The Standardisation of Scottish Gaelic Orthography 1750-2007: A Corpus Approach

Susan Ross

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School of Humanities / Sgoil nan Daonnachdan

College of Arts / Colaiste nan Ealan

University of Glasgow / Oilthigh Ghlaschu

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the standardisation of Modern Scottish Gaelic orthography from the mid-eighteenth century to the twenty-first. It presents the results of the first corpus-based analysis of Modern Scottish Gaelic orthographic development combined with an analytic approach that places orthographic choices in their sociolinguistic context.

The theoretical framework behind the analysis centres on discussion of how the language ideologies of the phonographic ideal, historicism, autonomy, vernacularism and the ideology of the standard itself have shaped orthographic conventions and debates. It argues that current spelling norms reflect an orthography that is the result of compromise, historical factors and pragmatic function.

The research uses a digital corpus to examine how three particular features have been used over time: the dialect variation between <eu> and <ia>; variation in s + stop consonant clusters (sd/st, sg/sc, sb/sp); and the use of the grave and acute accents. Evidence is drawn from the Corpas na Gàidhlig electronic corpus created at the University of Glasgow: the sub-corpus used in this study includes 117 published texts representing a period of over 250 years from 1750 to 2007, and a total size of over four and a quarter million words. The results confirm a key period of reform between 1750 and the early nineteenth century, and thereafter a settled norm being established in the early nineteenth century. Since then, some variation has been acceptable although changes and reform of some features have centred on increasing uniformity and regularisation.

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Author’s Declaration

I declare that this thesis is entirely the result of my own work. I have referenced sources from the work of others where necessary. This thesis has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Abbreviations

DASG - Digital Archive of Scottish Gaelic

GOC - Gaelic Orthographic Conventions

NLS – National Library of Scotland

RLS – Reversing Language Shift

SSPCK – Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge

Phonetic, phonemic, orthographic representations (following Sebba 2007: xiii):

Phonetic: [ ]
Phonemic: / /
Orthographic: < >

All translations in the text are my own.

1 Introduction

This thesis is the first corpus-based study of the history and standardisation of Scottish Gaelic orthography. In Scottish Gaelic studies, the discussions around spelling, its regulation and 'correct' or 'best' usage have aroused much debate and scrutiny. These discussions have, however, also been discussions about language ownership, authority and status. This research began as a project to examine actual written language; to record changes and patterns in the written system using the evidence base of an electronic corpus. However, there can be no understanding of how or why changes and developments have been made without attempting to analyse the various, often competing, ideologies about language and writing which have shaped the spelling of Scottish Gaelic. The thesis, therefore, has a dual aspect: it considers evidence of how Scottish Gaelic has actually been used, what is termed 'real writing', alongside an awareness of the sociolinguistics of orthography i.e. the orthographic choices in their social context.

This study uses the largest corpus available to date for Scottish Gaelic research with 117 published texts, covering over 250 years from 1750 to 2007, and which contains over four and a quarter million words. It looks at the modern period from the mid-eighteenth century, when publishing in Scottish Gaelic began to occur on a regular basis, to the early twenty-first century.

The main research questions addressed here are:

1. What language ideologies and practices lie behind the choices for reform or continuity in the spelling of Scottish Gaelic?

2. What can a digital corpus tell us about how Gaelic has actually been spelled historically?

In attempting to answer these questions, I will consider what relation there has been between actual practice and ideologies. I aim to contribute to knowledge about how the processes of standardisation have taken place in Scottish Gaelic and the ideological background to it.

Chapter 2 introduces theoretical frameworks of the study of writing systems, language ideologies in standardisation, and how the reform and standardisation of spelling is analysed and studied. Chapter 3 summarises the position of Scottish Gaelic, how academics have approached the study of its orthography, and reviews the evidence for literacy as a basis of understanding the cultural and ideological framework in which spelling has developed. Chapter 4 looks at the existence of language ideologies in Scottish Gaelic and how they have shaped discussions of the use of spelling. In Chapter 5 the rationale for the use of an electronic corpus is described. The thesis then examines three case studies; Chapters 6, 7 and 8 address the varied usage of the digraphs <eu> or <ia>, the contrast between s + stop consonant clusters, and the use of grave and acute accents on vowels. Finally, the last chapter brings together the main conclusions of the thesis.

2 Theories of Writing and Spelling

In this chapter, I examine previous literature relating to theories of writing systems, orthography, spelling reforms and the role of literacy and orthography in reversing language shift. This review outlines the theoretical background to the present study and allows a contextualisation of the research questions.

2.1 The Study of Writing Systems

This section summarises key points from the study of writing systems. Since the publication of I.J. Gelb's *Study of Writing* in 1952, a number of linguists and semiologists have explored the 'science of writing' as an area of linguistic research. Theoreticians such as Roy Harris, Florian Coulmas and Gordon Whittaker have, more recently, sought to establish a theoretical framework for the study of writing and writing systems. The field aims to go beyond Saussure's position that writing is purely of interest as a *document de langue*, positing that it is rather a uniquely complex form of communication. It also approaches writing beyond the ethno-centricity of the pre-eminence of the Latin-based alphabet.

The term 'writing system' is ambiguous in both scholarly and lay usage. Whittaker outlines two interpretations:

> 1. An independent system of graphic signs (such as the Roman or Latin alphabet) that renders
> a. a specific language (e.g., Latin) or
> b. a group of languages (e.g., Romance)
> 2. Such a system for a specific language, plus the rules (e.g., orthographic) that govern its use (Whittaker 2011: 935)

Meaning 1 is often referred to as a script, so for example, Modern Irish and Scottish Gaelic use the same script, the Latin alphabet, but have different writing systems, e.g. different orthographic conventions. In this study, 'writing system' will be used with the second meaning.

2.1.1 Writing and Speech

Within linguistics, it is understood that written language and spoken language are distinct. In literate cultures, lay users of language often do not appreciate the

distinction and this can affect the social context of written language where speech is corrected on the authority of 'that's how it is written'. Within linguistics by contrast, speech is often given primacy over writing. In his handbook, *Writing Systems* (2003), Coulmas argues that writing systems should not be viewed by linguists as the 'poor cousin' of speech. He contends that writing develops and functions as a device separate from speech, but not secondary to it:

> Saussure's [...] observation that 'language and writing are two distinct systems of signs' must always be kept in mind, but the second part of his definition, that writing exists for the sole purpose of representing speech, must be rejected, for writing follows its own logic which is not that of speech. (Coulmas 2003: 16)

He advises linguists not to underestimate writing or how, in literate cultures, writing has an impact on the linguistic behaviour of people. Coulmas bases his theory on four assumptions, which this study will also follow.

- Writing and speech are distinct systems.
- They are related in a variety of complex ways.
- Speech and writing have both shared and distinct functions.
- The bio-mechanics of the production and reception of speech and writing are different.

2.1.2 Writing is Graphic Communication

If writing is not solely a means of representing speech, what is it? Definitions vary. Some current theorists, following Roy Harris (1995, 2000), have a broad definition of what should be included as writing, including musical notation; however, this has not been widely accepted. A more accepted explanation of writing is that it is a type of graphic communication; a system of signs with a code that can be interpreted and related to speech. It is usually visual, but can also be tactile, such as braille (see Whittaker 2011: 935).

Whittaker identifies three types of graphic communication: writing, notation and iconography. Notation serves to calculate, order or distinguish units of non-linguistic data such as music and mathematics where discrete units of meaning, rather than speech, are represented (Whittaker 2009: 51 and Whittaker 2011:

935). Iconography codifies and represents information by means of pictorial elements, such as in emergency exit signs or emoticons, and has no fixed relationship to language. Of the three, writing is the most recent of the three in human development (Whittaker 2009: 52). However, these are not stand-alone categories: they can influence each other and borrow or incorporate features and elements from each other. For example, alphabetic writing systems use notational sets such as numerals. In Gaelic writing, the use of the Tironian sign ⁊ for *agus*, 'and', and '⁊ c' as *etcetera* is another example of notation within an alphabetic writing system.

Florian Coulmas further defines different systems of 'writing' as semiography and phonography (2003). Semiography assigns to a grapheme (or set of graphemes) a semantic value of meaning and phonography assigns to a grapheme a corresponding phoneme or phonetic quality. These are termed morphograms: signs representing a discrete unit of meaning (a morpheme) or a compound of such; and phonograms: signs representing a sound or sequence of sounds (phonemes). Underlying both systems is the core function of writing: to communicate via visual signs. Just as Whittaker suggests that his different categories can overlap, Coulmas argues that all writing systems contain both semiographic and phonographic elements to some degree. Coulmas agrees with Whittaker that 'Writing systems are, as a rule, mixed systems' (Whittaker 2009: 55). More specifically,

> This means that they are composed of at least two of the three sign types (morphograms, syllabograms, letters), the proportions of which vary considerably from system to system. (Whittaker 2009: 55)

Current discussion in the field of writing systems is concerned with the relationship between iconography, notation and writing and its theoretical implications for the early use and development of writing in ancient civilizations. For the purpose of this study, however, it suffices to clarify that Scottish Gaelic is, as all writing systems are, a mixed system based on an alphabetic phonogram system with elements of notation. This is important as it emphasises that morphograms are not unknown in phonographic systems. It allows us to understand that the way we, in literate cultures, interact with text involves interpreting more than graphic-phonic correspondence; it can also give us grammatical, historical and other data.

2.1.3 The Phonographic Ideal

Coulmas (2003) demonstrates that it is common for both semiography and phonography to be considered as distinct ideals to which a perfect orthography should aspire, the relevant one for Scottish Gaelic orthography being the phonographic ideal. This ideal requires each sound to be represented by one grapheme and each grapheme to have one phonological realisation. Analysis of other languages' writing systems and the history of writing shows, however, that it inevitably remains an ideal rather than an achievable reality and that this is primarily due to the change and variation inherent in the nature of spoken language which leads to divergences between graphemes and phonemes.

An illustration of the unrealistic goal of a perfect phonography is given by the Korean script Han'gŭl. Created in the 15th century by a group of scholars and detailed in the 1443 document *Hunmin Chŏng'ŭm* 'Correct Sounds for the Instruction of the People', Han'gŭl was a purely phonetic script. Unsurprisingly, however, since its invention many phonetic changes have occurred. Korean spelling is now more phonemic than phonetic and certain alterations are ignored in modern spelling. Although it still maintains a close correspondence to the spoken language, etymological spellings have developed within the writing system (Coulmas 2003: 156-161).

Despite the impossibility of the phonographic ideal, its influence remains strong as a way of rating how 'good' a writing system is and it is one of the competing 'principles' or tensions that shape spelling. Where this ideal has explicitly been argued for in the context of Scottish Gaelic will be documented in Chapter 4.

2.1.4 Real Writing

Coulmas encourages linguists to move beyond the impulse to analyse writing systems in terms of how much they live up to an ideal.

> If [...] we free our grasp on writing from the Western preconception that writing should, really, be a faithful representation of speech, then there is little reason to blame writing for whatever discrepancies we discover in the analysis. (Coulmas 2003: 16)

He argues instead for academics to approach their study of writing as it is, not as it should be.

> Writing does not refer exclusively to either thought or sound, and it is quite misleading to consider pure semiography or pure phonography as ideals that real writing systems fail to reach. **Real writing is compromise, it is historic, and it is pragmatic.** There is no perfect fit between the linguistic constructs that are functional in speech and writing, because writing is static while speech is dynamic. All writing systems have phonetic and semantic interpretations, they differ in the importance attached to one or the other. In describing and analysing the distinctive properties of writing systems and the way in which they relate to language these points must be borne in mind. (Coulmas 2003: 33) (emphasis mine)

Another argument relevant for the study of the actual use of writing systems is made by Whittaker who advises that 'we must not confuse the potential of a script with its purpose, flexibility and actual use at a given time' (2009: 49).

This study aims to consider aspects of the actual use of the Scottish Gaelic writing systems; to look at how Scottish Gaelic has been spelled along with the expressed ideals about how it should be spelled, based on an understanding that real writing is 'compromise, it is historic and it is pragmatic' (Coulmas 2003: 33). While the written conventions of Scottish Gaelic may have the potential to provide a consistent phonologically representative system, its actual use will be subject to social and pragmatic factors and its interpretation by writers and readers. A writing system is not a closed abstract code but carries the weight of complex social and historical factors as much as other aspects of human life.

2.2 The Study of Orthography

The term orthography is derived from the Greek *ὀρθο* (straight, correct) and *γραφία* (that writes, delineates or describes) and this etymology shows how this term denotes the widely accepted 'correct' or standard way of writing. It is sometimes used to refer to all 'correct', or socially sanctioned, ways of using the language including grammar, syntax and pronunciation. This has been rejected in the Scottish Gaelic context by Donald MacAulay; in his discussion of orthography he gives two examples that are about 'correct usage':

> For example the question 'You do not allow people to write *Tha e ag ithe an iasg* (instead of *Tha e ag ithe an éisg*) or *Tha e air faicinn am fear sin* (instead of *Tha e air am fear sin fhaicinn*), do you?' has nothing to do with spelling. It has to do with what the questioner considers to be correct usage in written Gaelic. (1979a: 86)

This focus on 'correctness' demonstrates how closely associated orthography is to the standardisation of language generally. The study of orthography was for a long time part of prescriptive linguistic etiquette. Through most of the twentieth century, the field of linguistics considered it closely related to phonology and standardised phonemic transcripts. Along with Coulmas' challenge to linguists to adopt a different scholarly approach to writing systems, recent work has considered orthography not simply to be a technical transcription matter, but one with social and cultural relevance. Mark Sebba, in particular, works towards a theoretical framework for 'a sociolinguistics of orthography' which aims to 'account for orthographic choices in their social context' (2007: 5). Gaelic orthographic history has yet to fully account for the sociolinguistic context in which orthographic choices have been made. As section 3.2 will show, scholarly accounts of Scottish Gaelic orthography have mainly discussed what spelling should be. This research aims to begin the work of charting standardisation in Scottish Gaelic orthography within its sociolinguistic context.

2.2.1 Standardisation

In his work on the history of European vernacular literacy (which he distinguishes from classical literacy), Fishman (2010) suggests that four 'belief systems' or 'attitudinal dimensions' are at work when a community self-defines their speech as a language. These are:

- Vitality
- Historicity
- Autonomy
- Standardisation

Vitality is the belief that a language needs a large number of speakers (what that number actually is, or needs to be, is relative). *Historicity* is perceived as a marker of authority and as inherently a 'good thing' and 'is commonly associated with

higher prestige and greater visibility' (Fishman 2010: 7-8). *Autonomy* is required as a 'real' language must not be considered a dialect of another.

The point of most interest to us here is Fishman's argument that, across Europe, sociolinguistic attitudes have considered standardisation, or a 'uniformisation' of a variety across educated members of the community, as a key element in communities' understanding of what makes their speech a 'language'. Standardisation interacts with the other factors to form the heart of the language's legitimacy:

> Varieties with the most protected formal or reading/writing functions and the most firmly instituted governmental or religious functions are also the same ones that are likely to be regarded as autonomous. (Fishman 2010: 12)

An illustration of the interaction between legitimacy as a language and standardisation is given by the history of Afrikaans. In the early twentieth century, promoters of Afrikaans fought for it to be considered a respectable language; trying to remove its associations with poverty and status as a 'kitchen language' by reinventing it as a standard language. They succeeded in two generations to turn 'kitchen Dutch' into an Afrikaans of science, technology and higher education (Alexander 2011).

From a different viewpoint, standardisation arises from the communicative needs of speakers:

> Standardisation of the written language is a process of codifying a particular set of usages. It arises from a perceived need for uniformity that is felt by influential portions of society at a given time. A variety is then selected as a standard, accepted by influential people then diffused geographically and socially by various means. (Milroy & Milroy 1991: 27)

This is not totally at odds with Fishman's framework, as part of the 'perceived need for uniformity' can be the legitimisation of a language. Alternative motivations, however, include the need to communicate by written means over distances, for records to be maintained that can be understood by others in the future and for mass literacy to be established. Grenoble & Whaley describe one interpretation of a standard written variety as:

> [A]n additional variety which should be maximally comprehensible to all speakers. [...] Without standardization, writing becomes idiosyncratic and cannot be interpreted by a large enough body of speakers. (Grenoble & Whaley 2006: 130)

In formal matters, such as legal documents, there is a need for cohesiveness and intelligibility. In the area of formal education, a standard provides a consistent (and *a priori* fair) approach, as well as reinforcing the earlier noted aspect of status and legitimacy:

> A written standard often proves to be invaluable in education as well. Teachers need some way of guiding their students in making choices when writing, i.e. some form to teach their students [...] Having a standard orthography can increase the functional domains of a language's use, which in turn increases its status within the community and reinforces community values. (Grenoble & Whaley 2006: 154)

The creation of a written standard variety necessarily entails orthographic standardisation. Orthography, and discussions around it, therefore also carries the weight of the belief that standardisation makes a language a 'real' language: the perceptions of 'correct' spelling contributes to the social legitimacy of the language as a whole.

In the Scottish Gaelic context, the legitimisation of Gaelic as more than a 'barbarous tongue' was desired by speakers and is expressed from medieval times (see Chapter 3). Another need was felt by eighteenth century evangelists who required their fundamental text, the Bible, to communicate to Highland souls, but in a carefully controlled form that did not stray into varieties that could misinterpret theological positions. The need for uniformity was felt clearly by writers, not only at the vernacularisation stage of the mid-eighteenth century, but as educational needs changed over the centuries. This speaks to the ongoing nature of standardisation as a *process* rather than an end point. The variety used as the basis of the emerging standard was largely that of the influential literati: the Protestant ministers of the southern districts. The standardised writing system was diffused by the Bible and the evangelical Gaelic schools.

In this context, threats to Gaelic's orthographic integrity are often felt as threats to the legitimacy and existence of Gaelic generally. In Chapter 4, I will argue that

this fear of illegitimacy is evidenced in the history of Gaelic orthographic discussions (see Section 4.5).

2.2.1.1 The Ideology of the Standard

The pragmatic advantages of a standard can often be forgotten, however, in the perceived inherent superiority of a standard and what is known as the classical fallacy. Milroy & Milroy (1998) describe how complete standardisation of a living language is, like the phonographic ideal, unachievable. Instead, they argue that a standard becomes a variety of the language that real language is measured against and that standardisation has real social consequences of prejudice.

One of the most apparent is the development of the consciousness and belief that there are 'right' and 'wrong' forms of language. Roy Harris has described how this began with ancient societies who advocated the belief that there is only one proper, correct usage of a language. Harris terms this the 'classical fallacy' (Harris 1980). Milroy describes literate cultures where the classical fallacy is ingrained in societal beliefs about language as 'standard language cultures'; cultures where 'virtually everyone subscribes to the ideology of the standard language, and one aspect of this is a firm belief in **correctness**' (Milroy 2001: 535). This is expressed in the Classical Gaelic teaching of the bardic schools (known as Irish Grammatical Tracts) with the terms *cóir*, 'correct' and *lochdach*, 'incorrect', prescribing usage (see Ó Cuív 1965 for description of the linguistic terms in the tracts).

A consequence of this hegemonic correctness of the standard is social stratification where people have unequal access to a standard form of the language and where disadvantages based on dialect or educational opportunity develop (see Milroy & Milroy 1998 for examples of this in anglophone societies). The social value that writing and orthography has accrued in France has led to a situation described as a 'Dictatorship of Orthography' (de Closets 2009: 51-2), where spelling mistakes are considered proof of low education, a lack of personal diligence and subsequently limit educational success and economic opportunity.

Scottish Gaelic literate culture has not developed in isolation but rather within the context of bilingualism and therefore alongside the anglophone ideology of

the standard. Section 4.1 considers whether the ideology of the standard can be seen to exist and operate in the same way in Gaelic literate culture.

2.2.1.2 Variations of the Standard

When Grenoble & Whaley advise on efforts to develop a new standard for an endangered language, the most important point they emphasise is:

> do not choose between features if it is unnecessary, i.e. a written standard can admit a certain degree of variation and still have a high degree of usability, even for those in the process of learning to read and write. (2006: 133)

There have been recent efforts in the Scottish context to consider orthography in a way other than as an inevitable history towards a standard, fixed variety. In Corbett's review of spelling variation in the work of the eighteenth-century poets Allan Ramsay and Robert Burns, he argues that the variation in Modern Scots orthography can be considered not as 'chaos' or confusion in relation to a standard 'ideal', but examined by linguists as a complex system in its own right. Corbett argues that it is possible to see Scots writers' alterations between Standard English forms and Scots forms, such as *sna'*, *snaw* and *snow*, not as conflicting orthographic systems of English and Scots, but as 'a single system that allows – or even embraces – variation' for stylistic and prosodic effects (Corbett 2013: 88).

