selves (‘by ourselves’), two raises the question whether myself, etc. is one word or two.

2.4. Demonstrative adjectives

Scots has thae (‘those’) as in thae cakes was awfy dear (‘awfully dear’). Thae is still alive but the most frequent form is now them: them cakes was awfy dear. Wilson (1915) gives thir as the plural of this. There is one occurrence in ECOSSE, from a young East Lothian speaker.

2.5. Adverbs

As in all Germanic languages (except Standard English), a given form can function as adjective and adverb: they got on real good, drive slow (on a sign at a roadworks), drive quick. (With some exceptions, such as fast, Standard English adjectives and adverbs differ in form.)

3. Syntactic Linkage

3.1. Number Agreement

Plural subject nouns usually combine with is and was. Wilson (1915) gives Ma glassiz iz broakun (‘My glasses are broken’) and Is they yours? (‘Are these yours?’).

(1) The windies wiz aw broken. ‘The windows were all broken.’
(2) The lambs is oot the field. ‘The lambs are out of the field.’

We was is frequent. We is does not occur. Educated speakers avoid the structures in (1) and (2) but many use the existential construction in (3) and (4).

(3) There’s no bottles.
(4) Is there any biscuits left?

Macafee in her 1983 book Glasgow (John Benjamin), cites you was, and goes (and other verbs in -s) as a narrative form: ‘Naw’, I goes, near screaming, you know? Macaulay (1991) gives examples of there (‘there’s’) and there were (‘there was’). Wilson (1915: 77) cites the example in (7), and the’re (sic) is mentioned in passing in Grant and Main Dixon’s 1921 Manual of Modern Scots.
There naebody going to force them.

And there a gate just after you go ower the brig takes you intae this field.

There no sic a thing hereaway.

3.2. Measure phrases

Numerals from two upwards regularly combine with singular nouns: *five mile long, two foot high, weighs eight stone, two year old.* In Macaulay’s data (1991: 110) forty one out of ninety measure nouns are plural. *Minute, day, week, shilling, inch and yard* are always plural after numerals greater than 1. The percentage of inflected plurals for other nouns is *pound* - 89%, *month* - 86%, *year* - 68%, *ton* - 50%, *mile* - 17%. Wilson (1915: 62) cites *three gless o’ whiskey, a guid wheen month* (*wheen* = ‘few’) and *five acre*, not to mention *broth, porridge and kail*, which were plural.

There is regularly no preposition between the measure nouns *bit* and *drop* and a following noun: *a bit paper, a bit steel, a drop water*. These constructions are typical Germanic. *Less* is normal with plural count nouns, as in *less cars*. Note too *much more cars* (‘many more cars’).

4. Syntax

4.1. Negation

In Scots verbs are negated by the independent words *no* and *not*, as in (8), or by the suffixes *nae* and *n’*, as in (9).

(8) a. She’s no leaving.
   b. She’s not leaving.

(9) a. She isnae leaving.
   b. She isn’t leaving.

In ECOSSE *no* and *not* are most frequent with *BE* – *She’s no ‘phoned yet, with ’ll (‘will’) – she’ll no be coming to the party, and with ’ve (‘have’) – I’ve no seen him the day*. The *no/not* construction is in fact the norm with *BE, WILL and HAVE* in Scots and Scottish English among all speakers. *Nae* is added to all the modal verbs and to *do* – *He doesnae help in the house, She cannae knit*. *Not* and *no* are the norm in negative interrogatives such as (10).

(10) Are you not coming with us?

The typical Scots tag question has *not* or *no*, as in (11). Educated speakers occasionally use *amn’t*, as in (12).

(11) That’s miles away is it no?

(12) I’m coming with you amn’t I?

*Nae* is suffixed to modal verbs if *nae* applies to the modal verb: *He cannae come to the party* (‘he is unable...’). *No* and *not* do occur with modal verbs, but apply to the phrase following the modal: *will you not put too many on there in case they fall in the street please* (Macafee, Glasgow.). *Not* applies to *put too many on there*. *Won’t you put too many...* asks for too many to be put on.

Clauses without an auxiliary verb, as in *I got the job*, can be made negative with *didn’t* or *didae* but *never* is frequently used, as in (13).

(13) a. ...I could’ve got the job...but I telt them I couldnae leave till the end of May so I never got it. [ECOSSE]
   b. I sat down to that tongue slips essay at 7 o’clock I never got it started till nine.
**ECOSSE**

*Never* is not emphatic. Speakers express the meaning ‘at no time in general’ with *never ever*. *Never* and *so* function as pro-verbs: *I added water and it fizzed I done it again and it never* (‘didn’t’) (pupil to teacher); *You’re not offended? – I am so!; you can’t do that! – I can so! (I will so and I do so are also frequent.)*

There is an emphatic negative construction with *nane*, (‘none’) as in (14). The interpretation is that Rab is completely useless at singing.

(14) *Rab can sing nane.*

Finally, we turn to the relationship between *not*, *n’t*, etc. and the quantifiers *all*, *each* and *every*. Consider (15):

(15) a. *It is not democratic, because every member is not consulted on the decision.* [radio interview]
   b. *We all don’t have to be there.* [conversation]

In context, (15a) clearly meant that some members are consulted but not others; the written English version would be *Not every member is consulted…* (15b) was used as justification for not attending a meeting – colleagues of the speaker would be there. The corresponding standard constructions are *We don’t all have to be there* and *Not all of us have to be there*.

### 4.2. Modal verbs

The system of modal verbs in Scots is massively different from that of Standard English.

a) ECOSSE has no occurrences of *shall, may* and *ought*, though these modal verbs do occur in writing and in formal announcements, as in the notice *This shop shall be open on Monday* and in announcements such as *This train shall stop at Paisley Gilmour Street, Johnstone,…* The source of this usage may be legal.

In spoken Scots *will* marks future tense – *We will arrive in the morning*, promises – *You will have the money tomorrow* (‘I promise you’), and occurs in interrogatives – *Will I open the window?* Permission is expressed by *can, get to* and *get + gerund* as in (16).

(16) a. *You can have this afternoon off.*
    b. *The pupils get to come inside in rainy weather.*
    c. *They got going to the match.*

*Should* and not *ought* is used, but *want* is frequent, as in (17), uttered by a judo instructor:

(17) *You want to come out and attack right away.*

b) In Standard English *must* expresses conclusions, as in (18a), and obligation, as in (18b):

(18) a. *You must be exhausted.*
   ‘I conclude from your appearance that…’
   b. *You must be at the airport by nine or you will lose your seat.*
   ‘It is necessary for you to be at the airport by nine.’

In ECOSSE *must* expresses only the conclusion meaning; obligation is expressed by *have to* and *need to*. Many speakers of Scots (and Scottish English) use *have got to* for external compulsion and *will have to* for milder compulsion, which can even be self-compulsion, as in (19).
I’ll have to write to Carol because she wrote to us six months ago.

Have to is less strong than have got to. It also expresses conclusions, as in (20).

That has to be their worst display ever.

c) Need behaves like a main verb – Do you need to leave immediately and You don’t need to leave immediately, They’re needing to paint the windows. It expresses obligation, and is equivalent to have to. (21a,b) are typical of answers produced by university undergraduates who were asked to complete the sentence I must be back at midnight because ____.

I must be back by midnight because I need to switch off my electric blanket.

I have to go to the library because I need to do my French essay today.

Need can express external compulsion as in (22):

You’d need to go down there and collect her and drop her. [ECOSSE]

In Scots mustn’t expresses ‘I conclude that not’, as in (23). Some grammars of Standard English prescribe can’t:

This mustn’t be the place.

I mustn’t have read the question properly. [conversation]

Obligation is also expressed by supposed to or meant to, as in (24):

You’re supposed to leave your coat in the cloakroom.

You’re meant to fill in the form first.

Meant to also occurs with the meaning ‘It is said that’: The new player is meant to be real fast.

d) Can’t, cannot and kannae all express ‘not have permission to’. To express ‘have permission not to’, speakers of Scots use don’t need to, don’t have to and are not allowed to.

e) Scots has double modals, as in (25):

He’ll can help us the morn/tomorrow.

They might could be working in the shop.

She might can get away early.

Wi his sair foot he would never could climb yon stairs. (Purves 1997: 57)

Note the acceptable interrogative Will he can help us the morn/tomorrow? and the unacceptable *Might they could be working in the shop? There are grounds for supposing that might in (25b,c) is developing into an adverb, syntactically equivalent to maybe: note sentences such as They maybe could be working in the shop, with maybe in the same position as might.

Might occasionally combines with should and would, as in (26). Here again might is equivalent in meaning and position to maybe. Note too the parallel between (27a) and (27b).

You might would like to come with us.

You might should claim your expenses. [both from informants from Prestonpans]

He might no could do it.

He maybe no could do it.
The double-modal sequence *will can* is relatively old – Wilson (1915) mentions it – but may be in decline. In her 1997 Edinburgh University Honours dissertation McIver found that in Orkney the over-60s used the construction but the under-25s neither used it nor recognised all the combinations. However, in a television interview (BBC Scotland, 22nd January 2002) a woman in her mid-thirties, born and brought up in Fife, declared *once I started I wouldnae could stop.*

f) Modal verbs occur after the infinitive marker *to*, as shown in (28):

(28) a. *You have to can drive a car to get that job.*
   b. *I’d like to could do that.*

According to an informant born and brought up in Galloway, examples such as (29) are common:

(29) *Ah would uh could uh done it.* ‘I would have been able to do it.’

Apart from the two instances of *uh* – presumably equivalent to *’ve or have*, the unusual feature is *could* preceded by *have*.

### 4.3. Tense and aspect

#### 4.3.1. Progressive

Standard English stative verbs such as *know, like, want* do not occur in the Progressive.

(30) a. *Kirsty is knowing the answer.*
   b. *Archie is liking this book.*

*Know* behaves in the same way in Scots but other stative verbs occur regularly in the progressive, as in (31):

(31) a. *I wasnae liking it and the lassie I was going wi wasnae liking it.* [ECOSSE]
   b. *We werenae really wanting to go last year but they sent us a lot of letters to come.* [ECOSSE]
   c. *He’s not understanding a single thing you say.* [TV programme]
   d. *They’re not intending opening the bottle tonight surely.* [informally recorded in conversation]

In Standard English *Soapy is washing the dishes* presents the action as in progress; *Soapy washes the dishes* presents the action as habitual or repeated. In Scots, younger speakers and writers use the progressive where older speakers, including the author, use the simple aspect. The examples in (32) are from essays and examination answers by undergraduates at Edinburgh University. The author would have to use *learn* in (32a), and *forget* in (32b). We may be seeing the beginning of a process whereby the Progressive changes into an Imperfective (a change that has affected many languages).