A centralised, uniform standard is not the only language model. An alternative to standardisation altogether is the concept of a *polynomie* or a polynomic language. The concept of a *langue polynomique* or 'polynomic language' was originally developed by Jean-Baptiste Marcellesi with regard to his own language, Corsican. It aims to provide a model for minority languages that is an alternative to the model of language planning common to majority languages. The standardisation model from majority languages, it is argued, promotes a prescriptive standard which reproduces hierarchies and hegemonies within the minority language and diminishes linguistic diversity. A polynomic approach is a pluralistic model which rejects a single prestige variety. Although as Julia Sallabank comments,

> polynomie as implemented in Corsica does not countenance free variation, or variation outside certain limits. It seems in effect simply to support the use of regional variations. (Sallabank 2010: 317)

In her research on the Guernesiais community in Guernsey, Sallabank evaluated the potential success of a polynomic approach there as the community have a '"folk linguistic" acceptance of regional variation as a source of richness' (2010: 311). In the 2014 *Dlùth is Inneach* report, which considered the Scottish Gaelic community's language beliefs, the study participants showed that dialects are also considered seats of language authority, authenticity and carry sociolinguistic value in the Gaelic community (see Bell *et al*. 2014: B129). Also similiarly to Guernsey, the *Dlùth is Inneach* research indicates that acceptance of variation in Scottish Gaelic only applies to where speakers perceive historic or dialectal legitimacy and there is a lack of tolerance for variation in the spelling of neologisms and loan words.

In Section 4.3 it is shown that dialectal spelling within standard Scottish Gaelic orthography has been seen as both detrimental and acceptable as writers argue over the degree to which 'a written standard can admit a certain degree of variation' (Grenoble & Whaley 2006: 133). In particular, in 1909 the then Chair of Celtic at Edinburgh University, Professor Donald MacKinnon, considered dialectal variation to be acceptable in the literary context of poetry and when illustrating dialect for linguistic or historical texts (see 6.2.2 for details of MacKinnon's paradigm). This thesis considers the use of dialectal spelling within a standard orthography using the case study of <eu> and <ia> spellings in Chapter 6.

2.2.2 The Sociology of Spelling

> Signs carry not only linguistic meaning, but also social meaning at the same time. (Sebba 2007: 7)

As Sebba notes, orthography is a place where different linguistic and cultural phenomenon intersect; be it social identity, cultural politics, linguistic ideology, cultural representation, etc. This has also been noted by scholars interested in the creation of new writing systems,

> A key factor for the ultimate success of a written language is its acceptability to the community, and so social and political issues almost always enter into the equation. (Grenoble & Whaley 2006: 132)

Written language has been no more immune to the influence of social and political concerns than any other aspect of human culture over the centuries. Writing, its

use and its users, has not existed without the aspects of power and social hierarchy: who learns the technology of writing, who learns to write, who teaches what is to be written. As noted by Coulmas and Guerini (2012), the command of the technology of writing allowed for other cultural hegemonies to establish themselves, such as sacred religious texts, trade management and empire administration. Other researchers in writing systems explore the connection between a written language and its speaker/readers' linguistic identity. The visual nature and visibility of writing in literate societies means that:

> writing systems led themselves easily as symbols of identity. In this sense, there is no symbolically neutral writing system, script or orthography. (Coulmas & Guerini 2012: 437)

This can be simply illustrated by the example of Croatian and Serbian. The spread of Christianity was tied to the spread of the Roman alphabet and the predominantly Catholic population of Croatia uses the Roman alphabet. The spread of Orthodoxy with Cyrillic, however, means Serbian, with a predominant Orthodox population, uses Cyrillic despite the relationship between the two varieties being more dialect-like than language-like. These socio-cultural contexts result in digraphia: two different writing systems for the same language (see Grenoble & Whaley 2006: 73). In another example. when the Soviet Union decided to create a written alphabet for the Siberian languages in 1932, they preferred Roman-based alphabets as Cyrillic was seen as being closely associated with the previous tsarist, Russian regime. In relation to West African languages, Peter Unseth has researched the use of different scripts to assert ethnic difference:

> By writing their language using a script that is uniquely theirs and instantly identifiable as distinct from those around them, a number of ethnic communities have created scripts as part of an effort to strengthen their ethnic identities. (Unseth 2011: 23)

In these countries, this often happened in the period between World War I and independence, a time of political and social change. This social reality of the important identity function of a writing system can be often overlooked.

In the early twentieth century, there was a shift from the use of the Latin semi-uncial script known as *clò Gaelach* to Roman script for the writing of Irish Gaelic (Roman type had previously been used in Ireland but its use was not conventional).

The organisation *An Cuman um Letiriú Shímplí*, the Simplified Spelling Society, was created with the aim of making acquisition of Irish easier in order to facilitate its survival. The key points proposed were the use of modern Roman type instead of Irish script and the removal of quiescent letters (called 'dead letters' by Bergin 1911: 13). Osborn Bergin argued against 'national sentiment' by appealing to the international use of Roman type and the economy and practicality in the availability of Roman type. When Brian Ó Cuív summarised the position in later years, he also set up a binary distinction between the 'sentimental' *clò Gaelach* script and the 'rational' Roman script:

> there developed a prejudice against Roman type which gave rise to the most extraordinary arguments based on sentiment rather than on reason. (Ó Cuív 1969: 25)

A section from Bergin's talk gives a perfect example of orthography (or type at least) as identity even though Bergin himself does not share the same opinion:

> And it is a curious fact that among those who regard the work of our Society with suspicion and alarm are several persons who have no intention of learning to read a word of the language. 'We know no Irish,' they complain, 'but at least do not rob us of our alphabet.' (Bergin 1911: 20)

This suggests that the potential of a script as an identity marker was so strong in the Irish context that it could be used in a post-vernacular context. As Doyle succinctly (2015) summarises:

> the reformers failed to take into account the symbolic importance of Irish having an orthography which was distinct from that of English: the spelling of *bhean* 'woman' as *van* was seen as a deplorable Anglicism. (Doyle 2015: 221)

By acknowledging the place of identity in human societies, however, the 'sentimentality' that Ó Cuív dismisses can be seen not as superficial but as a desire, in common with other peoples, to give themselves a social marker instantly and clearly distinct from that of other ethnic or cultural groups.

2.3 The Study of Scottish Gaelic Orthography

The French linguist Bernard Cerquiglini believes that historians of orthography are by nature those who wish to change it, although he cautions that they are naive when they expect their recommendations to be welcomed:

> Enclins par métier à simplifier une orthographe dont ils savent si bien comment elle se compliqua, favorables au mouvement de formes qui ne furent jamais immuables, ces érudits probes, mais naïfs, ne laissent pas de s'étonner chaque fois qu'une de leurs propositions, si modérée soit-elle, reçoit du public et des écrivains un refus net, suscite des controverses, déclenche les courroux. (Cerquiglini 2004: 7)
>
> *Inclined by their profession to simplify an orthography when they well know how it took on its complexity, favourable to the movement of forms which were never immutable, these scrupulous, but naive, scholars never cease to be amazed each time that one of their propositions, however moderate it is, receives from the public and writers a solid refusal, leads to controversies, or provokes anger.*

The history of Scottish Gaelic orthography has also generally been approached by scholars proposing changes and evaluating how best the orthography meets an ideal, rather than studying it as it is. There are different categories of writings about the orthography of Scottish Gaelic differentiated by their purpose:

1. simple descriptions (usually called something like 'How to read/pronounce Gaelic');
2. comments on editorial principles to explain an editor's or author's choices;
3. analyses of individual (often unusual) texts such as the Fernaig MS;
4. discussion of the purposes or principles of orthography in order to propose changes; and
5. scholarly descriptions of the history of Scottish Gaelic orthography.

This section will consider scholarly writing covering types 4 and 5. One factor common to these texts and commentaries is that they are based on the author's expert, but individual, impressions. In contrast, the use of a digital corpus, as in the present study, allows us to gather a large data set in order to see how Scottish Gaelic was *actually* written in published texts.

An early discussion of Scottish Gaelic orthography is provided by the Rev. Dr Alexander Stewart (1764–1821), Church of Scotland minister and author of a book on Gaelic grammar. In the introduction to his influential *Elements of Gaelic*

Grammar (1801, 2nd end. 1812), he details his approach to orthography. Between the first and second editions there are some small changes, some of them significant, such as the change in spelling from 'Galic' to 'Gaelic' in the book's title. The first edition will form the basis of analysis here with significant differences in the second edition noted where appropriate.

Donald MacKinnon (1839–1914), a native of Colonsay who became the first Professor of Celtic at the University of Edinburgh in 1882, wrote an article in *The Celtic Review* in 1909 in which he offered a general take on the orthographic system, describing its history and distinctive features. The article is superficially a brief description of the development of the Scottish Gaelic writing system beginning with the adoption of the Latin alphabet in preference to Ogham. MacKinnon describes how the current orthographic system came about by discussing major points such as the marking of aspiration (i.e. lenition), the marking of the nasal before consonants and marking broad and slender consonants. It concludes with a discussion about the use of dialectal forms in literary works. However, on another level, MacKinnon's purpose in the text is to maintain the standard by describing its pedigree and expressing disapproval of non-standard forms. He argues for conservative norms and for the standard as a set of common, consistent conventions.

Another key text is Donald MacAulay's talk to the Gaelic Society of Inverness in February of 1977. A native of Lewis, Donald MacAulay (b.1930), was Professor of Celtic at Glasgow University from 1991 to 1995 and a member of the sub-committee which was convened in 1976 by the Scottish Education Board and which produced the Gaelic Orthographic Conventions report of 1981 (SEB 1981). MacAulay's paper does not aim to give a history of Gaelic spelling, but to discuss orthography in the context of some theoretical, historical and pragmatic considerations. It is, in essence, a statement of his position on the need for established orthographic conventions (he avoids the term 'standard') and an argument for the need for a sub-committee to codify these. He recommends a fixed, well-defined norm to aid writing skills. Specifically, he recommends allowing exceptions to the 'broad to broad' spelling rule to allow for compounds, participle suffixes and borrowed words; regularising unstressed vowels; using <st> in place of <sd>; removing the acute accent; and reducing apostrophes.

Another Lewis native and Professor of Celtic at Glasgow Univeristy, Derick Thomson's (1921-2012) brief summary in *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (1994) is no more than a 'sketch of the topic' (Thomson 1994: 99). However, given Thomson's influence on orthography as editor of *Gairm* and in his participation in GOC 1981 it is useful to consider his account here. Thomson's focus is on the 'strong thread of continuity' (1994: 99) from Old Irish to modern usage and the change from inconsistent spellings in Classical Common Gaelic to more standardised use in the twentieth century. His interest is clearly in the inconsistencies of older texts, such as Carswell's. Although he mentions alternative orthographies such as those used in the Book of the Dean of Lismore and the Fernaig Manuscript, the narrative he presents is of the inevitable and commendable progress towards consistency. While he does not set out any particular recommendations, he does illustrate Coulmas' observation in that the aim of his study is to assess how a given writing system meets an ideal – in this case particularly how it is consistent, fixed and how exceptions are removed. Thomson's entry in the *Companion* is the only one of the scholarly works discussed here which does not argue for one spelling over another.

The most comprehensive and up-to-date discussion is found in Ronald Black's 'Gaelic Orthography: The Drunk Man's Broad Road' (2010). Black is a Senior Lecturer in Celtic studies at the University of Edinburgh and Gaelic Editor of *The Scotsman*. It is a very thorough biography of the writing system which gives a wealth of information about the different influential writers, reformers and their texts. Black's analysis of the Scottish Gaelic writing system is particularly framed in terms of the author's position vis-à-vis reform.

It is obvious that for Stewart, MacKinnon and MacAulay, the main aim of their respective texts is to present recommendations for the writing system and its use. Neither Thomson nor Black's analyses are so explicit in this respect, yet both express a preference towards uniformity in standardisation that rejects variability.

In Chapter 2.2, the four belief systems that socially validate a language, according to Fishman, were presented: vitality (by number of speakers), historicity, autonomy and standardisation. It is in Stewart's work that they are most explicitly seen, partly because he spends the most time discussing the nature of Gaelic and

of written language and partly because his contemporary social context was so hostile to Gaelic. He first introduces his work by justifying why Gaelic is a valid subject for a grammar. He does so by invoking the Vitality belief and arguing that Gaelic remains the 'common speech of multitudes' (1801: 4). He also covers the Historicity criterion by emphasising that it is an 'ancient' language (Stewart 1801: 4). MacKinnon also establishes a narrative that gives historical validity to the Gaelic writing system by detailing its history and development. Stewart also establishes a firm criterion of Autonomy from Irish Gaelic:

> The Scottish writers of Gaelic in general followed the Irish orthography, till after the middle of the last century. However that system may suit the dialect of Ireland, it certainly is not adapted to the Gaelic of this country. In the Gaelic translation of the New Testament, printed in 1767, not only were most of the Irish idioms and inflections, which had been admitted into the Scottish Gaelic writings, rejected, and the language adapted to the dialect of the Scottish Highlands; but the orthography also was adapted to the language. (Stewart 1801: 39)

Stewart, MacKinnon, Thomson, MacAulay and Black all support the existence of a standard orthography. For Stewart, the Gaelic Bible provides a largely satisfactory orthographic standard. He frames the desirability of a standard in terms of status; it is needed in order to 'redeem its credit':

> The Gaelic Version of the Sacred Scriptures lately published has exhibited a model, both of style and orthography, still more agreeable to the purest Scottish idiom, and has a just title to be acknowledged as the standard in both. Little seems to be now wanting, to confer on the orthography of the Scottish Gaelic such a degree of uniformity, as may redeem its credit and ensure its stability. (Stewart 1801: 39)

MacKinnon is also quite clear that a standard had existed for Scottish Gaelic since early in the nineteenth century. The translators of the Gaelic Bible and the Highland Society Dictionary team were 'capable and scholarly men' (MacKinnon 1909: 11) who reformed the Classical Gaelic norms and by 1828 created,

> a fairly uniform standard of orthography, based upon the old, but modified to suit Scottish requirements. (MacKinnon 1909: 11-12)

It seems that MacKinnon's understanding of 'standard' is of a flexible standard; it is acceptable even though it is only 'fairly uniform'. MacKinnon's main target, to which he devotes four pages, is to criticise 'localisms', his word for dialectal or

vernacular forms. He criticises the work of the schoolmaster and lexicographer Neil MacAlpine (1786-1867), the schoolmaster and grammarian James Munro (c.1794-1870) and the literary editor and translator John MacKenzie (1806–1848) for being ill-qualified to make pronouncements on orthography. He is particularly hard on the folklorists John F. Campbell (1821?–1885), Hector MacLean (1818-1893) and Sheriff Alexander Nicolson (1827–1893) for the way the use of dialectal forms in their texts (on folk tales, folklore and proverbs) had become so influential on Scottish Gaelic writing. The danger MacKinnon sees in having too great a role for dialects within a standard is that outsiders may consider it a loss of linguistic status. If there is too much variety, the claim to standardisation, one of Fishman's four pillars of language validity, is undermined, and this in turn undermines the very status of Gaelic as a valid language. This is discussed further in section 4.3. An example of this is given by MacKinnon when he warns of localisms disrupting the maintenance of the standard:

> This spread of 'localisms', influenced by Campbell's Popular Tales of the West Highlands and Nicolson's Gaelic Proverbs, has disrupted the maintenance of the standard and has led to recent eccentricities in Gaelic orthography which would have covered us with ridicule if our language was read by educated foreigners and considered worthy of notice. (MacKinnon 1909: 15)

Despite the dangers MacKinnon sees in dialectal representation, the standard he promotes is a normative standard, not tied to prescriptive rules for the sake of maintaining social hierarchy, but which maintains continuity with and knowledge of historical conventions. His article finishes with an exhortation for writers to at least master the existing standard before reforming and adapting the system.

In Black's history, the value of a fixed orthographic norm is also taken as a given. Without one, the spelling needs to be 'rescued' (2010: 251). MacAulay's discussion is the most nuanced with regard to a standard, possibly because he is in the position of preparing the audience for the reform of the first Gaelic Orthographic Conventions. MacAulay states clearly that he believes there to be 'no standard Gaelic in the strict sense of the term' (1976-78: 88), with the strict sense possibly referring to a prestige dialect for speech as well as writing. He strongly advocates a normative standard (although he avoids the word 'standard', preferring 'norm' or 'convention'), with room for acceptable variation (which he terms 'deviants'). Unlike MacKinnon, MacAulay does not simply approach standardisation as a matter

of status. He discusses the advantage of a standard by its usefulness for written communication:

> If we look at the spelling of different versions and translations of the Bible and the shorter catechism we see much variation there, but since these texts utilise a basic rough convention the variations by and large, do not make it impossible or even particularly difficult for us to read the texts. (1976-78: 91)

His other arguments for a 'single agreed norm' are: to prioritise the needs of the writer as simplicity aids the acquisition of writing skills; it is cheaper (although it is not clear why this should be the case); it is a normal process of language development; it is popular: 'Nobody believes spelling should be random' (1976-78: 91-92). He believes that spelling at the time (in the 1970s) was inadequately following the existing conventions because it was both ill-defined and lacked authority. He argues for an 'authoritative conventional norm to be established and agreed upon' for formal orthographic usage within wider literacy awareness of the appropriateness of informal and dialectal forms to be used 'purposely to mark written discourse as belonging to a particular area or a particular style' (1976-78: 89). He advocates a strict use of conventional orthographic norms for formal written discourse and gives the example situations of administration, books on 'serious topics', newspapers, school and university and all formal written prose. MacAulay hesitantly suggests that this standard orthography could allow for acceptable variation, as register variation exists in speech:

> Our judgements of their correctness should be based not on a singular norm allowing only one usage but on an assessment of their appropriateness in the situation in which they appear. [...] We said above that orthographic conventions are different in kind from those governing style. However I think we could usefully consider whether there is any way in which the notion of appropriateness might apply there also, in spite of the fact that most of the complaints about spelling relate to the proliferation of variants. (1976-78: 87)

In both Stewart and MacKinnon's writing the idea of a standard language in the sense of a prestige variety can be seen. For both writers, this is essential to the language's status, which in turn is essential to the language's ongoing existence. For Thomson, MacAulay and Black, there is little evidence of a belief in a prestige standard variety of Gaelic. Instead, the approach is much more on 'standard' as

codified orthographic conventions necessary for promoting written communication and the practical functioning of the language in the modern world.

MacKinnon's 1909 article can be read as an acknowledgement of Coulmas' definition of 'real writing' as his history describes Gaelic orthography and defends it on the basis of it being compromise, historic and pragmatic. MacAulay's analysis also fits Coulmas' theoretical framework: he specifies that; writing is different to speech; the main purpose of writing is communication and that writing is graphic communication. MacAulay expands the latter to mean clear and unambiguous communication: one of the clear differences between writing and speech for MacAulay being the importance of clarity in writing as the interlocutor is usually not present.

> It is essential for those marks and their combination to signal their messages clearly and unambiguously, for if they do not do so there is no other way in which we can arrive at their meaning: what is written down is all we have to go on. (1976-78: 81)

His argument that there should be acceptable variation in spelling is also framed as pragmatic, as being 'a matter of practicalities' (1976-78: 87).

The scholarly writings raise other questions of language ideology and its relation to how Scottish Gaelic is, and should be, spelled. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

2.4 Writing and Reversing Language Shift

This section summarises the ways in which orthographic planning and reform operate within the context of endangered languages and efforts to reverse language shift. This is the context in which Scottish Gaelic finds itself and the context in which twentieth-century reforms have taken place. There are various terms used for languages with a relatively small number of speakers; lesser-used, non-dominant, minority, minoritised or regional languages. The term *endangered* language will be used here as it foregrounds the decline of intergenerational transmission towards a state where the language is no longer being used as a vernacular; this is the crucial factor in Gaelic's current position and a key motivation for revitalisation efforts. The language that replaces the endangered

language will be referred to as the *dominant language* or *language of wider communication* (following Grenoble & Whaley 2006).

2.4.1 Reversing Language Shift (RLS)

When a language is lost as a vernacular, the implication is that the population has shifted its language use to another language.[1] The efforts to revitalise an endangered language are therefore efforts in reversing language shift (RLS) from the new (usually economically, socially and politically dominant) language back to the endangered one. The aim may be to maintain an existing diglossia or to create a stable bilingual language environment. It is unusual to aim for monolingualism in an endangered language due to the (perceived) economic and social limitations it would entail for speakers. Joshua A. Fishman's canonical text *Reversing Language Shift* (1991) has guided many theoretical, analytical and practical responses to language shift. It is not, however, a how-to guide. It is, in the main, 'about why most efforts to reverse language shift are only indifferently successful, at best, and outright failures or even contra-indicated and harmful undertakings, at worst' (1991: 1). Since the publication of this book, the field of language planning and policy has expanded as scholars and language activists try to find successful ways to undertake RLS.