(32) a. *Today, educational establishments are still trying to teach a standard. Many schoolchildren are not learning the standard outwith school.* [minutes of Liaison Committee, written by a student]
   b. *The code is often changed and students are forgetting the new number.* [minutes of Liaison Committee, written by a student]

#### 4.3.2. Past and Perfect

Combined with the Progressive, the Perfect refers to recent past time. *Kirsty has been working with the Royal Bank* is appropriate either if Kirsty is still working with the bank or was working with the Bank until quite recently. Speakers of Scots can refer to a recent, completed event by the Past Progressive + *there*, as in (33):
Deictics such as there point to entities or locations visible to speaker and hearer. In (33a) the speaker presents the event of speaking to John as metaphorically visible to the listener and therefore close in time. The Friday referred to in (33b) is the Friday in the past closest to the time of utterance.

The Standard English The electrician has just phoned puts an event in the immediate past. In Scots the same effect is conveyed by The electrician just phoned, with the Simple Past and just.

(34) And one of the men happened to comment he says “Bob” he says “you forgot the boy” “No” he says “I didnae forget the boy”.

In Standard English the Perfect can refer to an event which someone has experienced at some indefinite time in the past, as in I have visited Prague. In Scots the Simple Past with ever also conveys this experiential meaning, as in (35):

(35) You said you enjoyed fishing were you ever interested in football? [ECOSSE]

The Perfect in Standard English conveys the result of a past action. In Scots, results of past actions are often expressed by constructions other than the Perfect which contain a resultative participle. (36) and (37) exemplify the resultative structure from which the Perfect is supposed to have developed.

(36) You have access to a vein gained and a cardiac analysis done within one minute. [radio discussion]
(37) I was wanting to borrow her hoover but she’ll have it put away. [conversation]

A common structure is there’s plus resultative participle:

(38) There’s something fallen down the sink.

Speakers often report the completion of an action by referring to its result. The reverse cleft in (39), from A.L. Kennedy’s 1994 novel Looking For the Possible Dance, refers to properties assigned to the letters as the result of a writing event and a posting event.

(39) That’s the letters written and posted.

Example (40), from Macaulay (1991), offers reverse clefts in which the noun phrase following is is the ‘subject’ of the action.

(40) a. But that’s me seen it. ‘I’ve seen it now.’
   b. And he says “That you left the school noo Andrew?” “…Have you left school now…?”

The equivalent of a pluperfect is in (41):

(41) He just lay doon on the settee and turned over and that was him gone. ‘…he had gone.’
Resultative participles also occur in the construction in (42):

(42) a. I need the car repaired by midday. [conversation]
    b. She needs collected at four o’clock. [conversation]

4.3.3. Pluperfect tense
The pluperfect is rare in main clauses in Scots, and absent from certain subordinate clauses. The examples in (43) were written by secondary school pupils and ‘corrected’ to the pluperfect by their teacher.

(43) a. He said his mum had brought him the fireworks but she really didn’t. [hadn’t]
    b. ...he...was angry I didn’t stay in the café. [hadn’t stayed]

4.3.4. Tense and aspect in conditional clauses
(44a,b) are typical of modern Scots:

(44) a. If she would come to see things for herself...
    b. If she would have come to see things for herself...

Compare If she came to see things for herself she would understand our difficulties and If she had come to see things for herself, she would have understood our difficulties. Interestingly, (44) was a regular construction in Early Modern English and appears to be making a comeback, as in (45), from The Times:

(45) Suppose further that all Conservative and Labour voters in England would have given the Alliance as their second choice...

The pluperfect is replaced with had + ’ve (‘have’) in conditional clauses and in the complements of verbs such as wish. See (46a) and (46b):

(46) a. I reckon I wouldnae have been able to dae it if I hadnae ’ve been able to read music. ‘...hadn’t been able…’
    b. I wish he’d ’ve complimented me, Roger. ‘...had complimented…’

Häcker (1999) discusses how anteriority (one event preceding another) is expressed by means of once + Simple Past, as in once her children left home, she got a job.

4.4. Interrogatives
a) Scots regularly uses how where Standard English uses why:

(47) a. A: Susan, how’s your ankle?
    B: I can walk on it I think how? ‘…why?’
    b. How did you not apply? ‘Why did you not apply?’

b) Whereabout is used instead of where and is regularly split into where and about. How + about relates to quantity.

(48) a. Whereabout did you see him?
    b. Where does she stay about?
    c. How old was he about?

c) What time...at? frequently replaces when?, as in What time does it finish at?
d) In Standard English, *which book?*, e.g., asks about one of a set of known books; *what book?* asks about one out of the set of all books. In Scots *what* fulfils both functions, as in (49):

(49) a. *What book have you been buying?* [addressee is carrying a book]
   b. *What book is being published next year?*

e) In writing, indirect questions have the constituent order of declarative clauses, as in (50):

(50) *The teacher asked what book they had read.* (Cf. *What book have you read?*)

In Scots, indirect questions have the constituent order of direct questions, as in (51), which involved no hesitations or changes in intonation but were uttered as one chunk:

(51) a. *If they got an eight they had to decide where was the best place to put it.* [ECOSSE]
   b. *What happens in the last fifteen minutes depends on how keen are Rumania to win.* [football commentary]

f) Scots has various tag-questions. Speakers use the same tags with repeated auxiliary, as in Standard English, as in (52).

(52) a. *John has left, has he no?*
   b. *John’s no left, has he?*

They also use *e*, added to both positive and negative declarative clauses, as in (53a,b). Occasionally *e no* is added to positive clauses.

(53) a. *...we know him quite well by now e?* ‘... don’t we’ [recorded informally]
   b. *It’s no too dear e?* ‘It’s not too dear, is it?’ [recorded informally]

*E* occurs in imperatives, converting them to requests, even coaxing requests. In questions the tag asks the addressee to agree with the speaker’s statement; in imperatives the tag asks the addressee to agree with (and act upon) the speaker’s request, as in (54):

(54) a. *Let me tie my lace e!* [conversation]
   b. *Put it down there e!* [conversation]

When added to (54a,b) *won’t you* makes a request sharper – *Let me tie my lace won’t you, Put it down there won’t you*, but *e* always makes a request less sharp and more polite. The author observed the following event in February 2002. A customer (male, over 50) came into a fish and chip shop in Leven, in Fife. The assistant asked what he would like; he replied *A mini fish supper e?* The *e* carried interrogative intonation and the Standard English equivalent is *Could I have a mini fish supper please?*, which is also an interrogative.

In July 2002 the author overheard a conversation in a barber’s. The barber (male, 30-ish) told his colleague he had gone to a particular pub at the weekend. He looked in the mirror at the author and said *I like Sambuca e?*. The *eh* carried interrogative pitch but the barber could hardly have been asking about his own likes and dislikes. The utterance was interpreted by the author as equivalent to *I like Sambuca ken* (‘you know’, ‘you see’) or to *I like Sambuca* with the high rising terminal used by many speakers under 35. The author has heard the same usage from a male speaker in his forties and from a male speaker in his twenties. The latter was describing the location of a landfill site, saying that the Auchendinny to Penicuik road turned right at the bottom of a steep slope and that *I stay just opposite e?* Again the force of the utterance is *I stay opposite you know/you see* (and that’s how I know all about the landfill site).
A positive clause can be followed by a positive tag, as in (55). The force of these tags in context seems to be that speakers expect a positive answer to their question.

(55)  
A: Aye that’s cos I didnae use to go.  
B: Did you start skiving did you? [ECOSSE]

Other tags available in Scots are illustrated in (56). (56f) is from Bennett (1992: 115), (56a,b,f) are from ECOSSE, and the others are from conversation:

(56)  
a. You don’t go for that sort, no?  
b. You’ve mentioned this to him, yes?  
c. They’re not intending opening the bottle tonight surely?  
d. He’s not trying to make all of it, not really?  
e. He’s coming on Monday, right?  
f. Have you not heard of rubber trees, no?

(56a) expresses the speaker’s strong confidence that the addressee does indeed not favour that sort of man. (56b) expresses the speaker’s strong confidence that the addressee has mentioned ‘it’ to the other person. Particularly strong confidence is displayed by speakers who begin a declarative clause with sure or e, using interrogative intonation. Note that (57a,b) are not equivalent to ‘Are you sure that Harry supports Celtic?’ but ‘I’m certain you can confirm my confident belief that Harry supports Celtic’:

(57)  
a. Sure Harry supports Celtic?  
b. E Harry supports Celtic?

4.5. The definite article and possessive pronouns
A well-known characteristic of Scots is the use of the with nouns denoting institutions, certain illnesses, certain periods of time, quantifiers such as both, all, most, and one; games; family relatives and modes of travel. The examples in (58) are merely hints. There are many more examples in Miller (1993: 128), Macaulay (1991: 70–71) and Wilson (1915). Examples of possessive pronouns are given in (59):

(58) the day ‘today’, the morn ‘tomorrow’, the now ‘now’, have the flu, be at the school, through the post ‘by post’, when the one supporter ran on the field, the both of them

(59)  
a. Look Cathy, I’m off for my dinner. ‘…to have dinner’  
b. to get ready to go up to your work ‘…to work’

4.6. Comparatives
What intervenes between more than and as much as and a following clause, as in (60):

(60)  
a. more than what you’d think actually [ECOSSE]  
b. You’ve as much on your coat as what you have in your mouth. [conversation]

Macaulay (1991: 102) cites and of coorse the traffic wasnae as strong as what it is noo and gives two examples (uttered by his oldest speakers) with nor instead of than: well it was better then nor what I think it is noo and you couldnae get any mair nor two pound.

Comparative forms are used only before than: Sue is bigger than Jane. Elsewhere the superlative is used, as in Who is biggest, Sue or Jane?
4.7. Reflexives
The reflexive pronoun *myself* is frequently used in speech and writing where Standard English requires just *me* or *I*.

(61) a. *There wasn’t one policeman on duty at the time and if it hadn’t been for myself, no evidence either.* [radio discussion]
   b. *Myself and Andy changed and ran onto the pitch.* [school essay]

4.8. Prepositions and adverbs
The prepositional system of Scots has yet to be studied in detail, but the following points can be made.

   a) The typical prepositions in passive clauses are *from, frae/fae* (‘from’), *off (of)* and *with*.