2.4.2 Language Planning for Endangered Languages

Language planning is commonly understood as comprising three aspects: acquisition planning, status planning and corpus planning. It is believed that increased activity in each sphere can reverse language shift. The first is concerned with the users of the languages, their numbers and their level of acquisition; the second with use of the language, increasing social status and prestige and establishing linguistic rights. Corpus planning is concerned with the workings of the language itself: which linguistic resources are available to support acquisition and what form the language will take when status planning efforts require it to be used in new domains (in terms of vocabulary, register, standardisation, etc.). One aspect common to many endangered languages is that their use has been

[1] Although there is the alternative reality, which thankfully occurs more rarely, that the population of speakers themselves have been lost to humanity, e.g. the indigenous Beothuk of Newfoundland who were wiped out in the early nineteenth century following European settlement (see Pastore 1992).

restricted to certain, often considered traditional, domains: the home, immediate community and areas of non-industrial or pre-capitalist work such as farming, fishing, hunting and housework. Thus, language planning efforts seek to expand use of the language into new, or reclaimed, domains: education, professions such as the law, government and medicine, technological work (engineering, ICT), broadcasting, etc. Although, as discussed in section 2.2.1.3, the centralised model of selection, codification, elaboration and dissemination is criticised by proponents of polynomie such as Jean-Baptiste Marcellesi and Jacques Thiers (1999) as inappropriate to the needs of an endangered-language community.

In Grenoble and Whaley's guide to language revitalisation *Saving Languages* (2006) they review many projects and address orthography as a specific part of revitalisation efforts. Their focus is specifically on instances where an orthographic system has been created from scratch. While this is not the case for Gaelic, the examples they provide are illuminating. For example, in balancing the priorities for a new writing system, they conclude that 'acceptability stands above all other priorities in designing a writing system' (2006: 143), as any system cannot be successful if it does not have acceptance from the community.

2.4.3 Prior Ideological Clarification

Many scholars recommend that before planning for revitalisation begins, it is critical for community members to have an honest debate in order to understand and articulate what goals they want to achieve and what are the attitudes and beliefs they hold which may help or hinder their efforts. This is called 'prior ideological clarification' (Fishman 1991; Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1998) and is both for the communities' own benefit and for the guidance of any experts or linguists that become involved. This process is, however, not often attempted or carried out successfully.[2] Fishman also emphasises the importance of popular linguistic acceptance, or legitimacy, in his book on corpus planning (Fishman 2006), where he cautions language planners to gain a good understanding of the speech community's dominant language ideology (through prior ideological

[2] 'There has recently been an increase in the publication of edited collections of papers describing case studies of language revitalization efforts, but these rarely evaluate processes or outcomes or relate these to ideological clarification' (Austin & Sallabank 2014: 8). See also Fishman 2001: 541.

clarification) so that they can minimise the risk of engaging in corpus planning that actively accelerates language shift.

In 2013 a team within the Gaelic research network Soillse, including the author,[3] carried out a project named *Dlùth is Inneach* aimed at carrying out ideological clarification in order to create a linguistic foundation for future Gaelic corpus planning efforts (Bell *et al.* 2014).[4] A public consultation involving 39 workshops and 184 participants gathered information through Focussed Conversations to establish the dominant language ideology.[5]

The conventional understanding of corpus planning is that it primarily pertains to the formal and written forms of the language as they are the most easily controlled in education, publishing and governmental bodies, although it may also, however, have an impact on the spoken language. The role of orthography, then, is generally seen as part of the standardisation effort which aims to increase literacy, increase the written use of the language so that it can expand to new domains and consolidate existing ones, and to assist in educational endeavours. It forms part of literacy efforts in reversing language shift (RLS) which, as noted in Chapter 3.3, can have a complex role as it offers both prestige to the endangered language and facilitates acquisition of the dominant language.

2.4.4 How can orthography help RLS?

As discussed in section 2.2.1, the benefits of a standard orthography, or codified orthographic norms, are the facilitation of written communication across geographical areas, the facilitation of literacy acquisition, a consistent approach of teaching and assessment in formal education. There is also the potential for a shared linguistic identity where various dialects exist. Thus in reversing language shift, a standard orthography can benefit the community by extending

[3] Under the maiden name Bell. For information on Soillse, see www.soillse.ac.uk

[4] As revitalisation efforts are not only well underway, but institutionalised in Scotland, this was 'ongoing' rather than 'prior' ideological clarification.

[5] The Focussed Conversation is a group facilitation method created by the Institute of Cultural Affairs which provides a structure for effective communication where everyone in the group has the chance to participate. For more on how it was applied as an Ideological Clarification exercise, see Bell *et al.* 2014.

opportunities for communication as well as the implied status and legitimacy that contemporary Western societies ascribe to literate cultures.

2.4.5 How can a standard orthography hinder RLS?

2.4.5.1 Social consequences

One of the most apparent consequences of a standardised writing system is the development in the minds of speakers that 'standard' equals 'right' or 'correct' and 'non-standard' equals 'wrong' or 'incorrect'. This can hinder RLS efforts as it lowers the social prestige of oral ability and the confidence of speakers. It may also result in them withdrawing from intergenerational transmission so as to avoid passing on 'wrong' forms of the language.

In the Scottish Gaelic context, this phenomenon was discussed in Gordon Wells' study of the community of Uist. It included in its aims to 'find out how Gaelic speakers (particularly habitually non-literate ones) view Gaelic writing and whether literacy might be viewed as a pre-requisite in any positive self-evaluation of competence' (Wells 2011: 8). Although the participants did show a consciousness of the potential problematic relationships between literate Gaelic learners and non-literate L1 speakers,[6] they attributed these to *other people*. Therefore while Wells concludes that

> Several participants **expressed the concern** that a relative underconfidence in literacy skills could spill over into an apparent reluctance on the part of fluent speakers to converse in Gaelic, whether with Gaelic learners or indeed with other known fluent speakers who might exhibit signs of “book-learned” language (Wells 2011: 24, bold added)

The study participants did not testify that they *themselves* use Gaelic less as a result of encounters with literate L1 or L2 speakers or give concrete examples of events they have witnessed. Their concern is based on assumptions of what other people *might* think. At this stage, it is not clear whether non-literacy, a standard orthography, or the GOC reports have affected Gaelic speakers' confidence or their language use. Further work, with social psychologists, would be needed on

[6] Non-literate in Gaelic, but as likely to be literate in English as much as the average British citizen.

perceived or self-reported levels of self-confidence regarding language usage in the Scottish Gaelic-speaking community.

The second social consequence is derived from the prestige of literacy: those who adhere to and understand the standard are seen as more 'correct' in their use of language. As people inevitably have unequal access to a standard form, this leads to social stratification.[7] In weighing up these two social consequences, Grenoble and Whaley conclude that they do not outweigh the benefits because communities of endangered-language speakers *already* have social stratification and power imbalances:

> while the introduction of a standard written form will produce new stratification within, and sometimes among, the communities where an endangered language is used, it has the greater potential to rectify the more obvious asymmetry of power that holds between members of the community and those outside it. (Grenoble & Whaley 2006: 156)

2.5 Studies of Spelling Reforms

Coulmas and Guerini classify three kinds of reform (2012: 442):

- Orthography reforms
- Script reforms
- Writing system reforms

The first, orthographic reform, is the most frequent and least radical, meaning the adjustment of spelling conventions. A script reform replaces one graphical code with another. Writing system reforms change the systematic design and the basic operational units. Coulmas and Guerini suggest that there is one primary reason that lies behind reform: one which is also true for the reforms of Scottish Gaelic:

> The general motivation for such reforms is to secure the functionality of the system by simplifying its rules and thus facilitate the task of children becoming literate. (Coulmas & Guerini 2012: 446)

[7] See Urla 2012 for an exploration of this process over several years in regard to the 'Batua' literary form of Basque and its impact on speakers.

The twentieth-century Gaelic Orthographic Conventions (GOC) had a similar educational intent. Earlier reforms in the late eighteenth century were interested in making adults as well as children literate.

Coulmas and Guerini observe that 'Uniformity, transparency and simplicity are common aims of spelling reforms' (2012: 447). Orthographic reform is often prompted by the needs of education where uniformity makes assessment fairer and where teaching is consistent. Transparency can mean adapting spelling to reflect changes in pronunciation. Simplicity can be a matter of perspective; however, it is generally believed to aid the acquisition of literacy and reading skills. Coulmas and Guerini consider these cogent linguistic reasons for reform. However, they emphasise that there is a lack of clear evidence that design features help or hinder the acquisition and usability of literacy. They summarise that 'in regards to literacy, linguistic motivations for writing reform, therefore, seem to be of secondary importance at best' (Coulmas & Guerini 2012: 448-9).

An example of reform for linguistic reasons is given by France. At the same time that the Scottish Education Board was concerned about the quality of Gaelic students' spelling in the 1970s, the French education system was concerned about the obstacle that a complex orthography put in the way of education. Wider concerns that education served only an élite not the wider population, meant spelling had to be considered for change (de Closets 2009: 186-90). In 1988 the primary teachers' union, SNI-PEGC, published a report on orthography. It focussed on which errors were causing the most difficulty, on where the writing system was dysfunctional and caused traps even for those who knew the system well. The 'rectifications' were informed by an understanding that radical change would not be accepted by the reading public; however, despite efforts to address potential concerns, a media scandal erupted. The *Académie française,* which had agreed to support the reform, overturned its decision. In the end, the recommendations were not implemented in French schools. However, outside France, the reforms were welcomed and adopted, for example in Belgium, by the universities and exam boards. The *Office québécoise de la langue française* declared itself in favour in 1991 and in Switzerland a consultation with teachers also resulted in the adoption of the reforms in 1996. Due to this, the recommendations were gradually adopted as variants by dictionaries, spell-checkers, until finally, in 2008, they were accepted in education in France (de Closets 2009: 230-6). The French

example demonstrates that conservatism is a strong force, that linguistic authority can be held by different agents and that the 'common good' aspect means everyone holds an opinion.

2.5.1 Why Reforms Fail

A reform of spelling is rarely uncontested and just as often can be unsuccessful. As Whittaker notes,

> radical systemic change is comparatively rare in the long history of writing and, as a general rule, only take place when a speech community adopts and adapts a writing system. (2011: 938)

He goes on to note that not even the first-century emperor Claudius was able to introduce additional letters to the Latin alphabet.

> The general development of writing is, thus, somewhat reminiscent of the *punctuated equilibrium* model in natural history, according to which change is not gradual but sudden, followed by lengthy periods of stability. (Whittaker 2011: 939) (italics original)

That the contested nature of the Scottish Gaelic GOC reforms is not unique is illustrated through comparison with the modern reforms of Dutch, German and French orthography in 1995, 1996 and 2000 respectively:

> The said reforms do not alter any basic design features of the orthographies in question, pertaining to accent marks, word separation, the use of capital letters, the integration of loan words, as well as some other lesser problems. In all three cases international institutional efforts were made to realize the reform, yet they met with major resistance by defenders of the old norm. As a result, rival conventions coexist. Purists are disturbed by this state of affairs, but many readers, writers and publishers do not seem to be concerned. (Coulmas & Guerini 2012: 447)

As Cerquiglini characterises it, orthographic discussions are a battle of ideas:

> Pleine de cédilles et de fureur, l'histoire de l'orthographe française est avant tout une bataille des idées. (Cerquiglini 2004: 7)
>
> *Full of cedillas and fury, the history of French orthography is above all a battle of ideas.*

The approach of Cerquiglini to the study of French orthography is to see its history as an interaction of various language ideologies, linguistic ideals and social factors. Reforms are contested on these grounds and the ideas behind them can lose out to the ideas of those of the status quo.

Orthography is often seen as a technical exercise requiring expert linguists, not as part of language as a social phenomenon. As noted earlier, orthography and standardisation do not stand apart from social factors. Although Grenoble & Whaley are mainly concerned with creating orthographies from 'scratch', their observations on the importance of recognising the social aspects apply also to orthographic reform:

> The importance of sociological factors cannot be overstated. Regardless of how linguistically and technically sound an orthography might be, its initial (and continuing) acceptance by the people for whom it is designed is critical in determining its eventual effectiveness and use. Therefore, local leaders and native speakers must be integrally involved in the process of developing an orthography regardless of their supposed linguistic awareness; the creation of a writing system by an outside linguist or single community member acting independently, without continual local input and feedback, easily leads to a failed orthography. (Grenoble & Whaley 2006: 137-8)

The creation of an orthographic reform by an outside linguist or single community member 'without continual local input and feedback' has the same chance of failure.

3 Scottish Gaelic

3.1 Introduction

The name 'Gaelic' can be applied to three languages in the Goidelic, or Q-Celtic, branch of the Celtic languages; Irish Gaelic (Ireland), Scottish Gaelic (Scotland) and Manx Gaelic (Isle of Man). All three descend from the same parent language, referred to as Common Gaelic (Jackson 1951). The other branch of the Celtic language is the Brythonic, or P-Celtic, branch which includes Welsh, Breton, Cornish and their earlier relatives.

It is generally believed that Gaelic was established in Scotland when the Gaelic-speaking kingdom of Dál Riada in the north-east of Ireland expanded to include Argyllshire sometime around 500AD (Thomson 1977: 127).[8] Gaelic continued to expand from that base across Scotland. Ecclesiastical influence followed with the arrival of Columba and the spread of his Christian monasteries. By the end of the eleventh century, the Gaels were established over much of what is now within the borders of modern Scotland; the distribution of Gaelic place-names clearly shows the presence of Gaelic, at one time or another, excluding only the northern isles of Orkney and Shetland and the south-east counties of Berwickshire, Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire (Ó Baoill 2010: 8).[9]

After this early dominance in the creation of Scotland, Gaelic power and influence receded at the national level. The royal court stopped being Gaelic-speaking in the twelfth century and a 'consciously bi-cultural nation' (Gillies 1993: 145) emerged with Gaeldom established in the Highlands and Islands and the Scots language and culture in the Lowlands. Various factors contributed to the subsequent decline of the Gaelic language; the loss of political independence following the assimilation of clan chiefs and the Lordship of the Isles; the rise in prestige of Lowland Scots in official and public life; the subsequent rise of the English language after the royal and political unions with England in 1603 and 1707

[8] However, this paradigm has been dismantled by Ewan Campbell as lacking in archaeological, historical or linguistic evidence. He suggests that Argyll was Gaelic-speaking from the Iron Age (Campbell 2001).

[9] Recently, this has been challenged with suggestions that Q Celtic speakers may have travelled to mainland Britain from the continent and settled there. See Ó Baoill 2010 (2-3); for a recent up-to-date account of the advent and expansion in Gaelic, see Clancy (2011).

respectively; and economic isolation from the core areas of development. Official and social attitudes became more intolerant of Gaelic and various efforts to 'civilise' and 'improve' people's lives came to imply the eradication of Gaelic.

In the pre-medieval period evidence for Gaelic rests on historical references to named people and places as there are few surviving Gaelic documents. In the medieval period there is far more evidence across Scotland and Ireland, yet Gaelic writing took place in a standardised literary norm across both countries which reveals little dialectal variation. For this reason, it is difficult to discern the period of divergence between Irish and Scottish Gaelic. However, it is likely that divergences have existed from at least the Old Gaelic period (Ó Maolalaigh 2008: 182-97). It was in the seventeenth century and particularly the eighteenth century that Scottish Gaelic emerged as a distinct written language (see Thomson 1977).

It has been estimated that in the mid-eighteenth century, the start of the period that this work is concerned with, there were 289,798 Gaelic speakers in Scotland out of a total population of 1,265,380 (22.9%) (Thomson 1994: 109). However, this period is also the start of an age of mass migration and forced emigration, known as the Highland Clearances, which took place from the late-eighteenth century well into the nineteenth. The effects of this on the population of the Highlands, and therefore the number of Gaelic speakers, has been extensively studied (see Hunter 2000 and Withers 1984, 1988) and is ascribed to various socio-economic factors, agrarian transformation and the growth of capitalism without industrialisation in the Highlands. In particular, capitalism fundamentally changed the relationship of Highland leadership to its people from a clan structure to one of landlords and tenants. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also saw educational and evangelical agencies at work in the Highlands, aiming to improve the physical and spiritual well-being of the people (for details see Durkacz 1983).

However, when Gaelic language ability was first measured in the census in 1881, the language was still spoken by nearly a quarter of a million people in Scotland (Thomson 1994: 111). Social conditions changed again in the 1880s, when the fight for land rights, known in Gaelic as 'Aimhreit an Fhearainn', the land agitation, created active political engagement. This led to the Napier Commission and the Crofting Acts of 1886 and 1892. This activism also created the first Chair of Celtic in 1882 at the University of Edinburgh and the appointment of Professor Donald

MacKinnon. The early twentieth century saw heavy population loss in the First World War, followed by the continuing trend in economic migration and language shift to English. Gaelic speakers emigrated to many British colonies and beyond. Small diaspora communities can still be found in Nova Scotia, Canada.

The establishment of organisations such as An Comunn Gaidhealach provided a central focus of activity and activism as the twentieth century continued. An Comunn has run classes, summer camps, published books and school textbooks and has run the annual national festival, the Mòd, among many other initiatives. While the number of speakers and the geographical area have both declined, there has been a rise in the range of activity in education, broadcasting, publishing and community groups since the 1980s. The results of these may not yet have had their full effect or, as has also been noted, 'particular initiatives have increased Gaelic prestige, while the figures of speakers tell their own story' (Thomson 1994: 91). By 2001, accelerating Gaelic-to-English language shift meant that there were no monolingual Gaelic speakers left and 90% of the 340,000 people living in the Highlands and Islands were monolingual English-speakers (GROS 2005).

Today Scottish Gaelic is an endangered language. From the 2011 census in Scotland, 87,100 people aged 3 and over in Scotland (1.7 per cent of the population) reported having some Gaelic language skills. The breakdown of reported language skills are:

- 32,400 (37.2 per cent) with full skills in Gaelic, that is understand, speak, read and write Gaelic;
- 57,600 (66.2 per cent) able to speak Gaelic;
- 6,100 (7.0 per cent) able to read and write but not speak Gaelic;
- 23,400 (26.8 per cent) able to understand Gaelic but not speak, read or write it. (National Records of Scotland 2015a)

The 57,600 speakers are mainly resident in the Western Isles, parts of the north and west mainland and Glasgow. Nationally, 25,000 people aged 3 and over (0.49 per cent of the population) reported using Gaelic at home. The number of speakers living in the rest of the UK or in other countries is unknown.

3.2 Literacy in Gaelic Scotland

Part of the sociology of an orthography is its relationship to who uses it; that is who learns it and who is literate. This section will review the development of literacy in Gaelic Scotland to provide the historical context in which the standardisation of the orthography and the spread of literacy interacted. The role of literacy in a minority language is complex; on one hand it can confer prestige and on the other, it can facilitate the acquisition of the dominant language. This has been attested in other languages (see Grenoble & Whaley 2006: 102-3) and both elements can be seen at work in the history of Gaelic.

3.2.1 Ogham

The earliest form of Gaelic writing still extant are the stone inscriptions called Ogham (also known as Ogam). The alphabet is believed to date from the fourth century and has been found in Ireland, Wales and the Isle of Man in inscriptions from the fourth to the seventh centuries (Thomson 1994: 220; Ó Baoill 2010: 3). Examples in Scotland are generally found in the south-west.[10] Ogham was also (arguably) used for non-Gaelic languages in stones in Eastern Scotland in the eighth and ninth centuries (Ó Baoill 2010: 4). Even after Christianity was established, bringing with it Latin writing, knowledge of Ogham remained. Evidence shows it continued to be used (or taught) longer in Scotland than elsewhere. Damien McManus has argued that despite its distinctiveness in form from the Latin and Greek alphabets, Ogham has an alphabetic principle which shows it was derived from an understanding of their systems (McManus 1991).

3.2.2 The Latin Alphabet and Gaelic Script

The foundation stone of modern Gaelic orthography (both Scottish and Irish) was the adoption of the Latin alphabet. At its arrival in Britain, Latin provided not simply the physical technology and a writing system but a writing culture and a foreign language. Ireland was Christianised in the fifth and sixth centuries and Latin writing spread with the religion (Stifter 2010: 67). The Celtic Church, brought to Scotland by St Columba (Colum Cille) in the sixth century, developed the Latin alphabet to form the script used in Latin texts such as The Book of Kells

[10] see Forsyth (1996: lxvii) and MacManus (1991) for discussion of these.

(written mainly in Iona in the eight century) and the Lindisfarne Gospels (c. 700 from the monastery at Lindisfarne in Northumbria). Due to the adoption of Latin for written records, there is a scarcity of Scottish Gaelic writing or other evidence of Gaelic literacy in Scotland. The priority for writing in the Celtic Church was to create ecclesiastical documents and these were written in Latin (Meek 1993a: 345). Where and when this Latin alphabet began to be systematically adapted for writing in Gaelic is not clear. However, it is from the beginning that the sound system of Gaelic had to be adapted to symbols created for different languages and phonological systems. The decisions about which phonological information needed to be encoded for the graphic communication to be functional, and which phonological and phonetic information is unnecessary, began here.