(62) a. *Heh, ah’m gonna get killt fae ma maw.* ‘…by my Mum’
   b. *We were all petrified frae him.* [ECOSSE]
   c. *Ah’d rather hae no job than bein beat frae pillar tae post aff a that man.* ‘…by that man’ [radio interview 1992]
   d. *I got helped with the midwife.* [radio interview 2001]

   b) *Off*, not *from*, generally expresses the source of something – *I got the book off Alec* – and occasionally cause, as in *I’m crapping myself off you* (‘…because of you’), uttered sarcastically.

   c) *At, beside and next to* replace *by* in its location sense; *past* replaces *by* in its directional sense, *They drove past the house*. Elicitation examples such as *We went to Inverness ____ Stirling* elicited via.

   d) *In and out* are not followed by *to* or *of* after verbs of movement – *She ran in the living room, ...because she’s just walked out the shop with it*. Macaulay (1991: 111) gives similar examples.

   e) Likewise, *down and up* do not require *to* – *We’re going down the town, go down the shops*. After verbs of location they do not require *at* – *One day I was down the beach, They were up the town yesterday.*

   f) *Outside* is followed by *of* – *outside of the school*

   g) Miscellaneous examples: *shout on someone* (‘to someone’), *over the phone* (‘by phone’), *through the post* (‘by post’), *wait on someone* (‘for someone’), *fair on someone* (‘to someone’), *married on someone* (‘to someone’), *think on something* (‘think of/about’). Macaulay (1991) gives examples with *to* – *He worked to Wilson of Troon, I’m labouring to a bricklayer*.

5. Clause constructions
5.1. Clause structure and function
Clause structure poses two major problems, both discussed in Bernd Kortmann’s introduction. One is that in written language clauses combine into sentences. When *Morag arrived at the house, she found it locked and empty* is one sentence consisting of two clauses; *Morag arrived at the house*. *She found it locked and empty* is clearly two sentences, each consisting of a single clause. The Scots data described in this paper is informal and spoken and the unit of analysis called the sentence has been abandoned by most analysts of spoken language. (See the discussion and references in Miller and Weinert [1998], Chapter 2.)

Clause complexes bring us to the second problem. Clauses are organised into clause complexes, which typically lack the tight syntactic links found in written text. Their syntax is unintegrated. (See discussion and references in Miller and Weinert (1998: 72–132).) This property is exemplified and discussed in relation to (63)–(64). Consider (63):

(63) *You have a little keypad down here which you can use your mouse to click on the keys.*
The clause in bold looks like a relative clause as it apparently modifies *keypad* and is introduced by *which*. The clause, however, has no gaps, contains a full set of subject, direct object and oblique object noun phrases. This particular clause is not embedded in a noun phrase although it could be; the central fact is that it contains no gaps or pronouns linking with *keypad*.

(64) exemplifies another construction:

(64) *Everyone knows Helen Liddell how hard she works.* [radio discussion]

As the direct object of *knows*, *Helen Liddell* is central and salient in the clause complex. The clause *how hard she works* is syntactically optional but linked with *Helen Liddell* by *she*. A written text would have *Everyone knows how hard Helen Liddell works*. Another example is *I’ve been meaning to phone and ask about the new baby and Alan how they’re getting on*.

The range of unintegrated constructions can be extended but the reader is invited to bear in mind Bernd Kortmann’s introduction and to read Miller and Weinert (1998.105-121) on relative clauses, WH clefts and headless relative clauses in English and other languages.

### 5.2. Relative clauses

a) Restrictive relative clauses are introduced by *that*, but also by *where*: *just about that other place where I started*. Relative clauses modifying time nouns such as *day, month*, etc. typically lack *that*, as in *the day she arrived* (which is the only construction in ECOSSE). Restrictive relative clauses in the Broad Scots of Glasgow are occasionally introduced by *what*: *like the other birds what takes Dexedrine*.

b) Event relative clauses are introduced by *which*, never by *that*, as in *my Dad came to an Elton John concert with us which at the time we thought was great*. What was thought great was the event of the speaker’s father coming to the concert.

c) Instead of *whose, that* + possessive pronoun is used: *the girl that her eighteenth birthday was on that day was stoned, couldn’ae stand up* (as opposed to the girl *whose* eighteenth birthday was on that day).

d) Shadow pronouns are typical of complex relative clauses such as *the spikes that you stick in the ground and throw rings over them* [conversation] but also of simpler relative clauses such as *It’s something that I keep returning to it and they’re the ones that the teacher thinks they’re going to misbehave* [both from radio discussions]. The possessive example in (c) is also an example of a shadow pronoun. The shadow pronoun construction is widespread in non-standard varieties throughout Europe.

e) Prepositions always occur at the end of the relative clause (*the shop I bought it in, not the shop in which I bought it*) but are frequently omitted: *of course there’s a rope that you can pull the seat back up (with omitted) [ECOSSE] and I haven’t been to a party yet that I haven’t got home the same night (with from omitted) [radio discussion]*.

f) Existential constructions have no relative pronoun or conjunction; in writing, *that* or *who* would be in the square brackets in (65):

(65) a. *My friend’s got a brother [ ] used to be in the school.*

b. *There’s only one of us [ ] been on a chopper before.*

g) Non-restrictive relative clauses are notably scarce. MTC and ECOSSE have no non-restrictive relative clauses with *who*. University undergraduates and 17-year olds at an Edinburgh private school produced 19 non-restrictive relatives with *which*. Adults and 16–17 year olds at state schools produced 3 such clauses. Macaulay (1991: 64) comments that in his middle-class interviews 20% of the relative clauses are non-restrictive; in the working class interviews 5%.
Instead of non-restrictive relative clauses, speakers of Scots use coordinate clauses: the boy I was talking to last night – and he actually works in the yard – was saying it’s going to be closed down (not the boy…, who actually works in the yard,…).