This early period of language, from the adoption of the Latin alphabet to around 900 AD is designated as Old Gaelic or Old Irish (recently scholars have opted to prefer the former to indicate that its use extended beyond Ireland; see Ó Maolalaigh (2013b: 42, n. 2). Evidence for Old Gaelic is directly attested in eighth- and ninth-century glosses and marginalia of Latin manuscripts. At least by the ninth century in Ireland, Latin had been replaced by Gaelic as the primary writing system used in monastic schools (Stifter 2010: 67). The literacy training provided by monasteries and the Church foreshadowed the later importance that churches had for literacy in the Highlands of Scotland. One of the earliest written Scottish Gaelic sources is from a Columban monastery in north-east Aberdeenshire. Known as *The Book of Deer*, this small Gospel Latin book was produced in the ninth century and contains two additions in Old Gaelic. The manuscript also contains 5 formal deeds and an origin legend about the monastery of Deer added in the twelfth century; see Jackson (1972) and the re-assessments in Forsyth (2008). The use of Gaelic rather than Latin for this demonstrates the value attached by Gaelic-speaking clerics to formal Gaelic deeds confirming their land-grants and immunities (Meek 1993b: 238).

On the evidence remaining, it appears that those who used it, a small literary elite, created a single form of grammar as there is little synchronic variation. At this time, then, Gaelic writing embodies the idea of a standard language as a uniform prestige variety. It has been argued that a northern variety of Gaelic was adopted as the prestige form (McCone 1985) although it is not known if there was a codified synthesis of dialectal forms but the use of the resulting variety

nevertheless shows its prestige (Stifter 2010: 60). Ó Baoill ascribes the 'achievement' to 'the power of both the Church and the secular learned classes' (Ó Baoill 2010: 5). Despite the consistency in grammar, however, Old Gaelic orthography is not a fully uniform system (Stifter 2010: 67). David Stifter has described the use of 18 Latin letters (a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, t, u) as,

> Especially unsuited for rendering the phonemic system of Old Irish with its more than sixty phonemes (including diphthongs). This means that each letter has to bear the functional load of expressing around four different phonemes. (Stifter 2010: 67)

The system created, therefore, elaborated on the restricted alphabet by using word position and giving diacritic functions to some letters along with their phonemic value as well as diacritics themselves, in particular the *punctum delens* (the placement of a dot above a letter to indicate lenition).

Gaelic was written in a modified version of the Latin script which combines features of cursive and half-uncial Roman script. It is known as Insular miniscule or *an cló Gaelach*. One of the early pieces of evidence of it is in *Cathach Choluim Chille*, a psalter from the second half of the sixth century (Bannerman 1983: 214). It was used in Ireland for writing both Irish and Latin. Over 100 manuscripts between the ninth century and the second half of the sixteenth century were written in *clò Gaelach*. It was used in print in Ireland from the seventeenth century. Gaelic type did vary between then and the twentieth century, but 'in spite of variations these were all akin to one another and clearly distinguishable from Roman type' (Ó Cuív 1969: 24-25). Although, when the complete translation of the Bible into Irish Gaelic was published in Ireland in 1685, the *cló Gaelach* script appears to have become unfamiliar enough to Scottish Gaelic readers that the Rev. Robert Kirk (?1644-92) transcribed it into Roman print.

3.2.3 Middle Gaelic and Classical Gaelic

The Middle Gaelic period, traditionally dated from c.900 AD to c. 1200 AD, does not refer to a uniform variety, rather the period covering the transition between Old and Modern Gaelic. The end of the Middle Gaelic witnessed what Ó Cuív (1980) has referred to as a 'mediaeval exercise in language planning', which resulted in

the codification of language for use particularly in the composition of syllabic verse, a form of language which was propagated and disseminated in the Early Modern bardic schools. Linguistic development and divergence in Scotland independent from Irish Gaelic is likely to have begun long before this (Ó Maolalaigh 2008); however, concrete evidence from this period is lacking (Gillies 1993: 145) and we need to rely for the most part on linguistic reconstruction (Ó Maolalaigh 2008). Despite these developments the writing system itself made gradual changes rather than undergoing total reform:

> [the writing system] remains remarkably stable until the end of the twelfth century (...) The main deviations from the earlier standard lie in frequent spelling confusions of those sounds that had merged, e.g. nd and nn, or oí/aí/uí, etc. (Stifter 2010: 111)

The examples given by Stifter demonstrate how sound changes inevitably lead to graphic changes. Once the different forms of <nd> and <nn>, for example, are no longer needed to encode phonological data the choice of writers to retain them is for other reasons including historical continuity and conservatism.

The written language from around 1200 to 1600 is known as Classical Gaelic. It was used in Ireland and Scotland as a formal written convention. This convention masks dialectal divergences between Irish and Scottish Gaelic over this period (Ó Maolalaigh (1998: 12-16). Although Gaelic at the time ceased to be used by the Scottish royal court, being replaced by Scots in the court and in burghs, areas outwith the political reach of the court were able to maintain different traditions. In the areas controlled by the Lordship of the Isles, principally the West Highlands, the Lords encouraged what Donald Meek has referred to as a Gaelic 'civil service'; clerics, judges, genealogists, sculptors and physicians. This literate class were capable of using Classical Gaelic (Meek 1993: 345). There is little to suggest that literacy went beyond this élite class, or that there was a desire to extend it beyond them. The strongly conservative and prescriptive nature of Classical Gaelic is summarised by Colm Ó Baoill,

> This learned language remained the rigid and unchanging standard for professional poets in Scotland and Ireland down to the seventeenth century, becoming further and further removed from any spoken dialect as the centuries went on. (Ó Baoill 2010: 11)

The conventions of Classical Gaelic were not disrupted by the Reformation. It is believed that the tradition of writing Classical Gaelic was carried on by priests who had trained in bardic schools who subsequently became ministers (Meek 1993: 345).

Although Classical Gaelic was used and understood as a standard in the Early Modern period, it was not an utterly inflexible and invariable one. Thomson finds that 'at all times this language is open to modification in the direction of spoken Scottish Gaelic' and the same modifications in Ireland to spoken Irish (Thomson 1994: 99). For writers in the twentieth century who are reflecting on the patterns of use in early centuries, it can be easy to judge them in the frame of the ideology of the standard and the expectations of modern readers. Thus a lack of consistency becomes 'notorious' (Thomson 1994: 99). Donald MacKinnon noted that in the early MSS 'authors and scribes were not so much impressed with the importance of uniformity in orthography as we have become' (1909: 3).

A significant break from the Classical orthographic tradition is found in one of the major manuscripts of the sixteenth century. The Book of the Dean of Lismore remains one of the most important Scottish collections of Gaelic poetry. It was compiled between 1512 and 1542, by the Dean of Lismore, James MacGregor, and his brother Duncan, but with a spelling system based on Middle Scots and written in Scots 'secretary hand' (Meek 1993: 345; Meek 1989: 132; Ó Baoill 2010: 14). Its unconventional spelling was undoubtedly influenced by geography, as its scribes were located in Fortingall, Perthshire, far from the West Highlands where the Lords of the Isles and the conventions of the bardic schools in Gaelic writing were in control.

The Highland historian John Bannerman considers the sixteenth century as 'the earliest for which a seriously researched statement as to the incidence of literacy in the Highlands can be made' (Bannerman 1983: 214). Even then, literacy appears to be very restricted in spread. It is only in the second half of the sixteenth century that there is a noticeable increase in the numbers of Gaelic speakers able at least to append their signatures in Scots to legal documents (Bannerman 1983: 216). For a recent discussion of where and how Gaelic was written in late medieval and early modern Scotland, see MacCoinnich (2008).

3.2.4 The Seventeenth Century

The influence of the bardic schools lessened as power waned in Gaelic-speaking territories. In 1609, the Statutes of Iona enacted by King James VI of Scotland (1567-1625) included forcing the education of the clan chiefs' heirs in the Lowlands and outlawing the patronage of Gaelic poets. The spread of Gaelic literacy was also threatened by the efforts to remove Gaelic completely. In 1616, the Act for the Settling of Parochial Schools explicitly claimed that an aim of it would be

> that the vulgar Inglishe toung be universallie plantit, and the Irishe language, whilk is one of the cheif and principall causis of the continewance of barbaritie and incivilitie amongis the inhabitantis of the Ilis and Heylandis, may be abolisheit and removeit (quoted in Donaldson 1970: 174-75)

Outside of printed materials, we know some of the scribes who would have been active in the Highlands. They were literate in Latin and in Scots, which was the language of government. Toirdhealbhach Ó Muirgheasáin, one of two scribes for Ruairi MacLeod of Dunvegan, drew up and signed a contract in Scots in 1614 (Bannerman 1983: 217-8). The National Archives of Scotland holds a contract of fosterage he wrote in Classical Gaelic (Thompson 1994: 220). The Classical Gaelic poet and scribe for the MacDonalds of Clan Ranald, Cathal MacMhuirich also wrote and signed documents in Scots (Bannerman 1983: 218; Thomson 1994: 185; MacCoinnich 2008). These point to the fact that literate Gaelic speakers, at this early stage, are multilingual and were as familiar with writing systems of other languages as they were with Gaelic.

The Church of Scotland's Synod of Argyll was a 'relatively Gaelic-friendly' institution (Ó Baoill 2010: 14). Ministers of the Synod of Argyll completed a translation of the Old Testament by 1673 although the manuscript does not survive (Meek 1997: 16). It had more success with other religious works including the Shorter Catechism or *Adtimchiol an Chreidimh* (1631) translated by Rev. Ewen Cameron of Dunoon. Only the second edition from 1659 survives (Thomson 1962). It contains examples of usage which appear to be Scottish Gaelic and shows a move away from Classical Gaelic.

3.2.5 The Eighteenth Century

The eighteenth century is considered to be the key period for the development of a Scottish Gaelic orthography based on the contemporary vernacular. As MacBain describes it in his 'Outlines of Gaelic Etymology' with which he prefaces his dictionary:

> In the eighteenth century Scottish Gaelic broke completely with the Irish and began a literary career of its own with a literary dialect that could be understood easily all over the Highlands and Isles. (MacBain 1911: iv)

At the start of the eighteenth century, Edward Lhuyd commented on the disparity that had been created between Classical Gaelic writing and the vernacular:

> the ancient Orthography whereof has been much better preserv'd than its Pronunciation [...]; Pronouncing as different from what they write, as the French. (Lhuyd 1707: 2)

As the century continued, however, the grammar and vocabulary of the written language was reformed to the vernacular.

> Who forms the usage climate, in an age lacking grammars, dictionaries, and other linguistic resources? In a word: authors. Literary authors, in the first instance; academic authors, in the second. (Crystal 2006: 55)

As David Crystal observes above, authors are the main agents of linguistic authority in a written culture without grammars and dictionaries. In eighteenth-century Scotland, it was Gaelic authors, religious in the main, who formed the usage climate. One of the key figures in this period was the poet and teacher Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair (Alexander MacDonald); considered by Ronald Black as one of the 'founding fathers' of modern Gaelic orthography (Black 2010: 237). As a literary author, he authored the first published secular book with his collection of poems, *Ais-éiridh na Sean Chánoin Albannaich* (Mac-Dhonuill 1751). As a putative lexicographer, his published wordlist, *Leabhar a Theasgasc Ainminnin: A Galick and English Vocabulary* (M'Donald 1741) came under the auspices of a religious organisation.

The authors with the most impact on the usage climate, however, were the translators of the Bible into Scottish Gaelic. The influence of southern dialects, a

point that would be contentious later on, began with these authors. The work of the translation of the Bible into Scottish Gaelic has been documented and described in depth by Meek (see Meek 1997). The translation took place between 1755 and 1801, the New Testament appearing first in print in 1767. The different books of the Old Testament took longer to appear and the whole work was completed in 1801.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century there was a growth in the linguistic study of Gaelic following on from the sporadic works of Lhuyd and MacMhaighstir Alasdair's wordlist. Robert MacFarlan was the first and only 'Professor of Gaelic' appointed by the Highland Society (Gillies & Pike 2012: 207). He published a dictionary, *Nuadh Fhoclair Gaidhlig agus Beurla* [New Gaelic and English Vocabulary] in 1795 dedicated to the Society's members. In it, he expresses his dismay at the decline of Gaelic and shows his concern at the lack of a standard Gaelic orthography. The Rev. William Shaw also published a grammar in 1778 and a dictionary in 1780 for which he gathered some material orally on a trip to the Highlands in 1778 (Gillies & Pike 2012: 206). In contrast, he is clear that he is not attempting any orthographic revision in his dictionary:

> The Gaelic reader will find no innovations in orthography; for I have considered it my business rather to record words as they have been written in the ancient Irish MSS. than attempt to write a Dictionary, by altering the spelling from the received method, to what I might conceive it ought to be, according to the powers of the letters, and the philosophy of the language. (Shaw 1780: 8)

3.2.5.1 **Literacy**

In the formal educational gap left by the state, evangelical societies attempted to bring literacy, and with it the word of God, to the Highlands. The most signficant of these was the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SSPCK) founded in 1709 to spread Protestant Christianity. This evangelical impetus, along with the Gaelic Bible as a principal text-book, meant that literacy went hand in hand with Christianity. Again, this is not unique to the spread of Scottish Gaelic literacy:

> One thing seems clearer, however, namely that vernacular literacy per se is usually merely an intermediary goal along the road to something

> other and greater than itself, something which (it is hoped) literacy would enable the literate to attain (Fishman 2010: 84)

In this case, that which was 'greater than itself' was access to the word of God. The SSPCK were initially no more open to Gaelic than the writers of the 1616 Act and over the decades Gaelic's association with 'barbaritie and incivilitie' was still strong, with the added negative factors of Jacobitism and Catholicism as this extract from the SSPCK records show:

> Another unfavourable circumstance is the Erse tongue. (...) a number of arrful<sic> and bigotted priests, men who 'compass sea and land to gain one proselyte,' are either born to the knowledge of their language, or spare no pains to acquire it. Indeed there are no Erse Grammars but those that are printed at Rome, and taught at some of the Colleges in France. (SSPCK 1771: 3)

SSPCK teachers were instructed not to use Gaelic in their schools. However, before the end of the eighteenth century, the Society had been convinced that teaching monolingual Gaelic speakers literacy in their own language first would be effective in later teaching them English.

Durkacz characterises the Church's position towards Gaelic in eighteenth century as ambivalent; supporting 'English in education, serving the long term aims of civilising and reforming the Highlands, and Gaelic in preaching and worship (...) holding back the counter-Reformation' (Durkacz 1981: 147). The European creation of mass literacy is closely linked to the establishment of 'national languages' understood as 'codified written languages suitable to unite those literate in it to form a national community' (Coulmas & Guerini 2012: 438). The expansion of Gaelic literacy in the eighteenth century took place in this context, but it had to work against the British project of English as the 'national language'. Scottish Gaelic, moreover, was associated with rebellion and Catholicism and the Church regarded the Anglicisation of Gaelic-speaking areas as an essential aspect of reformation (Durkacz 1981: 147).

While mass literacy was yet to be achieved in the eighteenth century, the literate class of Gaels and Highlanders, particularly ministers, had both literacy and access to the written tradition of Gaelic. In the Rev. Thomas M. Murchison's writings on church history in the Highlands, he cautions against underestimating the availability of books. As an example, he details the library of a Rev. Donald

MacKilligan, minister of Alness, who in 1715 had an English Bible, an (Irish) Gaelic Bible, a Greek New Testament, a Latin grammar, several theological works, Woodridge's book on gardening and a book by Lord Gray on equine health (MacCalmain 2010: 91). There were also presbytery libraries in places such as Glenelg.

The eighteenth century saw a period of reform in the orthography of Scottish Gaelic as writers sought to vernacularise the Classical Gaelic norms to fit the modern language as spoken in Scotland. This was in part motivated by religious and political desires to bring religion, and 'civilisation', to the Highlands.

3.2.6 The Nineteenth century

The nineteenth century continued the influence of ministers as arbiters of linguistic usage and in various roles beyond translation: as magazine publishers, as dictionary makers and as grammarians. The aims of literacy were the same for the early part of the century as the eighteenth century; Gaelic literacy was a path to God. There are accounts of successful acquisition of literacy, although these include accounts of literacy as a path to English.

3.2.6.1 Linguistic works

The first linguistic book of the nineteenth century was *Elements of Galic Grammar* (1801), the grammar by the Rev. Dr Alexander Stewart (1764-1821). Stewart was a son of the Manse of Blair Atholl and became a minister himself at Dingwall and later at the Canongate, Edinburgh. He later revised the SSPCK translation of the Scriptures. It was while he was minister at Moulin, Perthshire that he first published his *Elements*. It remained influential throughout the century, with five editions between 1801 and 1901. In 1801, Stewart saw the orthography as a work in progress, promising to 'assist the reader in forming a judgment of its merit, and how far it may admit of improvement' (1801: 30). In the first edition Stewart calls for editors and writers to use *h* with aspirated *l, n, r,* confident that the change would be welcomed. But by the second edition, Stewart's hopes of altering the written form of aspirated *l, n,* and *r*, have changed:

> It is perhaps too late, however, to urge now even so slight an alteration as this in the Orthography of the Gaelic, which ought rather to be held as fixed beyond the reach of innovation, by the happy diffusion of the Gaelic Scriptures over the Highlands. (Stewart 1812: 31)

The Rev. Alexander Stewart, along with the Rev. Alexander Irvine, had a direct influence on the form of orthography used in the spread of literacy: Alexander MacLaurin credits them with revising his *First Book for Children*, clearly appealing to their recognised authority.[11]

> The manuscript having been submitted to the revision of the Rev. Mr Stewart of Dingwall, and the Rev. Mr Irvine of Little Dunkeld, was afterwards presented by Mr M'Laurin to "The Society for the support of Gaelic Schools," and is now printed for the use of the Schools under their charge. (M'Laurin 1811: 1)

In the 1820s, there was a series of argumentative letters in the *Inverness Journal* between the Rev. Dr Alexander Irvine and the Rev. Dr Thomas Ross about the translation and orthography of the Gaelic Bible which revealed the tensions between dialects. Ross claimed that:

> One of the greatest objections to that translation is, that it is into Gaelic of a much too local nature, - that it is peculiarly adapted to the Highlands of Perthshire, while it is but partially intelligible in other parts of the Highlands. (Ross 1821: 13)

In response, the Rev. Dr Irvine, argued that the Bible was, in fact, supradialectal, differing from all dialects:

> (…) till the days of Dr Ross (…) the merit of the translation was never once called in question, though it was not faultless, and though it might differ from the dialectal variations of language in Ross, Inverness, Argyle, and Perthshire. For it differs from all; and this is just one of its excellencies. (Ross 1821: 25)

The Rev. Alexander Irvine (1773-1824) was a Church of Scotland minister and poetry collector from Fortingall, Perthshire. The son of a tenant farmer, he attended the Universities of St Andrews and Edinburgh and ministered in Mull, Rannoch and Little Dunkeld, Perthshire (Hogg 2011). While he did not author many Gaelic texts, he revised and prepared for publication the quarto edition of the

[11] Although MacLaurin doesn't follow their conventions on the use of the accent. See 8.1.

Gaelic Bible issued by the SSPCK and assisted in the *Dictionarium Scoto-Celticum* (1828) produced by the Highland Society of Scotland (Scott 1923: 159). He also collected Ossianic poetry, the MS of which is now held at the National Library of Scotland. A monument to him was erected by subscription in the parish church at Little Dunkeld (*Edinburgh Magazine* 1825: 381).

An early dictionary was Peter MacFarlane's *Focalair Ur Gaelig agus Beurla* (1815). MacFarlane (1753-1832) was a schoolmaster in Appin and he translated religious works. His dictionary has a dialectal bias towards Argyllshire Gaelic (Gillies & Pike 2012: 209). He included a short section on 'General Rules for Reading the Gaelic Language', specifying that they are mainly taken from the Gaelic Bible. Robert Armstrong (1788-1867) produced *A Gaelic Dictionary* in 1825. Originally from Perthshire, he studied at St Andrews University and worked as a schoolmaster in London (Gillies & Pike 2012: 210) His dedication to King George IV preceded his appointment as Gaelic Lexicographer in Ordinary, and Gillies & Pike suggest that he benefitted from a pro-Scottish mood after the King's famous visit to Edinburgh in 1822 (2012: 210). He had an etymological interest and was concerned with the antiquity of the Celtic languages (Gillies & Pike 2012: 211).

The Highland Society of Scotland was founded in 1784 to promote the interests and culture of the Highlands and Islands. In 1828, it published its *Dictionarium Scoto-Celticum*. It was the first Gaelic dictionary to be compiled by a team; the Rev. Dr John Macleod, minister of Dundonald, assisted by Ewen MacLachlan, the Rev. Dr Alexander Irvine of Little Dunkeld, and the Rev. Alexander Macdonald of Crieff. The overseer of the printing of the text was the Rev. Mackintosh Mackay, minister of Laggan (Gillies & Pike 2012: 212). Its prefacing grammar is an abridged version of Stewart (1801). Its spelling system was based on that of the scholars of the SSPCK bibles who it credited with creating a standard orthography.

> This deficiency was happily and in a great measure, supplied by the translation of the Scriptures, and the publication of them in Scoto-Gaelic, by the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge. The system of orthography followed there, adopted, as it was, by natives of intelligence and learning in the Scottish Highlands, and improved by successive editions of the Scriptures, has been strictly adhered to in the present work. (HSD 1828: xi)

It dealt with orthographic variation by including entries for variants that cross-referenced back to the main entry.

The Rev. Dr Norman MacLeod (1783-1862), known as 'Caraid nan Gàidheal', *The Friend of the Gaels,* was from Morvern and was a major figure in Gaelic literary production in the nineteenth century as well as developing education in the Highlands and organising relief during the potato famines in the 1830s and 1840s (see Gillies & Pike 2012: 216-7). The Rev. Dr Daniel Dewar (1788-1867) was born in Glen Dochart, Perthshire and studied at Edinburgh University (see Gillies & Pike 2012: 216-7). MacLeod and Dewar's dictionary aimed to fill the need of a small, moderately priced dictionary that condensed the existing lexicographical work done by Armstrong and the Highland Society. It was first published in 1830, with a second appearing in 1832, and twelve more between 1833 and 1910.

Neil MacAlpine (1786-1867) was a native of Islay and a schoolmaster there. In 1832, he published *The Argyllshire Pronouncing Gaelic Dictionary* in which he included a substantial 'Rudiments of Gaelic Grammar'. Intended for use in Gaelic schools, it drew on Armstrong (1825) and the Highland Society Dictionary (1828) with his own additions from Islay usage and other sources including Lewis, Skye, Lochaber, Harris, and Perthshire usages (Thomson 2004). Its usefulness and impact is reflected by the fact that it was reprinted fourteen times between 1833 and 1973.

John MacKenzie's *An English-Gaelic Dictionary* was written in 1847 to specifically accompany MacAlpine's Gaelic-English work. John MacKenzie (1806-1848) was born in Gairloch and worked as a joiner, debt collector and book-keeper before taking up a job in Edinburgh with the MacLachlan and Stewart publishing house (Gillies & Pike 2012: 221). He published several collections of poems, an edition of MacMhaighstir Alasdair's poetry (1834) and a history of the 1745 rebellion *Eachdraidh a' Phrionnsa* [The Prince's History] (Mac-Choinnich 1844). It was his *Sàr-Obair nam Bàrd Gàelach* [The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry] (1841), a major anthology of Gaelic poety, that became his calling-card. Introducing it, MacKenzie acknowledges that his edition will have 'a few derivations from what is generally recognised as the standard of Gaëlic orthography' and in order that he can 'do justice to the harmony of the versification, no acknowledged rules will apply' (MacKenzie 1841: iv).

Alasdair Roberts has argued for Father Ewen MacEachen as a 'neglected pioneer' of Scottish Gaelic orthography (Roberts 2006: 365). Father Ewan, or Evan, MacEachen [Eobhan MacEachainn] (1769-1849) was a native of Arisaig in the West Highlands (Robert 2006: 358). He trained as a priest in Valladolid, Spain, before returning to the Highlands where he built the first chapel in Laggan and practised for twenty years in Braemar (MacEachen 1902: iv). He translated several religious works into Gaelic including *An Cath Spioradail* (1835), a translation into Gaelic of *Il Combattimento Spirituale* by Dom Lorenzo Scupoli, and *Leanmhuinn Chriosta* (1836), a translation of *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis (Roberts 2006: 360). His translation of the New Testament, was also revised by the Rev. Colin Grant, Strathglass, afterwards Bishop of Aberdeen, and published in 1875 (Grant 1875).

Frustrated by publishing errors and rows with other bishops over his translations,

MacEachen published his own dictionary in 1842 (Roberts 2006: 378).[12] Although it appears to have had little impact at the time, it was published in four revised editions in the early twentieth century – after extensive orthographic revision by John Whyte and Alexander MacBain – and became the recommended schools dictionary. MacEachen's original dictionary was a response to the written conventions of the time. He was keen to label his dictionary as containing ‘pure Gaelic words’ in contrast to the errors he saw in existing bibles (MacEachen 1842: iii). He prioritised his own dialect of Arisaig and stated that vernacular speech was his guide:

> in Gaelic authors no improvement can be expected unless they throw aside the Bible and take their expressions, as I have done, from the mouth of the best Gaelic speakers. (MacEachen 1842: iv)

He regularised the spelling he found in MacLeod and Dewar. One of his conventions was to use *str* word initially replacing existing spellings with *sr-*. This was undone in the second edition of this dictionary, revised by MacBain and Whyte (MacEachen 1902: iv).

[12] The title page was erroneously dated 1862 (Roberts 2006: 365)

3.2.6.2 Literacy in the nineteenth century

The vital period for widespread literacy was the beginning of the nineteenth century, with the establishment of the Gaelic Schools Societies from 1810 and the completion of the translation of the Scriptures. The Edinburgh Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools was set up in 1810. Together with Alexander MacLaurin, the Rev. Christopher Anderson, who founded the Society, produced readers and textbooks in Gaelic (e.g. MacLaurin 1811: 1816). A year later, a similar Glasgow society was founded and another in Inverness in 1818. The Edinburgh society taught Gaelic only and those of Glasgow and Inverness taught writing, counting and English.

The relative success of the effort to spread Gaelic literacy in the nineteenth century should not be underestimated. The editor of the periodical *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* claimed a twenty-fold increase in literate Gaels between 1829 and 1835.[13] There is evidence of Gaelic literacy in even the most remote areas. In *An Teachdaire Gàidhealach*, April 1857, there is an account of a visit to 'Eilean Irt', presumably Hiort, St Kilda, from a Mr. Mac Dhaibhidh na h-Earradh. He says he visited on Tuesday 2 September 1856 on board the factor's ship the Cornwallis for communion. He visits the school, taught by a Mr Kennedy and describes the abilities of the pupils:

> Bha cuig deug thar fhichead 's 'a sgoil. Bha dha-dheug dhiubh a leughadh Beurla, ach cha robh leabhraichean freagarach aca; bha ceithir deug a sgirobhadh<sic> agus naoidh thar fhichead a leughadh Gailig. (Mac Dhaibhidh na h-Earradh 1857: 6)
>
> *There were 35 in the school. Twelve of them were reading English, but they didn't have suitable books; fourteen of them were writing and twenty nine reading Gaelic.*

The spread of evangelical Presbyterianism along with Gaelic literacy has been credited by Charles Withers as strengthening Gaelic in some areas, but also

[13] 'Tha nis anns a' Ghàidhealtachd fichead a leughas agus a sgrìobhas a' Ghàilig air son a h-aon a bh' ann 'nuair thòisich an seann Teachdair' air dol a mach.' (MacLean 1835: 2) *In the Highlands there are now twenty who read and write Gaelic for every one there was when the old Messenger was going out.*

establishing a diglossic situation. In his assessment, Highland schools teaching Gaelic scriptures:

> not only helped to reinforce Gaelic's place as a church language but further influenced Highland consciousness in making a distinction between Gaelic as the language of spiritual affairs, English of worldly advance. (Withers 1988: 151)

In Grenoble & Whaley's guide to language revitalisation *Saving Languages* (2006), they acknowledge that the role of literacy in language revitalization is complex as it can have positive effects such as prestige and negative ones such as facilitating acquisition of a majority language (Grenoble & Whaley 2006: 102-3). One of the arguments made to promote the teaching of Gaelic literacy first in schools was that it would encourage speakers to advance to reading, and learning, English. Accounts from the time appear to give evidence for this. The Rev. Dr Macleod observed in the Gaelic Schools Society's annual report in 1833:

> English reading, and English speaking have made greater progress in the Highlands and Isles of Scotland, since the system of Gaelic teaching has been acted upon – that is, during the last twenty years – than it did for centuries before then. (quoted Withers 1984: 148)

Personal accounts of Gaelic literacy being a path to English can also be found such as this one from the Gaelic periodical *An Teachdaire Gaidhealach* published in Australia:

> An deigh dhomh comas fhaighinn air a Ghaelic a leughadh, cha'n fhoghnadh so leam gu'n oidheirp a thoirt air a' Bheurla; cha robh moran leabhraichean Gaelic 'ra fhaotainn.' ('An Ceannaiche Og Gaedhealach' 1857: 6)
>
> *After I was able to read Gaelic, I wasn't satisfied without making an effort to learn English; there weren't many Gaelic books available.*

3.2.7 The Twentieth Century

By the start of the twentieth century, some provision was beginning to be made for the teaching of Gaelic in schools. This revived the more pragmatic educational motives for uniformity and simplicity in order to achieve literacy. MacBain and Whyte's third edition of MacEachen's Dictionary (1906 [1842]) was recommended

by the Education Department as an orthographic guide for the Leaving Certificate Examination in Gaelic (Gillies & Pike 2012: 227).

Alexander MacBain (1855-1907) was from Badenoch in the North Highlands (MacBain 1911: vi). The son of a farm worker, he worked for the Ordnance Survey in Scotland and Wales before attending King's College, Aberdeen, and graduating MA with honours in philosophy. He was rector at Raining's school, Inverness, until his death. An active participant in the Gaelic Society of Inverness he wrote many papers on Gaelic philology and edited the *Celtic Magazine* and *Highland Monthly*. He published in 1896 the first *Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language*. The first edition was sold out within a year and a revised edition was published in 1911.

One of the key influential linguistic works appeared in the first decade of the century. Edward Dwelly (1864-1939) was a native of Twickenham, Middlesex and learner of Gaelic. He was a soldier with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, then the Seaforth Highlanders and he married a native Gaelic speaker from Ardchattan in Argyll in 1896 (Gillies & Pike 2012: 227). The dictionary he created appeared in instalments between 1901 and 1911. The complete dictionary was reprinted in a three volume set in 1911 and he was awarded a pension by King Edward (Gillies & Pike 2012: 234). His dictionary did not provide etymological information, and along with existing texts, he collected words from a network of informants. From this, it appears his interest was with the language as it existed, rather than its philological and antiquarian value. His legacy was to have created what would be the lexicographical authority in Scottish Gaelic of the twentieth century.

Other dictionaries produced in the twentieth century showed an interest in collecting dialectal variation. The Rev. Malcolm MacLennan (1862-1931) from Cnip, Lewis revised the Gaelic Bible and published books of hymns, and edited *An Deò-ghrèine* between 1906 and 1908. His connections to the Western Isles and other scholars from the North-West Highlands and Islands meant that his dictionary was the first such to record many Hebridean words (Gillies & Pike 2012: 238). Heinrich (Henry) Cyril Dieckhoff (1869-1950) was a German phonetician and a priest at Fort Augustus abbey. In 1932, he published *A Pronouncing Dictionary of Scottish Gaelic*, based on the Glengarry dialect. His motivation was the preservation of the traditional pronuncation of older speakers.

3.2.8 The GOC Era

In 1976, the Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board (SCEEB) (later the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)) set up, at the request of their Gaelic Panel, a sub-committee to draw up guidelines on Gaelic spelling. Donald MacAulay describes the impetus as coming from the dissatisfaction of school examiners with pupils' literacy:

> the Scottish Certificate of Education examiners have been so unhappy with the problem that they have prevailed on the Examination Board's Gaelic Panel to establish a committee to look into the matter. (MacAulay 1976: 85)

The first report, entitled *Gaelic Orthographic Conventions* and known as GOC, was published in 1981. It was intended to be used in the SCEEB's exam questions from 1985 and used by candidates from 1988. The remit was not to radically reform or remake the orthography but to produce a set of standard orthographic conventions which would be utilised by the Board's examiners, setters and markers as basic criteria in dealing with Gaelic examination papers and scripts and would serve as a guide to teachers and to candidates preparing for the examinations.

The existence of the report provided a benchmark against which subsequent publications defined themselves; editors and authors often explaining if they were following GOC and what exceptions if any they were choosing to make. The GOC reforms can be described as largely successful in the sense that they have been widely disseminated and adopted – at least recognised as an authority if not carefully followed in practice.

In 1982, the Gaelic Books Council (at that time based at the Department of Celtic, University of Glasgow and know in Gaelic as An Comunn Leabhraichean), published a booklet entitled *Facal air an Fhacal* covering publishing-related news. It included an article, in English, on the 'New Spelling' which the issue itself largely follows. The article notes that:

> it seemed worthwhile, in this first issue of *Facal air an Fhacal*, to provide some information on the report which recommends the changes and about which very little seems to be known outside educational circles (Anon. 1982: 23)

The article uses quote marks for 'new spelling' as it subsequently reassures readers that:

> some of the conventions recommended are widespread already: for example *seo* and *siud* for *so* and *sud* and the use of <a> for unstressed vowels which is already quite well established, although far from universal (Anon 1982: 23-4).

The recommendations highlighted in the article are those where one form is preferred over variety, and the wariness of orthographic diversity is seen in its description of GOC's convention on the use of hyphens:

> Hyphens are introduced in 'certain expressions which are strongly felt to constitute a unit but have primary stress on a non-initial element', and the adoption of this recommendation would eliminate **the confusing diversity** which obtains at present. (Anon 1982: 24) bold added

In the early 1990s, it was felt that the orginal report required extending. A sub-committe of the Gaelic Panel of the Scottish Examination Board was created, convened by Ronald Black, University of Edinburgh, Kenneth MacDonald, University of Glasgow, Iain MacIlleChiar, Northern College of Education and Rosemary Ward, Strathclyde Regional Council. However, the Principal Examiners for Gaelic responded that the changes recommended were too substantial when familiarity with GOC 1981 was recent. They strongly rejected many of the points made and criticised what they considered a lack of consultation, believing that the proposals would not be accepted by teaching staff. The report was not published.

The second publication in 2005 superseded the first GOC report. The brief for the panel carrying out the work was that 'the document should be reviewed and updated, whilst adhering to the principles and recommendations contained in the original' (SQA 2005: 1). The Project Consultant was Donald John Maciver, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. The steering group comprised Annie MacSween, Lews Castle College, Boyd Robertson, University of Strathclyde and Ian MacDonald of the Gaelic Books Council. A third edition of GOC was published in October 2009 with the same steering group and project consultant. This third edition made minor amendments to the 2005 report.

4 Ideologies in Gaelic Spelling

> Pleine de cédilles et de fureur, l'histoire de l'orthographe française est avant tout une bataille des idées. (Cerquiglini 2004: 7)
>
> *Full of cedillas and fury, the history of French orthography is above all a battle of ideas.*

This chapter asks which are the language ideologies that have been at work in the standardisation of modern Scottish Gaelic orthography. Beliefs about language, known as language ideologies, shape all aspects of how people use language and talk about language. They include beliefs about how written language is spelled, how it should be spelled and who influences and manages the application of these beliefs to shape the creation of the standard. The ideas are often at odds with one another. In this way, the comment made by Cerquiglini about French orthography above is also true in this case: the history of Scottish Gaelic orthography is a battle of ideas and the path towards compromise between the competing ideologies is difficult. Thus Black refers to the reform of Classical Gaelic to vernacular Scottish Gaelic as 'the long and painful process of adaptation' (Black 2008: 74).

There are several beliefs and narratives that illustrate language ideologies in relation to the development and standardisation of Scottish Gaelic spellings. The motivations that underlie these ideologies are the need to defend Gaelic as a valid language and the desire to maintain Gaelic as a living language.

This chapter considers the following: what does 'standard' mean in terms of Gaelic spelling; what role do the phonographic system and the phonographic ideal have in Scottish Gaelic standardisation; what place does variation have within spelling conventions; what place do historicity and etymology play; and how does orthographic standardisation relate to language status.

4.1 ’Standard’ Language in the Scottish Gaelic context

As was discussed in Chapter 2, having a standard confers social prestige on a language; it is a mark of a civilised and fully developed language and, therefore, defends it and its speakers from those seeking to denigrate it. However, 'standard' can be understood in different ways. It can be a **codified prestige variety** based

on that of high-status speakers such as in English or French. It can have the meaning of the **'correct' form of language** as in Milroy's definition of the ideology of the standard. Or it can mean a **set of conventions** used to facilitate interaction, in the same way as standard weights and measures.

The popular European understanding of standard languages is that they are the models of correct language that are based on rules. 'Standard' spelling in Gaelic is understood in different ways. The translation of the terms *standard* and *conventions* into Gaelic can reveal writers' attitudes as to their meaning. In the early nineteenth century, the idea of the standard as correct language is evident in the use of the term *ceart-sgrìobhadh*, 'correct writing', to mean spelling or orthography. This is found in several dictionaries including; Shaw (1780) which has *Ceartſgriobham* for 'spell', MacLeod & Dewar (1831) which has both *litirich, ceart-sgrìobh* for 'spell' and Dwelly (1911) which has *ceart-sgrìobhadh* and *litreachadh* for 'orthography'. The online dictionary LearnGaelic.net also currently includes *ceart-sgrìobhadh* as 1. correct writing 2. orthography. The only example so far located of *ceart-sgrìobhadh* in a text other than a dictionary is in *An Teachdaire Gàidhealach* (Australia) where it is used but also glossed in English for the reader as 'spelling' ('Naigheachdan' 1857b: 8).

The use of *litreachadh* for 'spelling', from *litir*, 'letter', is more frequent in the late nineteenth and twentieth century. It is used in the corpus, for example, by Archibald Sinclair in *An t-Òranaiche* (1879), and by Donald MacKinnon in his introduction to *Am Fear-Ciùil* (1910). It continues to be the most common translation of spelling in the twenty-first century, used by Cox in *Ri Linn nan Linntean* (2005), along with *modh-litreachaidh*, 'way of writing' (2005: xii). In *Saoghal Bana-mharaiche* (2007) *litreachadh,* 'spelling', is also contrasted with *nòsan,* 'conventions'.

Orthography is also regularly interpreted as 'rules'. In their dictionary, MacLeod & Dewar say they adhere to the 'rules' prescribed by the Gaelic Bible (MacLeod & Dewar (1831: vi). MacDonald complains that varied usage gives the impression that no-one ever laid down any *riaghailt*, 'rule' (MacDonald 1875: 118). Despite the GOC committee's choice of the word *conventions* and the Gaelic translation of *gnàthachas* to describe their report contents, as in other spelling reform contexts, the prescriptive intent led some to the metaphor of legalistic language and 'rules',

for example Donald Meek, who described GOC in a radio interview as *riaghaltan ùra*, 'new rules' (Dealan-dè 1986). In the next example, the legalistic metaphor 'ruling' is used to describe the recommendations:

> Initially accents sloping both right and left were used, however the ruling now allows only those sloping in one direction. (Garvie 1999: 7)

The title of GOC is translated as such by the author in this example (*Riaghailtean-stiùiridh* – guiding rules):

> Bu mhath leam a ràdh gum bi mi a' cumail cho dìleas 's as urrainn dhomh ri Riaghailtean-stiùiridh Litreachadh na Gàidhlig (GOC), a dh'fhoillsicheadh an 1981 agus a-rithist an 2005, agus gur e sin an fheallsanachd a tha fa-near dhomh anns an leabhar seo cuideachd. (Boyd 2006: 15)
>
> *I'd like to say that I keep as faithfully as I can to the 'Guiding Rules of Gaelic Spelling' (GOC), that were published in 1981 and again in 2005, and that will be my philosophy in this book too.*

In contrast, there exists the translation *bun-tomhas*; a compound of *bun,* 'base, foundation' and *tomhas*, 'measurement', which reflects Milroy & Milroy's idea that the standard is 'a set of abstract norms to which actual usage may conform to a greater or lesser extent' (1991: 23). Colm Ó Baoill describes his editorial policy in *Duanaire Colach* (1997) as following the *bun-tomhas*:

> Tha litreachadh annasach ann an HM, agus san deasachadh seo tha mi ag iarraidh bun-tomhas na Gàidhlig a leantainn san litreachadh. (Ó Baoill 1997: 49)
>
> *There is unusual spelling in HM [the original MS], and in this edition I want to follow the standard of Gaelic in the spelling.*

The actual choice of the GOC reports, *gnàthachas*, is rarely used. A semantically similar choice, however, *nòsan*, 'customs, manners, habits', is used here by Seòsamh Watson:

> ’s ann a rinn mi an litreachadh a leasachadh cho fada is a b’ urrainn ach am biodh e ag aontachadh ris na nòsan a tha gan craobh-sgaoileadh an-diugh. (Watson 1997: 33)
>
> *What I did was amend the spelling as much as I could till it agreed with the conventions that are circulated today.*

Watson's characterisation of *nòsan*, rather than rules, is in keeping with the flexible approach he uses to convey the vernacular speech of his informants in writing.

4.1.1 A Codified Prestige Standard

It is generally accepted that when the orthography was modernised in the mid-eighteenth century, the variety the orthography was based on was southern, based in mainland Argyllshire and Perthshire. However, there are few examples of this variety being chosen due to a belief in its superiority or prestige. Rather, the writers at the time give prestige to the vernacular, to the general 'Scottish idiom', in contrast to Classical norms perceived as 'Irish'.