The relative complementiser that is a conjunction which developed historically from a pronoun. Which is following the same path. Consider the second which in (66).

(66) You can leave at Christmas if your birthday’s in December to February which I think is wrong like my birthday’s March and I have to stay on to May which when I’m 16 in March I could be looking for a job.

The second which, in bold, does not link a relative clause to a noun but signals that the preceding chunk of text is connected to the following one. (This construction occurs in Dickens and in Punch throughout the nineteenth century.)

Finally in this section, we should note that shadow pronouns occur in another construction that can be heard on radio and television. Consider (67):

(67) a. In New York on Manhattan Island there is a theatre there... [radio report]
   b. Out of the three questions we got two of them. [conversation]

5.3. Complement clauses
In English generally some verbs take infinitives, as in (68a), while others take gerunds, as in (68b). Other verbs may take either an infinitive or a gerund, as in (69):

(68) a. We hope to leave next week. (not *we hope leaving...)
   b. Archie resents spending money on books. (not *Archie resents to spend...)

(69) The children started to quarrel/quarrelling.

Verbs and adjectives that take either infinitives or gerunds in Scots are shown in (70).

(70) a. It’s difficult to know/knowing how to start this letter.
   b. They always continue to work/working until the bell goes.
   c. He started to talk/talking to his friend.
   d. It was daft to leave/leaving the puppy in the house.
   e. Try to eat less/eating less if you are putting on weight.

Elicitation tests showed that for (70a–e) Scottish pupils had (statistically) significant numbers of gerunds while the English pupils did not. Some Scottish pupils used only gerunds. Teachers preferred infinitives, with English teachers showing a stronger preference than Scottish teachers.

In Scots the infinitive is regularly marked by for to. Macaulay (1991: 106) gives the examples in (71):

(71) a. We had the clear road for to play on. [infinitive relative]
   b. You don’t need to faw ten thousand feet for to get killt. [purpose/result]
   c. You werenae allowed at this time for to go and take another job on. [verb complement]
   d. But my own brothers was all too old for to go. [comparison]

His youngest working-class speakers have no for to infinitives, whereas the oldest two use them regularly. The construction may be in decline.

Some verbs are followed by and plus a verb phrase, as in (72):

(72) a. Try and do your homework by tomorrow. ‘try to do…’
b. Remember and bring her back by 12 o’clock.
c. She tells us to mind and dae what we’re tellt. ‘…to remember…’

The television comedy show, Chewing the fat uses the catchphrase gonna no dae that, which is probably a distortion of go and no dae that, the negative of go and dae that (right the noo). Infinitives can follow AWAY: I’m away to the shops, I’m away to ask her to dance.

5.4. Adverbial clauses
Adverbial clauses in general are less frequent (in speech) than relative and complement clauses. The following specific points are important.

a) Because or cause clauses typically follow the main clause – We lent them our car because the garage couldn’t fix theirs right away; in writing they both precede and follow the main clause – Because the garage couldn’t fix theirs right away we lent them our car. Preceding because clauses act as signposts, whereas following the main clause they merely provide a reason. (See the reference to Chafe in Miller and Weinert (1998).)
b) Clauses of condition and time also tend to follow the main clause. In ECOSSE and MTC many if clauses are not straightforward adverbial clauses of condition but convey an instruction – if you just draw the line 2 cms below the cave – and constitute a complete discourse. Conversely, imperative clauses can express conditions: tell a lie an they’ll believe you (Häcker 1999: 119).
c) There are no concession clauses introduced by although. Speakers in ECOSSE concede points with but clauses or with clauses containing clause-final though – They’re not going to shut the factory – they’re making a loss though. Another construction for the conceding of points is exemplified in (73).

(73) But eh customs is a’ changed noo. You still see them in Glasgow right enough. (Bennett 1992: 110–111)

d) Consider If Shona is coming to the party, I’m going to stay at home. The if clause is starting point or theme and therefore prominent. Another common construction is see if Shona is coming to the party – I’m going to stay at home and see when we get into the gardens, can we go up the tower? This construction highlights the time or condition and breaks the integration of subordinate and main clause; the if and when clauses are complements of see.
e) Adverbial clauses of time can be introduced by frae or fae (‘from’) instead of since, as in (74) from Macaulay (1991). The author has heard similar examples in West Lothian.

(74) a. My it’s a while fae I heard that. ‘…since I heard that’
    b. The first time I ever was idle fae I left the school. ‘…since I left the school’

f) Time clauses can be introduced by tae (‘to’) instead of till, as in (75a), from Macaulay (1992). To or tae can also replace till as a preposition, as in (75b):

(75) a. Wait here tae I come oot. ‘…till I come out’
    b. Well you can hear her aw over the shop she just says you’ve nae right cos i cannae come in to this time. [ECOSSE]

Häcker (1999: 172–173) suggests that adverbial time clauses introduced by till have a purposive meaning, as in (76):

(76) a. Turn on the wireless till we hear the news.
    b. An that wis wait till I think where that [was].
    ‘…wait so that I can think where that was.’
Wait in (76b) is an atelic verb and the till clause can be interpreted as a time clause setting a limit to a stretch of time. Turn on in (76a) is telic but has the interpretation ‘turn on and leave turned on for a certain length of time’ – note the (devised) example they turned on the water till everyone got their buckets filled (and then they turned it off again). The purposive component of the interpretation can be seen as coming from a felicity condition on commands: the speaker(s) really want a situation to be brought about.

g) Häcker (1999: 161, 192) comments on the use of gerunds introduced by with to express reason, manner or accompanying circumstances. (77) is from ECOSSE:

(77) But he didnae like to take it [a job] with him being a friend.