4.1.1.1 **Autonomy from Irish Gaelic**

One of the categories of legitimacy that modern language can claim according to Fishman is autonomy from other languages (Section 2.2). This can lead to Gaelic writers seeking to distance Scottish from Irish Gaelic. However, it is not so simple to ascribe this motivation to the frequent comments to removing 'Irishisms' in the standardisation debate. Often, when using the term 'Irishism', the writer is referring to a Classical Gaelic form that they wish to replace with a vernacular Scottish form. It could also reflect the strong anti-Catholic sentiments of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the discourse, however, and for whatever reasons, autonomy from the Irish language is frequently raised in orthographic discussions of the early nineteenth-century. The first example, from Shaw's eighteenth-century grammar disagrees with the example of MacFarlane's translations:

> The Rev. Mr. Macfarlane, in his translations and psalms, uniformly uses *ibh* in the dative and ablative plural; which I think resembles too much the Irish dialect. *Do na muilaichibh, leis na caimbeulaichibh*, would have a harsh sound to any provincialist of Scotland. (Shaw 1778: 19)

MacFarlane's translations have been noted as being Classical Gaelic, so it appears that Shaw uses *Irish* to refer to outdated forms. Another influential figure, the Rev. Dr Alexander Irvine who authored a revision of the Bible for the SSPCK and contributed to the Highland Society's dictionary (1828), was also keen to see antiquated, 'Irish', spellings removed from the orthography. He wrote to the Rev.

Dr John MacLeod who was then in charge of the Highland Society Dictionary telling him he was too antiquated and 'Irish' in his spelling:

> He wished for the Scottish Gaelic language to look presentable to the modern world, and to have an orthography that showed its independence from Irish Gaelic. (Hogg 2011: 121)

Irvine's contemporary, the grammarian Rev. Alexander Stewart agreed (see 3.6.2.1 for a brief biography of Stewart). For Stewart and his contemporaries, they mentioned no 'classical' or shared Gaelic writing tradition, only the inheritance of 'Irish' orthography. In Stewart's account of the vernacularisation and modernisation of the written language, the underlying narrative was a process of separation from Irish:

> The Scottish writers of Gaelic in general followed the Irish orthography, till after the middle of the last century. However that system may suit the dialect of Ireland, it certainly is not adapted to the Gaelic of this country. In the Gaelic translation of the New Testament, printed in 1767, not only were most of the Irish idioms and inflections, which had been admitted into the Scottish Gaelic writings, rejected, and the language adapted to the dialect of the Scottish Highlands; but the orthography also was adapted to the language. In later publications, the manner of writing the language was gradually assimilated to that pattern. The Gaelic Version of the Sacred Scriptures lately published has exhibited a model, both of style and orthography, still more agreeable to the purest Scottish idiom. (Stewart 1801: 39)

Despite Stewart's assessment of the success of the Bible translators, he would later revise the spelling of the 1820 Pentateuch. The 1826 revision of the Bible, authorised by the Church of Scotland, found even more 'Irish' to remove:

> This edition, although at first intended to be merely a reprint of that of 1807, with the orthography altered to the system adopted by Dr. Stewart in the revised text of the Pentateuch of 1820, is not strictly a reprint, as material alterations were made in expunging, chiefly in the New Testament, what were considered to be Irish idioms, and substituting idioms purely Gaelic. (Reid 1832: 9)

Yet again, when this edition was considered by Father Ewan MacEachen, he too found even more Irishisms to be expunged:

> I saw that the Gaelic Bible, though looked upon as the standard of the Gaelic language, had many errors. It has many Irishisms. (MacEachen 1842: iii)

MacEachen's objections were aimed at the 1801 publication and at the 1826 edition. His contemporary, the poetry editor and lexicographer, John MacKenzie agreed with his assessment, complaining about:

> [...] the Bible, where many words set down in the Irish style are still to be met with, to the annoyance of intelligent readers and prejudice of the Scottish Gaelic (MacKenzie's preface in MacAlpine 1866: x)

MacKenzie praises the Islay schoolmaster Neil MacAlpine's *Pronouncing Gaelic Dictionary* (1832) as 'the first to present a Dictionary divested of antiquated Irishisms' (MacAlpine 1866: x). In his much re-printed collection of Gaelic poetry *Sàr-Obair nam Bàrd Gaelach*, MacKenzie himself aimed to 'throw out the Irish' (MacKenzie 1841: v).

The first half of the nineteenth century is where most of the comments about 'pure' Gaelic and the need for removing Irishisms is found. MacBain is the last to openly make the same comments:

> Celtic scholars, if they find nothing else in the present Dictionary, will, at least, find a nearly pure vocabulary of Scottish Gaelic, purged of the mass of Irish words that appear in our larger dictionaries. (...) I guarded especially against admitting Irish words, with which dictionaries like those of Shaw and Armstrong swarm. (MacBain 1911: ix-x)

In this section, we have seen that Scottish Gaelic linguists and editors from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century sought to emphasise the distinctiveness of Scottish from Irish Gaelic. By doing so, they rejected the linguistic authority of the previous prestigious variety and based the new standard on the notion of a 'pure' vernacular Gaelic. The new variety they choose as 'standard' was not the variety of a prestige social elite. Shaw, Irvine and Stewart were ministers, MacEachen was a priest and they were all interested in spreading the word of God through an accessible vernacular written norm. The elevation of the 'purest Scottish idiom' (Stewart 1801: 39), however, led to the new standard being open to challenge, as the several revisions and criticisms of the Bible show. In the later decades of the nineteenth century, the linguistic authority of the new modern Scottish Gaelic standard orthography faced the fragmenting drive of the 'pure' dialects.

4.1.2 Codified Conventions

Whether a standard exists or not is often disputed depending on how much a writer agrees with the existing conventions and how much variation he considers acceptable. Writers may wish to exaggerate the want of a standard in order to make their recommendations and reforms seem necessary. The Rev. Dr Alexander Irvine, before making his own recommendations, is keen to disparage existing usage:

> Those volumes of original beautiful poems, which have, at separate times, been offered to the public, are many of them so mutilated, **the orthography so imperfect**, the sense, in some instances, so obscure, that unless they are revised, corrected, or unfolded, their beauties must, ere long, cease to be relished or understood. (Irvine 1801: 12, bold added)

Therefore, his plans for the book *Caledonian Bards* included the 'settling' of the orthography.

> IV. to demonstrate the capacity of the Gaelic language, and subjoin a scheme for enlarging its bounds, and settling its orthography. (Irvine 1801: 4)

This quote also shows how a standard is part of the validation of a language as within the same point Irvine wants to demonstrate the *capacity* of the language, not simply to improve consistency. The preface to the Highland Society Dictionary also dismisses the early volumes of poetry as following 'no system of orthography':

> It is in course of the use and cultivation of languages by writing, that a system of orthography becomes fixed, and properly conventional. Such a benefit, has been denied by circumstances to the Scoto-Gaelic; its written records being few, and the practice of writing it in latter times having been disused, if we except the few volumes that in recent years have, from time to time, been given to the public, of the native poetry and songs; wherein no system of orthography was followed, because the reading or writing of Gaelic was unusual with the compilers. (HSD 1828: xi)

However, the Highland Society Dictionary editors go on to say that the Gaelic edition of the Bible remedied this situation and provide a standard system:

> This deficiency was happily and in a great measure, supplied by the translation of the Scriptures, and the publication of them in Scoto-

> Gaelic, by the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge. The system of orthography followed there, adopted, as it was, by natives of intelligence and learning in the Scottish Highlands, and improved by successive editions of the Scriptures, has been strictly adhered to in the present work. (HSD 1828: xi)

A couple of years later, another dictionary edited by ministers, MacLeod and Dewar, emphasise the 'justly recognised standard of Gaelic orthography, the Gaelic Bible':

> We consider that one of the excellencies of this Dictionary is an uniform adherence to the justly recognised standard of Gaelic orthography, the Gaelic Bible. The venerable translators of the Scriptures, who were so competent to form an accurate judgment on this subject, gave it the most serious consideration during the many years they were engaged in their beneficent labours: and feeling as we do, the propriety of entirely acquiescing in their decision, as well as the advantages which result from uniformity in orthography, we have invariably conformed to the rules which they have prescribed. (MacLeod & Dewar 1831: vi)

However, John Mackenzie (1806-1848) ascribes the 'variety of orthographies' used later in the nineteenth century as partly due to 'the want of a standard' (1877b: 333). The perception of a standard is still relative, however, with other writers believing that there were 'now almost universally received standards' (Alastair Og 1877: 28). The existence of a standard did not guarantee its dissimulation or application. By the late nineteenth century, the same complaints about idiosyncratic spellings are found as, for example, in this paper presented to the Gaelic Society of Inverness by its treasurer, John MacDonald:

> Mar a thubhairt 'Alpein Og', o chionn ghoirid, bha 'n doigh sgrìobhaidh cho caochlaidheach ri breithnachaidhean an luchd-sgrìobhaidh. Ma choimeaseas sibh leabhraichean Gàilig a chaidh chuir a mach an Inbhirnis, an Glascho, 's an Dùneidin, shaoileadh sibh nach deach riaghailt a chuir sios riamh chum sgrìobhaidh na Gàilige a theagasg, ach gu 'n robh gach aon air fhàgail gu saors' a thoil, gu dheanamh mar a bha ceart na shuilean fein. (...) Tha againn fathast ann ar measg beagan do sgoilearan Gàilig, ach tearc mar a ta iad cha chord iad mu 'n doigh a's fearr air sgrìobhadh na cànaine (MacDonald 1875: 118)
>
> *As 'Alpin Og' said recently, the orthography was as variable as the judgments of the writers. If you compare Gaelic books produced in Inverness, Glasgow and Edinburgh, you would think that no rule was ever made to teach Gaelic writing, but that everyone was left to their own desires to do whatever was right in their own eyes. (...) We still have in our midst a few Gaelic scholars, but as rare as they are they don't agree on the best way to write the language.*

At the meeting of the Society, members backed MacDonald and the legitimacy of the Bible as the linguistic authority:

> The meeting [of GSI] expressed strong approval of the writer's suggestion, that the orthography of the Gaelic edition of the Bible should be the basis of Gaelic orthography in general. (MacDonald 1875: 121)

In the first half of the nineteenth century, influential writers such as the religious translators, lexicographers and grammarians hoped to create a standard orthography in the sense of a set of 'correct' rules.

4.2 The Phonographic System

Many of the world's writing systems are based on a phonographic system where there are established conventional relationships between graphic and phonic units (see Coulmas 2003: 89-108). There is also the phonographic ideal which measures the 'success' of a writing system on how closely it adheres to the ideal (discussed in 2.1). As the phonographic ideal will always be impossible to reach, there will inevitably be a compromise with the other factors necessary for standardisation.

Modern Scottish Gaelic orthography is founded on graphic-phonic correspondence based on the vernacular speech of the writers, grammarians and lexicographers from the mid-eighteenth to the early nineteenth century. This section will give examples of how early reformers invoked graphic-phonic correspondence in order to vernacularise the orthography to meet their literacy goals and how Gaelic's perceived 'success' measured by the phonographic ideal is used to defend it from attack.

4.2.1 Phonography and Vernacularisation

From the mid-eighteenth century to the early nineteenth, greater graphic-phonic correspondence was part of the reforms of the writing system from Classical to vernacular Scottish Gaelic along with grammatical changes. For example, in Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's introduction to his *Ais-éiridh na Sean Chánoin Albannaich*, he states his changes are partly to show 'the more usual pronunciation of the generality of the highlanders' (Mac-Dhonuill 1751: x). When the Rev. Alexander Stewart outlined his principles of orthography in his introductory section on

'Pronunciation and Orthography' to his *Elements of Gaelic Grammar* (1801), they were all based on the representation of sound in writing.

Vernacularisation in the form of greater graphic-phonic correspondence was also seen as an essential step towards making literacy easier to acquire. Thus, in Alexander McLaurin's *First Book for Children in the Gaelic Language* (1811) for example, his rationale for changing <do> to <a dh'> before a vowel is that is makes Gaelic reading smooth and easy:

> Chum leughadh na Gaelic a dheanamh réidh agus furus, tha e féumail gu tugamaid fainear do atharrachadh a ta air a dheanamh air an roimh-fhocal bheag “do,” air an doigh so; an ait’ a radh, do Albainn, do Eirin, do ionnsuidh, is e an gnath a scriobhadh, agus a labhairt mar so, a dh’ Albainn, a dh’ Eirin, a dh’ ionnsuidh. (McLaurin 1811: 26)
>
> *So that the reading of Gaelic is made smooth and easy, it is useful for us to recognise a change that has been made to the little preposition "do," in this way; instead of saying do Albainn, do Eirin, do ionnsuidh, it is the convention to write, and say like this, a dh’ Albainn, a dh’ Eirin, a dh’ ionnsuidh.*

When Father Ewen MacEachen advocated reforms in his 1842 dictionary, he had a mistrust of the 'Irishisms' and 'Englishisms' he saw in existing dictionaries and Bibles. He took vernacular speech 'from the mouth of the best Gaelic speakers' as his guide (MacEachen 1842: iv). From this, he used graphic-phonic correspondence as a guide and justification for his choices:

> My principal aim in this Dictionary is to make the spelling echo with the sound in all cases where uniformity is wanting (MacEachen 1842: vi-vii)

However, MacEachen's guide to which sound should be used was firmly based on 'my own dialect, with its proper and uniform orthography' (MacEachen 1842: iv). This illustrates how the drive for vernacularism could also result in the promotion of dialects which then competed for acceptance within standardisation, as will be discussed in the following sections.

4.2.2 The Phonographic Ideal in Scottish Gaelic

The phonographic ideal is one of the main ways that orthographies are judged to be successful; evaluating an orthography according to how well it meets the ideal of one grapheme, one sound (see Section 2.1.3). This section will consider the role

of the phonographic ideal in Scottish Gaelic. In the historiography of Scottish Gaelic orthography, there is a complex relationship between recognising the impossibility of the phonographic ideal and appealing to it to defend the language's status.

The limitations of the phonographic ideal are discussed by the Rev. Alexander Stewart in his grammar when he asks:

> How near ought the written language to correspond to the spoken; and where may a disagreement between them be allowed with propriety? (Stewart 1801: 26)

Stewart makes significant effort to discuss the factors involved with his readers. He is likely to have expected his readers to also be scholars and educated people. He uses his introduction to persuade his readers of the necessity for continuing to modernise the orthography and engages with the theoretical questions of what spelling in an alphabetic system is trying to do: balancing the codification of speech with the impossibility of following all the changes and variabilities of speech particularly as he is aware that there is:

> a diversity of pronunciation (...) in different districts of the Highlands of Scotland, even in uttering the same words written in the same manner (Stewart 1801: 2).

He concludes that the 'disagreement' between letter and sounds is necessary for the sake of 'preserving some degree of uniformity' (1801: 29).

The authors of the Highland Society dictionary similarly noted that a perfect phonographic ideal is not possible although a 'regular system', in other words a codified relationship between sound and grapheme, allows for writing to function as graphic communication:

> though it be not possible to represent sound, by any notation of letters, with sufficient accuracy and plainness; yet the greatest facility attainable, in the absence of oral communication, is afforded by a regular system of such notation. (HSD 1828: xi)

MacAulay argues against the phonographic ideal, recognising that the relationship between the sound and the representation of it in writing should not be overstated

or even aimed for: ‘It is essential therefore not to confuse speech and writing and not to act as if they were the same’ (1976-78: 82):

> Even if it were true that an orthographic system were to begin as a direct representation of the spoken word (i.e. be something like a broad phonetic transcription) since it is a system with conventional characteristics, which are necessarily conservative in nature in order to maintain the integrity of the system, and since a basic feature of spoken language is that it changes, then, before long, the directly representational nature of the system must change (MacAulay 1976-78: 83).

It appears then, that the phonographic ideal has been recognised as being impossible to achieve; that graphic-phonic correspondence will be bound by the requirements for uniformity and regularity which are necessary for functional written communication. However, this has not meant it has not remained as a measure of success with which to compare the Scottish Gaelic writing system to others.

4.2.3 Phonography as Gaelic Superiority

As was noted in 2.2.1, standardisation is a key element in European societies' understanding of what makes a certain language variety a valid language and the phonographic ideal is one of the ways in which a language standard is measured. Therefore, relative success in terms of the phonographic ideal can be used to praise and defend a language from attacks on its legitimacy. The phonographic ideal is often invoked to praise the Scottish Gaelic system. Writers and commentators argue for the superiority of regular graphic-phonic correspondence in Gaelic as compared to others, in particular, as compared to English spelling. In this way, they defend Gaelic from being attacked as nonsensical (see also Section 4.5).

Shaw is the first to elucidate this. He argues that, according to its internal orthographic conventions, Gaelic has more regular and consistent correlation between spelling and pronunciation than Irish, English or French:[14]

[14] Conversely, after Irish Gaelic underwent significant reform in the twentieth century, its greater phonographic correspondence could be used to show its superiority to Scottish Gaelic as in this example: 'Le Gàidhlig "standard" air a teagasg anns na sgoiltean air fad, agus litreachadh ùr simplidh (nas fhasa na an dòigh-litreachadh uabhasach duilich a tha againn ann an Alba co-

> Unlike the Irish, the Scotch Galic delights to pronounce every letter, and is not bridled over with so many useless and quiescent consonants. The English and French are infinitely more difficult to read and pronounce and have many more silent and mute letters. In the Galic there are no such ugly looking words as thought, through, strength, &c. nor sounds so different from what the letters at other times express. (Shaw 1778: xx-xxi)

Although Malcolm MacFarlane created his own phonographic system, he still praised the 'general consistency' of the existing writing system and pointed out its superiority over English:

> The orthography of the Gaelic language does not consistently correspond to the spoken sounds. [...] Eighteen letters are made to fulfil more than double that number of functions. Phonetic evolution is, to a certain extent, recorded graphically. Yet, notwithstanding these circumstances, such is the general consistency of the system that it is easier to learn the reading of Gaelic than that of English. (MacFarlane 1889: 67)

At the start of the twentieth century the editor of the *Celtic Annual* also noted that the success of Scottish Gaelic in meeting the phonographic ideal places it ahead of other languages:

> Phonetically, the spelling of our Scottish Gaelic is far in advance of Irish Gaelic, and very far indeed in advance of English. In fact it may be said that the men under whose hands our spelling system developed knew some phonetic facts which have hardly dawned on the ordinary English phonetician's mind, and gave effect to them in the spelling of our language. And yet some of those English phoneticians have the impudence to say, before knowing anything of our language's spelling system, that it is the most unphonetic of all. (MacLeod 1913: 8)

This then forms a reinforcing pattern: the better the adherence to graphic-phonic correspondence, the more 'worthy' the orthography (and by implication, the language) is considered to be; and the more adherence to this ideal is considered the measure of a good orthography, the more inconsistencies and exceptions need to be 'ironed out' or 'tidied up' so as not to threaten the status that the ideal confers. Thus, the change from *tigh* to *taigh*, *so* to *seo*, to adhere to the conventional graphic-phonic correspondence. In another example, Stewart terms

---

dhiù) [*With 'Standard' Gaelic taught in all the schools, and a new simple spelling (easier anyway than the terribly difficult spelling we have in Scotland*] (MacAoidh 1978: 74)

as 'defects' elements that do not adhere to the phonographic ideal, as in this example regarding the unmarked mutation of <l>, <n> and <r>:

> both classes of consonants are alike mutable in their pronunciation; and their mutation ought to have been marked in the orthography, though it has not. This defect in Gaelic orthography has been often observed and regretted, though it has never been corrected. (Stewart 1812: 3)

When recent writers describe spelling changes as *sgioblachadh*, 'tidying', what they are usually referring to is greater adherence to a graphic-phonic correspondence. It is the adherence to this principle that usually wins the battle of ideas and motivates nearly all of the changes and adjustments that shape Gaelic orthography through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

4.2.4 Phonography, Dialects and Uniformity

The basis of the graphic-phonic correspondence was on the phonological features of southern Gaelic dialects, particularly Argyll and Perthshire. However, as part of vernacularisation, dialects were given prestige as the 'true pronunciation' in contrast to the conventions that Classical Gaelic encoded, as in this quote from Irvine:

> It will endeavor to ascertain the leading characteristics of the provincial dialects, the true pronunciation, of the Gaelic Language. (Irvine 1801: 6)

As the same time as giving the dialects prestige, Irvine is conscious of the need to know what they have in common, in the form of their 'leading characteristics'. That Gaelic writers have continually needed to find a balance is illustrated by Archibald Sinclair. Prefacing *An t-Oranaiche* [The Songster] (1879), Sinclair writes:

> dh'fheuch mi ris a' Ghàilig a litreachadh mar a tha i air a fuaimneachadh ann an ceàrnaibh air leth. So puing a tha duilich a laimhseachadh gun ceòlmhoireachd agus co-sheirm cuid do na h-òrain a mhilleadh, (…) agus ged nach biodh gach ni a réir meidhean-tomhais nan tiolpairean, bu mhaith leam gu 'n cuimhneachadh iad an sean-fhacal—"Saoilidh am fear a bhios 'n a thàmh gur e féin is feàrr làmh air an stiùir." (Mac-na-Ceàrdadh 1879: vii)
>
> *I tried to spell the Gaelic as it is sounded in separate districts. This is a difficult point to manage without ruining the musicality and harmony of some of the songs, (…) although not everything might comply with*

> *the yardstick of the grumblers, I'd like them to remember the proverb - "The man who's at rest thinks he is the best at the helm".*

This is discussed further in section 4.3 and in the study of the use of <eu> and <ia> in Chapter 6.

4.2.5 The Compromises of Phonography

Phonographic correspondence is generally understood to be an impossible ideal and several writers discuss how it is limited. Instead, they agree that Gaelic has a phonographic basis while recognising that it will be a mixed system; compromised by the inherent differences between speech and writing, the continuity of retaining historical features, the avoidance of homographs and the compromise between dialects. The notion of phonographic ideal as a measure by which writing systems are judged, however, is invoked on occasions when the writer is seeking to defend the legitimacy of Gaelic. There has, over the decades, been a shift to greater graphic-phonic correspondence. It is used to remove exceptions from the conventions of graphic-phonic correspondence but is set aside when reducing homonyms.

4.3 Dialects and Acceptable Variation

Dialect usage can threaten the status of written standard as variation and uniformity is seen to weaken it. This in turn can threaten the validity of the language itself. Yet, dialects in Gaelic carry prestige as authentic forms of the language. This stems from the eighteenth century spelling reformers. They appealed to vernacular language use as an authority to counter the prestige Classical Gaelic standard as opposed to prestigious authors. This was followed in the mid-nineteenth century by the interests in folklore spurred by John F. Campbell's *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*. Once again, authority and authenticity came from vernacular sources and this was reflected in orthographic choices to reproduce tales as they were told. In this section, examples where variation in orthography has been both discouraged and encouraged are discussed.

4.3.1 The Curbing of Dialects

One of the ways in which a standard is maintained is the discouragement or prohibition of dialects. Non-standard usages in Gaelic are disparagingly called localisms or provincialisms as a relatively mild way of discouraging their usage. There are also examples of writers explicitly warning of the fragmentation that dialectal writing threatens. In the arguments between the Rev. Dr Alexander Irvine and the Rev. Dr Thomas Ross over the Bible translations, Irvine warns of consequences of dialectal variation:

> Were this overture listened to, what would be the consequence? Why, this, that as in the county of Ross various dialects prevail, and as this translation of Dr Ross cannot be adapted to them all, the same complaint would never cease to exist. (Ross 1821: 4)

A similar point is made by MacLeod in 1913 where he sees too much dialectal variation at work and 'confusion and delay' with the lack of a common standard:

> At present nearly every person who attempts Gaelic work of a kind, which in other languages would be confined strictly to the literary style, uses his or her own provincial or local dialect. Provincial and local dialects have their values and uses, and inside their own sphere they ought to be recognised; but nothing but confusion and delay can result if there be not a literary dialect as in all other languages, forming a central standard round which all can rally, no matter what their colloquial style of speech may be. (MacLeod 1913: 7)

Dialectal variation could be a chance for humour as in Eoghan a' Chaolais' reply to another contributor's lofty ambitions in *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* (1835-). In a sarcastic joke, he blames the Ross-shire folk for pushing spelling reform.

> Tha "Mactalla" 'g ìnnseadh gu'n d' ionnsuich e iomad òran o bhuachaillean Thyre. Tha mi 'deanamh dhe gur e so cuid de'n speileadh ùr tha muinntir shiorramachd Rois a' feuchainn a chur oirnn, oir 's ann a b' àbhaist duinne a sgrìobhadh, Tirie (Eoghan a' Chaolais 1835: 43).[15]
>
> *'MacTalla' tells us that he learnt many songs from the shepherds of Tyre [Greek philosophers]. I guess this must be some of the new spelling that the Ross-shire folks are giving us, because we used to write Tiree.*

This exemplifies a theme where unfamiliar or unapproved of forms in Gaelic are dismissed as 'those other folks' weird dialects'. Another example is in the account

[15] 'MacTalla' was a pen-name of Lachlan MacLean (1798-1848) from Coll, the editor of *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* (1835-36).

by the Rev. Kenneth MacLeod (1871-1955) of Prof. John Stewart Blackie's visit to Eigg in his youth:

> Bha e mòran na b'fheàrr air a' Ghrèigis. Gun teagamh, leughadh e agus dh'eadar-theagaicheadh e Gàidhlig, ach cha deachaidh aige riamh air a bruidhinn air a leithid a dhòigh is gun tuigeadh neach sam bith dè bha e ciallachadh. Co-dhiù, cha do thuig sinne aon fhacal a thubhairt e. Ach bha na h-Eigich cho modhail 's nach aidicheadh a h-aon diubh sin. "Nach eil fhios gu bheil Gàidhlig mhaith aig an duine," ars iadsan, "ged nach eil sinne ga tuigsinn. 'S fheudar gur h-ann fada mu dheas a dh'ionnsaich e i." Bha tè anns an eilean a thug bliadhna no dhà ga cosnadh fhèin ann an Loch Raonasa an Arainn, agus an uair a chuala i mu dheighinn Gàidhlig Mhic'Ille-dhuibh, "Cuiridh mise geall," ars ise, "gur h-i Gàidhlig Arainn a th'aig an duine agus mas i, cha bhi i idir furasda a tuigsinn."
>
> *He was much better at Greek. Without doubt, he could read and translate Gaelic, but he never managed to speak in a way that anyone would understand what he was saying. Anyway, we didn't understand a single word he said. But the Eigg folk were so polite* that none of them would admit that *we didn't understand him. "The man must have good Gaelic', they said, "even though we don't get it. He must have learnt it way to the south." There was one women on the island that had spent a year or two working in Lochranza on Arran, and when she heard about Blackie's Gaelic she said, "I bet that he has Arran Gaelic and if he does, it wouldn't be easy to understand".* (MacLeod 1988: 64-5)

When John MacKenzie compiled *An English-Gaelic Dictionary* to accompany Neil MacAlpine's *Gaelic-English Pronouncing Dictionary* (1832), he first praised MacAlpine's orthography for being 'much more correct' that those who preceded him (MacAlpine 1866: vii). He then goes on to criticise MacAlpine for his 'various provincialisms' which MacKenzie believes have no place in a dictionary.[16] Archibald Farquharson, from Perthshire, singled out Lewis Gaelic in particular as 'provincial':

> As there is a good deal of provincialism in the Gaelic of Lewes, I think, in writing, it would be better if possible to follow our standard of Gaelic. (Farquharson 1868: 15)

In spite of these concerns, a counter-narrative supported the use of dialects, particularly in the contexts of poetry (or song) and folklore.

[16] 'These he defends, giving them a preference over words of more general acceptation, a proceeding by no means to be justified in a work of this kind' (MacAlpine 1866: vii)

4.3.2 Poetry and Folklore

In the quote used in the previous section by MacLeod, he argued for a common standard yet said that 'provincial and local dialects have their values and uses, and inside their own sphere they ought to be recognised' (MacLeod 1913: 7). Donald MacKinnon sets out that these 'spheres' when 'localisms' are acceptable are: in poetry where 'the ring of the line must be preserved' and 'all local sounds that lend grace and melody to his rhymes'; and in texts that are 'illustrating dialect, or registering dialectal material for linguistic and historical purposes' (1909: 17). This paradigm, although most clearly codified by MacKinnon, is commonly accepted by other writers. Given Nicolson's interest in proverbs, it is not surprising that he prefaces his *Collection of Gaelic Proverbs and Familiar Phrases* (1881) by arguing in favour of variability and flexibility:

> We have as yet no absolute standard of Gaelic orthography, and it is no disgrace considering that William Shakespeare spelled his own great name in several ways, and that even Samuel Johnson's English spellings are not all followed now. (Nicolson 1881: x)

The folklorist Alexander Carmichael (1832–1912) discussed the influence of John F. Campbell of Islay on his methodology. He notes, as Campbell did before him, that spelling variations may be used in the text to show variation in speech:

> Some localisms are given for the sake of Gaelic scholars. Hence the same word may be spelt in different ways through the influence of assonance and other characteristics of Gaelic compositions. (Carmichael 1900: xxxi)

His daughter Ella Carmichael also noted when editing songs 'I have retained 'localisms' which seem in keeping with folk-songs' (Carmichael 1904: 147). It is possible, although more rare, to find justifications of dialectal variation extending into other areas of literature. However, Kenneth D. MacDonald, the editor of the short story collection *Briseadh na Cloiche* (1970), which is included in the corpus, said:

> Ann a bhith ’gan deasachadh air son a’ chlò, rinneadh beagan sgioblachaidh air litreachadh an siod ’s an seo, ach dh’fhiachadh ri dual-chainnt gach sgrìobhaiche a ghleidheadh mar a bha i. (MacDonald 1970: 9)

> *In editing them for printing, a little tidying of spelling here and there was done, but* an attempt was made to keep *each writer's dialect as it was.*

MacKinnon's paradigm is explored further in Chapter 6 where it is an important factor in the variability of the use of <eu> and <ia>.

4.3.3 Unacceptable Variation

Dialectal acceptability does not extend to all spoken forms and forms seen as colloquial are often rejected. MacKinnon acknowledges that compared with plain prose 'conversation will also insist on having its privileges.' However, he does not believe that the written word should closely follow conversational forms:

> But we have allowed the colloquial to preponderate in our writing; and as a consequence the Apostrophe runs riot on a Gaelic page. Why should we persist in writing *'Se* for *Is e*, 'it is'? Everybody says, but why should any one write, *Co 'th' ann?* for *Co a tha ann?* 'Who is there'? Our fathers and grandfathers were in these respects more careful and accurate than we have become. (MacKinnon 1910: 197)

William J. Watson, the place-name scholar, also agreed:

> Contracted forms of words - the bane of modern written Gaelic - have been freely extended (...) At present there is a tendency to make the written language reproduce all possible contractions of common speech, and the result is unsightly and often obscure. The sound principle is to write each word in full, except in the case of recognised contractions of old standing. (Watson 1915: vii)

Donald MacAulay was also not impressed with 'aggressively colloquial' spelling:

> there has arisen a tendency with some people to use colloquial language for all levels of discourse, and furthermore to spell it in an aggressively colloquial fashion. (1976-78: 88)

Spelling variation *can* be acceptable, in Gaelic, but only in its place. Variation is not considered acceptable if it perceived as ad hoc, or based on colloquial speech.

The polynomic model was discussed in section 2.2. It was suggested that, as in Guernsey, the Gaelic community has a folk linguistic acceptance 'of regional variation as a source of richness' (Sallabank 2010: 311). This section has shown that this is not simply 'folk linguistic' in the Gaelic context but that this extends

to (or possibly derives from) scholarly works and literary authors. The early religious codifiers valorised vernacular speech and the dialects of Scotland in contrast to Classical norms regarded as Irish. From the mid-nineteenth century dialects were valorised by folklorists and historical linguists interested in 'pure' language. We have also seen that there is a tension between the prestige of dialects and the belief in the necessity of a common written norm.

4.4 Etymology and Historicism

Etymology can be important in language ideology as it stems from what Fishman calls 'historicity' or the way in which history is considered to socially validate a language (Section 2.2.1). In terms of orthography, this belief suggests that spelling should preserve etymological information. This can be considered a worthy goal in and of itself or to assist readers with their knowledge of older forms of the language. Etymology therefore can be invoked when it comes to arguing for or against a particular form. Consistency with the past or spelling conservatism is related to this, but not equivalent. The etymological principle is interested in the oldest form, conservatism with preserving the status quo even if it is etymologically inaccurate. This section will discuss where etymology is cited as orthographic principle, how it clashes with the phonographic ideal and how it relates to historicism and spelling conservatism.

Historicity is visible, particularly in the early texts which have to validate the language. The idea of providing an ancient lineage is important in order to promote the validity of the language as not simply 'a barbarous tongue'. For example, Shaw spends a good deal of time in his introduction to his *Analysis* describing Gaelic as the descendent of the 'Celtic nation' which was marginalised in preference to Greece and Rome. He stresses the antiquity of Gaelic, introducing it by talking of its history at the time of the Roman empire, equating Gaelic and Celtic history with the prestigious great civilizations (Shaw 1778: ix-xi).

4.4.1 Etymological Principle

At the end of the eighteenth century when Shaw was creating his grammar, he references advice that appears to promote the phonographic ideal and the idea of reforming the writing system:

> Being the first that has offered the public a grammatical account of the Galic, it was recommended by several persons to frame a new alphabet, consisting of letters or combinations, to express all the sounds in the language, without any mute letter. This is impracticable; but though it could be effected, it would only render the etymology more perplexing. (Shaw 1778: xx)

Shaw disagrees with the idea by appealing to etymology. Stewart can also appeal to etymology as a deciding factor, as in this example of the spelling of 'Gaelic' itself:

> The word 'Gaelic' has of late been written with ae in the first syllable. Whether this way of spelling it be preferable to the former 'Gailic, Gaidhlig, Gaoidheilg, &c.' must depend on the etymon of the word; a point not yet fully settled. (Stewart 1801: 5)

Alexander MacBain's etymological interests are obvious from his *Etymological Dictionary* (1896). This meant that although MacBain praised MacEachen's lexicography, he found it etymologically wanting and emended 'on a large scale' MacEachen's orthography in his 1902 jointly edited edition (MacEachen 1979: vi). MacBain and Whyte's editorial comments show their preference for etymology: 'While giving a common, though historically wrong, spelling of a word, they make cross-reference to its proper form' (MacEachen 1902: vi).

In 1933, John Lorne Campbell published a short article on standardising Gaelic spelling in *An Gaidheal*. In the article, his interest is clearly prescriptive, being more interested in 'correcting' contemporary norms rather than standardising as uniformisation. Campbell stresses the importance of etymological origin:

> Similarly there are words now etymologically wrongly spelt in Scottish Gaelic in an attempt to reproduce their pronunciation more phonetically. Of these the word aobhar, correctly adhbhar is a good example. Because the pronunciation of its first syllable resembles in some dialects the sound written ao in taobh etc., its correct spelling has been abandoned for the “phonetic” one. (...) The best thing to do with this kind of word is to leave the original spelling alone or at least not alter it to something fundamentally different from its etymological origin. There are a number of words in Gaelic which have suffered in this way, as Dr Alexander Cameron (Reliquiae Celticae) and others have pointed out. Any revision of Gaelic spelling should insure their correction. (Campbell 1933: 26-27)

Campbell in this quote clearly considered the etymological spelling to be the 'correct' one in contrast to simpler graphic-phonic correspondence.[17] Campbell also argued for other etymological spellings, dismissing the <eu> forms that were in use for over a hundred years before he wrote as 'wrong':

> thus writing correctly *céim, léim, féim*, for *ceum*, etc., which are wrong spellings, the *m* in these words being originally a narrow consonant; and *bréag, léag*, etc. for *breug*, etc. This would have the merit of getting rid of an unnecessary digraph, and also bringing Scottish Gaelic into line with Irish, which has preserved the correct form. (Campbell 1933: 26)

Campbell's recommendations for regularising unstressed vowels and regularising <ao> in this article were, eventually, realised with GOC. His option for replacing <eu> with <éa> and <éi> before broad and slender consonants respectively was not taken up. The former two advocated regularising to one option from those in use while the latter recommended adopting etymological Classical forms no longer in conventional usage. This demonstrates a clash between conservative forms (those in use), and etymological forms no longer in use where the conservative form wins out.

In a more recent example, in Richard Cox's review of GOC 2009 (Cox 2010), he evaluates the recommendations in part by assessing how they relate to Old Gaelic, e.g. 'The form siad 'hero' (Word List) fails to acknowledge the word's etymology (OG sét, cf. OG fér > modern feur)' (Cox 2010: 165).

4.4.2 Etymology and Compromise

Etymological goals often conflict with the phonographic ideal and phonographic correspondence. Etymology can also be in conflict with the demands of standardisation for uniformity. The conflict between phonography and etymology is summed up by the Rev. MacLean Sinclair in his 'Speculations on Orthography':

> We should spell words, so far as practicable, just as they are pronounced. [...] We should preserve the oldest form of words, so far as that can be done without violation to the present mode of pronouncing them. (MacLean Sinclair 1898: 271)

[17] The example Campbell uses, *adhbhar* not *aobhar*, is the current recommended form (GOC).

In this brief account, MacLean Sinclair outlines two competing principles. He balances them by hedging that they should be applied 'so far as practicable' and 'so far as that can be done'. In this, he epitomises the compromise of real writing.

Conservatism in spelling can also conflict with etymology, as the example from Campbell showed earlier. The conservative impulse is part of standardisation's requirements for uniformity: in this case consistency over time. The focus is not on etymology, but a resistance to a change to conventions. The theory that this has existed in Scottish Gaelic writing has been espoused by scholars such as Eric P. Hamp, who comments in an introductory section to the *Linguistic Survey of Gaelic Dialects* that conservatism has a 'strong sense of observance':

> The distinction between language and dialect for Scottish Gaelic is to be mapped largely on an inherited literary and bardic norm; while there is no national or academy-promulgated or school-imposed set of rules […], there has existed a strong sense of observance before the practices of preachers and learned persons. (Hamp in Ó Dochartaigh 1997: 8)

Conservatism means that writers and editors can be reluctant to innovate. In this example from Katherine Whyte Grant she cites the needs of those acquiring literacy, children in this case, for conservatism:

> Tha mi air cumail ris an t-sean dòigh-sgrìobhaidh. Tha clann cho cleachdta ris, ’an leughadh a’ Bhìobuill, agus leabhraichean eile, gu ’n do mheas mi nach biodh e glic atharrachadh a dheanamh, no dòighean úra a ghnàthachadh. (Whyte Grant 1911: 4)
>
> *I have kept to the old spelling. Children are so used to it, reading the Bible, and other books, that I judged that it would not be wise to make changes, or utilise new ways.*

Donald MacKinnon also admits, while complaining that previous scholars chose to write *ar n-athair* and *gu'n iarr*, instead of either *arn athair* and *gun iarr*, or *ar n-athair* and *gu n-iarr*, that 'It would probably serve no useful purpose for writers of Scottish Gaelic to change their practice now' (MacKinnon 1905: 11).

4.4.3 Summary

In this section, we have seen that there have been few cases of etymology being used to inform spelling choices over the modern period. It is conservatism, rather, that seeks to preserve familiar spellings but not reinstate older norms or decide

which is 'correct'. When it comes to reform, etymologically 'correct' or conservative forms often lose out to phonography. This is not always the case, however. As will be seen in Chapter 6, conservatism wins out with <eu> being preferred to <ia>. The conservative form of <sd> in many lemmas loses out to standardisation's demands for uniformity and simplicity to <st> in all lemmas in Chapter 7.

4.5 The Fear of Illegitimacy

In Chapter 2, it was noted that without standardisation, one of the pillars of cultural legitimacy that leads people to consider a language variety a 'real' language is removed. If it has no standard (i.e. uniform) writing system, it is not a legitimate language. To counter the attacks, Gaelic writers also draw on ideologies of spelling as defence. In this section we will see examples of spelling being used to attack Gaelic, examples of where Gaelic writers exhibit the fear of linguistic illegitimacy and where they defend Gaelic orthography. There are three particular narratives that writers use when defending Gaelic spelling. The first is the use of the phonographic ideal to rate Gaelic more highly than other languages, discussed earlier in this chapter. The second is to appeal to prestige languages – Classical or other European majority languages – to argue that a level of variation is normal. The third is the narrative that Gaelic spelling is simple, effective and sufficient.

Over the centuries the legitimacy of Gaelic has been repeatedly challenged. An early example of the perception of Scottish Gaelic orthography is found in Samuel Johnson's comment that:

> Whoever therefore now writes in this language, spells according to his own perception of the sound, and his own idea of the power of the letters (Johnson 1775: 267-68)

Johnson was followed by other writers such as John Pinkerton who said in his *Enquiry into the History of Scotland* (1789) that:

> of all etymology whatever, the Celtic is the most uncertain, because the language is hardly a written one, and its orthography, on which etymology depends, is quite various and lax. (Pinkerton 1789: 139)

The Rev. Dr Alexander Stewart begins the introduction to his grammar by acknowledging that the work will be 'variously appreciated' particularly by those who 'will be disposed to deride the vain endeavour to restore vigour to a decaying superannuated language' (1801: 1). Stewart responded by criticising those 'who judge of the language only from its appearance in writing [who] have taken occasion to vilify it as "unfixed and nonsensical"' (1812: 38). These opinions also led the Rev. Dr Irvine to complain that,

> Strangers to the Gaelic language have taxed it with unwarrantable harshness. Deceived, or misled, by a dress, with which they were not acquainted, they passed too hasty a judgment. (Stewart 1801: 10)

The typical tropes of denigration are that Gaelic has no spelling conventions at all (as with Johnson above) or that Gaelic has no uniform standard (it is too various in its spelling). Sometimes, there is more general prejudice such as this by an unknown reviewer in *Nature* of the newly-created *Scottish Celtic Review*:

> The programme is an excellent one, (...) as well as to afford room for the discussion of questions relating to Gaelic grammar and orthography. This last, it seems to us, is a subject with which the Gaelic scholars of the Highlands trouble themselves a great deal too much. Modern Gaelic orthography, whether in Ireland or in Alban, is simply incorrigible, and had better be left alone for the rest of the natural lives of the surviving dialects. This involves no great inconvenience; for no scholar who wants to understand the history of a Gaelic word ever thinks of being guided by any of the modern spellings which may be in use, but goes back to the Irish of the Middle Ages, or farther still, to what is technically known as Old Irish. It is some consolation to Englishmen to know that English orthography is not quite the worst in the world, and that Tonald seldom writes, but that when he does he spells more outrageously than the most wayward spelling-book ever known in the land of the Southron. (Anon 1881: 50-1)

Donald was a stock name in the stereotypical portrayal of Highlanders in the nineteenth century and often spelled as 'Tonald' to mock the Gaelic pronunciation.