5.5. Non-finite main or adverbial clauses

Surprise, disappointment or a strong emotion can be expressed by non-finite clauses introduced by and: He wouldn’t help and him a minister too! She’s taking in lodgers and the house not even hers. He’s gone off on holiday and her still in the hospital. It is unclear whether these clauses are main or adverbial.

6. Organisation of discourse

Scots has a range of devices for highlighting items. The devices belong to speech and many are not unique to Scots.

a) Speakers often announce a new topic, possibly contrasting with another topic, by means of left-dislocation, a noun phrase followed by a complete clause. Left-dislocation is not primarily associated with planning problems; it occurs frequently with simple noun phrases with no pause between the noun phrase and the clause. The noun phrase may be introduced in an existential clause, as in (78c):

(78) a. It’s not bad – ma Dad he doesn’t say a lot. [ECOSSE]
    b. And the minister, ye just gave him five shillings. But on the way out we met a wee girl and we gave her the christening piece. [Bennett 1992: 69–70]
    c. And there’s one girl she’s a real extrovert. [ECOSSE]

The initial noun phrase can be quite complex – well another maths teacher that I dinnae get he must’ve corrected my papers – or may be separated from the main clause by a subordinate clause, as in (79):

(79) But a lot of people, although they didnae have a gift, it was a coin that they would give them. [Bennett 1992: 48]

b) English possesses the IT cleft, WH cleft and reverse WH cleft constructions exemplified in (80):

(80) a. It was Aongais that left. [IT cleft]
    b. What I want is a large cup of coffee. [WH cleft]
    c. That’s what you should read. [Reverse WH cleft]
    d. What he does is interrupt all the time. [WH cleft]

The IT cleft picks out an entity from a set of possible candidates – Aongais as opposed to Ruaridh. The second clause, that left, is a relative clause.

There may be no complementiser, as in (81), from Macaulay (1991: 121).

(81) a. It was Jimmy Brown was the fireman.
b. And it was *my mother* was daein it.

77% of Macaulay’s IT clefts are in the working class interviews. IT clefts in general are rare in ECOSSE and MTD but interrogative IT-clefts occur regularly in ECOSSE in WH questions, as in (82):

(82)  
   a. Where is it he works again?  
   b. Who is it that’s been murdered?  
   c. Which part of Leith is it you’re from?  
   d. What was it he did? Was doing law or something.

The IT clefts both make the question less abrupt and highlight the WH word. (82a–d) are not contrastive, though other examples are, such as *Was that Malcolm that did it* [ECOSSE]. One example is a YES-NO question – *Is that you skive skipping off this afternoon?* The construction awaits detailed investigation.

The most common WH cleft in the data has the structure of *What we’re doing we’re hanging them up to drouth (=’dry’).* A headless relative clause – *what we’re doing* is followed by a complete main clause *we’re hanging them up to drouth*. In MTD WH clefts finish off a section of discussion and point forward. In ECOSSE WH clefts finish off a section of narrative and move it on to the next section.

Reverse WH clefts are frequent in MTD and occur in ECOSSE. They highlight some point that has been agreed and draw a line under a section of discussion but do not point forward. (For detailed discussion of clefts see Weinert and Miller [1996] and Miller and Weinert [1998: 263–306].) Many discussions in MTD close with remarks such as *that’s where you should go*. In Macaulay (1991: 78–79) sections of narrative are closed by reverse clefts introduced by *that or this* followed by a pronoun and a modifying phrase, as in (83):

(83)  
   a. *So that was me on the rope-splicing.*  
   b. *That was him idle. ‘laid off work’*  
   c. *And this was him landed with a broken leg.*

Macaulay (1991: 91) discusses right-dislocation but its discourse function is unclear and there seem to be two constructions. One is exemplified in (84):

(84)  
   a. *In fact he offered me a job Mr Cunningham.*  
   b. *I was asking John if he ever heard of it Cabbies Kirk.*

In (84a–b) the right-dislocated noun phrases, *Mr Cunningham*, and *Cabbies Kirk*, appear to confirm the referents of pronouns inside the clause rather than highlight them. In the other construction, exemplified in (85), the right-dislocated noun phrase is a pronoun repeating a pronoun inside the clause. The referent is not only confirmed but reinforced and highlighted:

(85)  
   a. *He was some man him.*  
   b. *But she was a harer her.*  
   c. *Oh it was a loss it.*

Right-dislocation is less frequent than left-dislocation and almost absent from Macaulay’s middle-class interviews. Macaulay suggests that middle-class speakers are more likely to use emphatic stress than the repeated pronouns.

c) Various focusing devices highlight items (or propositions) being introduced into the discourse. *See* in (86a) is close in meaning to the perception verb *see*, more distant in meaning in (86b):

(86)  
   a. *He was some man him.*  
   b. *But she was a harer her.*  
   c. *Oh it was a loss it.*
(86)  a.  See those old houses...this area was all houses like that right round. [ECOSSE]
b.  A: There’s a car park.
    B: Aye – see I hate going in there. [ECOSSE]

See highlights those old houses in (86a) and I hate going in there in (86b). In the MTD, examples such as see the bridge below the forest are always understood as questions: the reply is uhuh or aye or right. See does not normally occur in the imperative except in special phrases such as see here! I’ve had enough of this nonsense!

In the MTD speakers use see when they treat a landmark as given. See always takes a definite noun phrase: see the fast-flowing river but not *see a fast-flowing river. Items treated as new are introduced by a, e.g. Can you see a fast-flowing river? or Do you see a fast-flowing river? See can also highlight entire clauses, as in 5.4.d. Examples from the MTD are in (87):

(87)  See if you go straight down but not go straight to the aeroplane right see where the see where the pilot would go that wee bit.

In the MTD, given items are introduced by means of interrogative clauses with know: know the bridge across the fast-flowing river. *Know a bridge… is not possible. Know is equivalent to the Scots ken (‘know’); you can ken someone and ken how to do something. Ken can highlight new items, including new topics of conversation:

(88)  a.  Ken John Ewan – he breeds spaniels. [conversation]
    b.  The estate up at Macmerry – ken there’s a big estate there – it’s got a gamekeeper. [ECOSSE]

Ken in (89) introduces a proposition by way of explanation.

(89)  She’s on the machine until they can get another kidney for her – ken to have a transplant. [ECOSSE]

Macaulay (1991: 160) says that ken often accompanies background or orientation clauses (as in 89) and marks interactional solidarity. That is, checking that your partner in conversation knows what you are talking about is a good way of bringing them into the conversation. Macaulay (1991: 145) notes that you know occurs at almost the same rate in the speech of his middle-class and working-class speakers.

The thing is and thing is highlight properties and propositions.

(90)  a.  But the thing is – at our age what is there what sort of facilities can you provide.
    b.  Thing is he’s watching the man he’s not watching the ball.
    c.  The thing about school is that you can get them to relax.

d) There are two constructions with like, both discussed in detail in Miller and Weinert (1998). The older construction has like in clause-final position and is used by speakers to provide explanations and forestall objections as in (91):

(91)  You had a wooden spile – you bored on the top of the barrel...and then you had ready a spile, which was a wooden cone about that length...and a soft wood naturally was porous and it would help to get this froth to let it work down – you had to be very careful you didn’t take it right down like/it went flat. [ECOSSE]

The inference being countered by the like in (91) is “Surely the beer would go flat if you bored a hole in the top of the barrel?” The speaker points out that this inference is incorrect, because the
operation was carried out very carefully, precisely to prevent the beer going flat. (Similar like-final clauses are uttered by characters speaking non-standard English in Trollope’s novels (1860 and 1870s) and in Dorothy Sayer’s novels, set in East Anglia in the thirties). 

Like occurs in interrogative clauses, as in (92):

(92) A1 Got a bairn have you?  
B1 Aye – Nicole’s eh three.  
A2 Three?  
B2 Aye – I was married young.  
A3 Aye – you must have been – how old are you like?

(92) has emphatic stress on are. A receives the surprising information that B’s daughter is three and suddenly suspects that he has wrongly inferred B’s age. Other examples of interrogatives with like can be paraphrased as IT-clefts: did you stick it down with Gloy like? (‘was it with Gloy that you stuck it down?’).

ECOSSE has one occurrence of likesae, used by the research assistant’s brother. Both were from north Edinburgh (not Leith itself but close to Leith). In his novel Trainspotting Irvine Welsh consistently uses the above construction with likesae instead of like.

In the second, more recent, construction like occurs in any position except at the end of clauses.

(93) a. I mean and like you’ve not got any obstacles here have you? [MTC]  
b. To the lefthand side of East Lake? Like the very far end of East Lake?

Like does not occur at pauses or where the speaker has planning problems. It is regularly equivalent to WH or IT clefts – note what I want to ask is – you’ve not got any obstacles here? and is it the very far end of East Lake I go to? Like regularly highlights items constituting an explanation, as in (94):

(94) Like I knew I couldnae apply for Edinburgh because I didnae have an O level language so I just didnae do it.

7. Conclusion
This paper has set out the major syntactic and discourse structures of modern Scots. Unfortunately there has been little study of Scots grammar since the late seventies. New bodies of data on computer, such as the SCOTS archive at the University of Glasgow, have to be exploited. The systematic collection of data by cassette recorder and elicitation techniques has yet to be undertaken. Map Task dialogues help to build up our knowledge of structures currently in use but represent a different genre from spontaneous conversation. Some accounts of Scots are based on dialogues in novels; it is essential to determine which structures are peculiar to such dialogues and which are still in active use.

But in active use where? There are no detailed accounts of the morphology and syntax of current Buchan Scots nor about the grammatical differences between, say, the Scots spoken in Edinburgh and the Lothians, Glasgow, Ayrshire, the Borders, and Dumfries and Galloway? What is the linguistic situation in cities, towns and villages? How is grammar and discourse organisation affected by variation in setting and in topic and in the socio-economic status, age and gender of speakers? The participants in the ECOSSE conversations and the MTC are now approaching forty and thirty respectively. What is the spoken language of the 15–25 age group? What do people write in diaries, in personal letters, in work reports and so on? There is a small army of questions; where is the small army of researchers?
References

Bennett, Margaret 1992 *Scottish Customs from the Cradle to the Grave*. Edinburgh: Polygon.