Even at the beginning of Celtic lexicography, Lhuyd needed to defend variation in spelling:

> This Uniting of some words, and the Disjoyning of others, as also the Variation of spelling, occur also in the old Latin manuscripts, as well as those of other Languages. (Lhuyd 1707: 232)

Lhuyd normalises the idea of spelling variation with his readers by appealing to the high prestige of Latin. At the end of the eighteenth century, Shaw also anticipated that his readers would expect a fixed standard. He argued that its relative lack of printing history was the cause of continuing variation:

> A speech so singular in its inflections, so ancient in its structure, and so copious in words as the Gaelic, although much written, cannot be so fixed in its orthography as those tongues which enjoy the benefits of Printing. With the Irish, however, (whose dialect has always been the written and studied language) the difference was very inconsiderable. One vowel or diphthong is sometimes substituted for a similar one, and the commutable consonants and combinations are interchanged. This has been the case with the Greek and Latin languages, as well as with the Gaelic. (Shaw 1780: 8)

Just as Shaw also appeals in the previous quote to the Classical languages of Greek and Latin for legitimacy, Stewart appeals to the universality of the processes of change which means that Gaelic 'has shared the common fate of all written languages' (1812: 24). By comparing Scottish Gaelic to Greek, Latin, English and French orthography he seeks to demonstrate that these are not unique or strange aspects of Gaelic orthography (1812: 26). Thus Stewart explains broad and slender consonants by invoking examples from English and Italian:

> It may not appear obvious at first sight, how a vowel should be employed, not to represent a vocal sound, but to modify an articulation. Yet examples are to be found in modern languages. Thus in the English words, 'George, 'sergeant,' the *e* has no other effect than to give *g* its soft sound; and in 'guest, guide,' the *u* only serves to give *g* its hard sound. So in the Italian words 'giorno, giusto,' and many others, the *i* only qualifies the sound of the preceding consonant. The same use of the vowels will be seen to take place frequently in Gaelic orthography. (Stewart 1812: 2)

Despite Dr Johnson's controversial pronouncements on Gaelic in his *A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland*, MacLeod and Dewar made subsequent reference to his lexicographic authority in order to justify 'anomalies':

> 'Every language," says the great lexicographer, Dr. Johnson, "has its anomalies, which, though inconvenient, and in themselves once unnecessary, must be tolerated among the imperfections of human things, and which require only to be registered that they may not be increased, and ascertained that they may not be confounded.' (MacLeod & Dewar 1831: vi)

The anonymous writer 'Golisdar Gàelach' more aggressively attacked variation in English spelling in his letter to the editor of the *Scots' Times*:

> The feigned beauties of the Anglo Saxon or Johnsonian English, now the favourite dialect, and most fashionable in the un-it-ar-i-an kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, are given in a rhyme of rules, which are all smothered and crushed to death, or left in the minority by a huge multitude of exceptions every where, so that wholesome rules are indeed very much wanted. (Gàelach 1830: 1)

By referencing other languages with social prestige and by citing those considered to have linguistic authority, Gaelic writers hoped to persuade others that some variation was not a sign of linguistic barbarity.

The other defence narrative is to appeal to the 'virtues' of simplicity, effectiveness and sufficiency (i.e. in that it has no need for new letters). This is summarised by John Whyte and Alexander MacBain who reassure readers of their dictionary that Gaelic orthography:

> [...] though it appears somewhat complex to the eye, is at once simple, effective, and quite sufficient for all the orthographical requirements of the language. (Whyte & MacBain 1902: 1)

James Munro, in the orthographic description of his Practical Grammar, praises Gaelic effectiveness in showing lenition; arguing that retaining the primary letter and adding an <h> is superior to the Welsh system 'in point of perspicuity' (1843: 2). One of the founders of the Gaelic Society of Inverness implored members to improve their literacy in Gaelic and tried to reassure them of the orthography's simplicity:

> It is generally taken for granted that Gaelic is a language difficult to learn – impossible to spell; but had those who are of this opinion devoted to Gaelic but the hundredth part of the time which they devoted to English before they became masters of its orthography, their tale would be very different. The principles of Gaelic orthography are few and simple; and if these principles are mastered, the language is mastered. If you speak Gaelic, I assure you that two months' earnest study – two hours every evening – will result in you being able to write it. (MacKay 1873: 44)

John MacKenzie, in his 'Defence of the Orthography of the Gaelic Language' (1877), offers accounts of people mastering the system in a few months to show its

simplicity and effectiveness (1877b: 334). He references a report of the Glasgow Auxiliary Gaelic School Society where is it noted:

> that to acquire the art of reading Gaelic to one who speaks it, is by no means so formidable a task as it is for one who speaks English to learn to read English. (MacKenzie 1877: 334)

Another level of meta-linguistic analysis emerged in the late twentieth century, as concerns were raised that the continued discussions around spelling, rather than just variation itself, reflected badly on the status of language:

> Tha an stràc geur fhathast beò – air èiginn. Ach am bu chòir a bhith? Mura h-eil na Gaidheil comasach air tighinn gu aonta air rud cho bunaiteach, carson a bhiodh an saoghal mòr a-muigh a' toirt spèis dhaibh is don cànan? (MacIlleathain 2005)
>
> *The acute accent is still alive – just. But should it be? If the Gaels aren't able to come to an agreement on something so basic, why would the great outside world give us and the language respect?*

However, if there were no debates on spelling at all, it would, in fact, be quite unlike the great outside world given that Germany, France, Spain, the Czech Republic and many others have undergone and debated reform in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

4.6 Summary and Conclusions

The battle of ideas and ideologies that surround discussions of orthography means that any set of conventions is a result of compromise. It also means that shifting language use or language change engenders further discussion. This discussion itself has often been criticised. In a paper read to the Gaelic Society of Inverness entitled 'Am Feum a ta air aon doigh suidhicht' Aithnichte air Sgriobhadh na Gaidhlige' (*The Need for One Settled Recognised Way for Writing Gaelic)*, a Mr John MacDonald expresses his dislike of writers that do not follow the example set by the Bible. He does not see Gaelic scholars setting a good example:

> Tha againn fathast ann ar measg beagan do sgoilearan Gàilig, ach tearc mar a ta iad cha chord iad mu 'n doigh a's fearr air sgrìobhadh na cànaine (MacDonald 1875: 118)

> *We still have in our midst a few Gaelic scholars, but as rare as they are they don't agree on the best way to write the language.*

When Dr Hugh Cameron Gillies was Secretary to the Gaelic Society of London, he proposed a resolution aimed at establishing collaboration between the various Gaelic Societies and to hold a conference to create a settled and recognised system of orthography and grammar. MacBain was less optimistic about getting consensus noting that 'One humorous gentleman asked, on hearing of the proposed conference, who would come out of it alive? For we know of friendships having been broken and professional advancement wrecked over a little Gaelic apostrophe!' (MacBain 1887b: 45).

While discussions have rarely resulted in formal consensus, there is, on the evidence of the literature, a general compromise which appears to have the following features:

- Phonographic correspondence is important because it make the orthography 'better' which legitimises the language. This results in 'tidying up' exceptions to phonographic patterns e.g. *tigh* > *taigh*, *so* > *seo*.
- Uniformity is important. This is because it makes the standard 'better' which legitimises the language. This results in the reduction of alternatives such as <io> or <ea> in unstressed vowels.
- Conservatism, rather than etymology, is important in order to preserve literary efforts and to not discourage readers.

In Chapters 6, 7 and 8 which look at three particular features — the variation between <eu> and <ia>, the variation between <s> consonant clusters and the use of the accents — the decisions about their usages are analysed with this compromise of ideologies in mind.

5 Methodology

This chapter provides an account of the corpus linguistic approach and describes the electronic corpus used in this study. The broad methodology is outlined here; more detail on the exact process undertaken for the analysis of the features investigated in Chapters 6 to 8 can be found in the corresponding chapters. Section 5.1 summarises the approach of corpus linguistics, how it has been previously used in relation to Scottish Gaelic and why this approach is useful for describing standardisation in action. Section 5.2 provides the documentation of the corpus used including a description of its composition in terms of genre, date of publication and dialect. Section 5.3 describes the use of concordance software to locate occurrences for quantitative and qualitative analysis.

5.1 The Methodology of Corpus Linguistics

5.1.1 What is Corpus Linguistics?

Advancements in computer technology since the mid-twentieth century have greatly expanded linguists' use of computer-aided analysis. The field of practice of computer-aided textual analysis for linguistic research has become known as corpus linguistics. Corpus linguistics is generally considered a methodology rather than a discipline of linguistics; indeed, Tony McEnery and Andrew Hardie suggest that 'the future of the field is in “corpus methods in linguistics” rather than “corpus linguistics standing independently”' (2012: xiv). The use of corpus data, and the computer's ability to search for, retrieve, sort and calculate (after Leech 1991), can provide a fast and accurate tool for the linguist. An overview of the development of the field, which argues strongly for corpus linguistics as 'nothing but a methodology' can be found in McEnery and Wilson (2001). McEnery and Wilson characterise corpus linguistics as part of a long-standing debate between rationalists and empiricists in linguistics as it is based on the observation of naturally occurring data. McEnery and Hardie (2012) provide a survey of corpus methods, primarily English language corpus linguistics, and the use of corpora in studying synchronic and diachronic variation, functionalist linguists and the Neo-Firthian analysis of meaning in text.

While researchers have employed a variety of technologies and approaches, there are basic underlying methods in common: the corpus researcher aims to process large quantities of authentic, naturally occurring data in order to obtain objective evidence and quantitative techniques are applied before qualitative interpretations are made. It allows linguists to approach language and describe it better, testing out hypotheses with data on a large scale and discovering new, unexpected, patterns.

5.1.2 Corpus use in Scottish Gaelic Studies

When it comes to computer-aided research in Scottish Gaelic,

> Scottish Gaelic language scholars work in an entirely different environment than English scholars in terms of the resources and workforce available to them. (Ó Maolalaigh 2013a: 113)

However, the use of machine-readable texts in Scottish Gaelic and Celtic linguistics is growing as researchers take advantage of new bases of empirical evidence which were previously hard to access. Existing corpora of, or including, Scottish Gaelic include the Language Engineering Resources for the Indigenous Minority Languages of the British Isles (BIML) project headed by Andrew Wilson at Lancaster University. It contains transcriptions of spoken Scottish Gaelic of c.17,500 words (comprising a conversation, a university lecture, two sermons and an informal talk) contributed by Kevin Donnelly of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. The Gaelic Text Database *GaelDict* created by Ciarán Ó Duibhín was first released in 1995 (last release in 1998) which included Irish (mainly Ulster Irish) and Scottish Gaelic materials with 1,997,043 tokens (running words in text). The Scottish Corpus of Texts and Speech (SCOTS) at the University of Glasgow has a very small selection of transcribed conversations (20,687 tokens) in Scottish Gaelic. William Lamb created a Scottish Gaelic corpus for his 2002 PhD and subsequent monograph in 2008; a benchmark study in register and stylistic marking in modern Scottish Gaelic. The corpus had a total of 76 texts amounting to 81,677 words and included a spoken sub-corpus covering Conversation, Radio Interview, Sports Reportage and Traditional Narrative and a written sub-corpus drawn from the categories of Fiction, Formal/Academic Prose, News Scripts and Popular Writing (Lamb 2008). For a useful summary of current resources, see Ó Maolalaigh (2013).

5.1.2.1 Corpus na Gàidhlig and DASG

The most significant corpus project for Scottish Gaelic is the ongoing Digital Archive of Scottish Gaelic (DASG) project, a British Academy-recognised project established by Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh in 2006 and founded in order to digitise valuable parts of the archive generated by the Historical Dictionary of Scottish Gaelic (HDSG) which was established within the University of Glasgow (1966–97). Corpas na Gàidhlig was established in 2008 as a constituent project of DASG. Corpas na Gàidhlig has two aims: to provide a comprehensive electronic corpus of Scottish Gaelic texts for students and researchers of Scottish Gaelic language, literature and culture; and to provide the database of texts for Phase II of the inter-university historical dictionary project, Faclair na Gàidhlig (FnaG - Dictionary of the Scottish Gaelic Language).[18] For a description of DASG and FnaG, see Pike and Ó Maolalaigh (2013) and Ó Maolalaigh (forthcoming). The digital texts produced have enabled preliminary linguistic investigation of the corpus, even as materials continue to be added. A public web interface was launched in 2014 to make the corpus searchable. This is the first major online corpus of Scottish Gaelic to be publically available and at the time of writing contains over 10 million words.[19] The author previously used the texts created by Corpas na Gàidhlig for her MLitt thesis examining possessive forms in modern Scottish Gaelic (Bell 2010). The texts have also previously been analysed by Ó Maolalaigh (2013) to investigate singular nouns in Scottish Gaelic and a h-uile ('every') with historical implicaitons (Ó Maolalaigh 2013b). The full possibilities of corpus exploitation to assess previous linguistic descriptions and to expand our knowledge of Scottish Gaelic have only just begun to be explored.

5.1.3 Corpus Linguistics for Analysing Orthographic Standardisation

In Chapter 2, the approach advocated by Coulmas was that linguists studying writing should analyse 'real writing' rather than only considering how writing systems fit an ideal. The use of an electronic corpus covering the modern period

[18] Faclair na Gàidhlig was established in 2003 by an inter-university partnership comprising the universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Strathclyde and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (University of the Highlands and Islands), funded by a number of sources: Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, the Gaelic Language Promotion Trust, the Leverhulme Trust, the Scottish Funding Council and the Scottish Government.

[19] Available at www.dasg.ac.uk

of Scottish Gaelic allows this study to discover how Gaelic spelling has actually been used in print instead of how it *should have* or *could have* been used; to consider usage as well as principles of orthography. Also, with regards to the study of standardisation, corpus methods can reveal patterns and norms which help us document shifting patterns of use, revealing how standards and conventions evolve and are subsequently either adhered to or rejected by writers. Corpus analyses can also challenge the 'standard wisdom' within a field. As Raymond Hickey has observed:

> One obvious use of text corpora is to confirm or refute opinions which have perhaps been held without any serious degree of questioning by scholars in the field. (Hickey 2007: 120)

As the review of previous studies on Scottish Gaelic orthography in Chapter 3 illustrates, existing discussions have focussed on idiosyncratic forms as useful evidence sources for historical linguistics, or on contentious features where the author wishes to advance their own solution to the perceived problem. The broad patterns contained in the corpus give evidence for wider trends and norms rather than the idiosyncratic exceptions and outliers as the corpus analyses in the following chapters show.

5.2 Corpus Documentation

5.2.1 Corpus Construction

The corpus exploited for this research is constructed from the materials created by the DASG team. Permission and access was given in 2011 for the files which had, at that time, been digitised and proof-read from the list of texts intended to form the Faclair na Gàidhlig historical dictionary database. An account of the digitisation process of the texts can be found in Pike and Ó Maolalaigh (2013).

5.2.1.1 **Designing the corpus**

Professors William Gillies and Donald Meek made the initial selection of texts suitable to form the textual basis of an historical dictionary during Phase 1 of the Faclair na Gàidhlig project. Dr Catriona Mackie, Research Assistant, researched and collated metadata of the corpus texts which has also been of great help to this study. The selection which was made aimed to cover a wide range of texts

over three hundred centuries, particularly including influential texts and with a range of dialect representation, register and topics (see Ó Maolalaigh 2013). It is therefore a solid foundation for a corpus of written Scottish Gaelic.

5.2.1.2 Metadata

For each text of the corpus used in the thesis, the metadata of the author (and editor if transcription was carried out by that person) was collected.

Table 5-1 Metadata features for corpus texts

Metadata Feature	Notes
Name of Author	In both English and Gaelic forms
Date of Birth	
Date of Death	
Dialect	Both region and parish
Literacy in Gaelic	Any relevant information about their education
Title of Text	Short title
Date of Production	If known to be different from publication
Date of Publication	
Bibliographic information	Full bibliographic reference

See Appendix 2 for a sample metadata page from DASG of *Am Fear-Ciuil* (1910).

For some texts, more detailed information than that in the Faclair na Gàidhlig metadata was gathered. For example the collection of historical essays *Oighreachd is Gabhaltas* [Estate and Tenancy] (1980) has several authors and metadata information details for the author of each essay in the publication was collected. This meant that each essay could be considered a 'text' with different dialect information and more complete data for each author could be used to assess the variety of the corpus contents.

Not all texts were divided by author, however: in *Na Baird Thirisdeach* [The Tiree Bards] (1932), the orthography was not determined by the individual poets (all from Tiree) but by the single editor, Hector Cameron (also from Tiree), and so there was no value in dividing the texts. The same applied to *An t-Oranaiche* [The Songster] (1877) edited by Gilleasbuig Mac na Ceàrdadh [Archibald Sinclair]. The magazine *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* [The New Gaelic Messenger] (1835-36) is considered as a whole in this study due to the sheer volume of individual texts and authors, often using pseudonyms.

5.2.2 Corpus Description

This section describes and evaluates the contents of the corpus. The contents of the corpus can be measured in different ways, one of which is in terms of word count. The corpus can also be measured by Type Token Ratio (TTR) which indicates lexical variety. The corpus is drawn from 117 published works between 1750 and 2007.[20] There are 251 text files which contain over 4,250,000 words. This section will detail the composition of the corpus by date, genre and dialect.

5.2.2.1 **Date of texts**

The oldest published text in the corpus is *Gairm an De Mhoir* [The Call of the Great God] (1750), Alexander MacFarlane's translation of *A Call to the Unconverted to Turn and Live* (1658) by Richard Baxter, which was published in Glasgow by Robert and Andrew Foulis. The most recent published text is *Saoghal Bana-mharaiche* [A Fisherwife's World] (2007), an ethnographic study of the life of a fisherwife and her community through the anecdotes of Bell Ann MacAngus and other Gaelic speakers from the fishing villages of Easter Ross by Seòsamh Watson, Professor (Emeritus) of Modern Irish Language and Literature at University College, Dublin.

In Table 5.2 below, the number of tokens per decade is shown. As this study is interested in orthography, texts have been counted here under their orthographic date: e.g. *Tuath is Tighearna* [Tenants and Landlords] (1995) is a collection of nineteenth-century poems; however, its orthography was modernised for its edition of 1995. Thus, it is included in the 1990s word count. Similarly, the editor of *Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod* (1934) modernised the spelling of the language originally dating c.1616-c.1707 to the 'correct modern standards' (Carmichael Watson 1934: vii) although there are variant readings in the footnotes. This is the same for *An Clarsair Dall* [The Blind Harper] (1970), *Òrain Iain Luim* [The Songs of Iain Lom] (1964) and *Sìlis na Ceapaich* [Silis of Keppoch] (1972) where the orthography is generally that of the respective twentieth-century publication date despite some older forms appearing on occasion. In the case of *Eachann Bacach and other MacLean poets* (1979), two poems, 'Rainn' by Maighstir Seathan and 'Aindra Mc Ghiléoin cecinit' by Anndra Mac an Easbuig have been presented in the original spelling from their publication in 1707 (in Lhuyd's *Archaeologia Britannica*)

[20] See Appendix 1 for a detailed table of metadata information on texts.

while 'All the other poems I have attempted to present in an acceptable modern spelling' (Ó Baoill 1979: viii).

Table 5-2 Corpus data by decade

Decade	Tokens	Types	TTR	% Corpus	% by Century
1700s	4,468	1,871	41.87	0.12	
1750s	92,295	13,357	14.47	2.16	
1760s	240,774	11,217	4.85	5.63	
1770s	15,655	2,659	17.23	0.36	
1780s	0	0		0	
1790s	9,976	2,050	20.72	0.23	8.39
1800s	108,938	11,014	10.11	2.54	
1810s	69,372	10,206	14.82	1.62	
1820s	87,648	10,433	12.00	2.05	
1830s	205,342	22,641	11.02	4.80	
1840s	164,626	22,631	13.80	3.85	
1850s	0	0		0	
1860s	47,887	9,086	18.97	1.12	
1870s	141,539	20,991	14.83	3.31	
1880s	51,041	13,000	25.46	1.19	
1890s	341,594	73,094	21.39	7.99	28.50
1900s	58,722	12,816	21.82	1.37	
1910s	251,756	47,745	18.96	5.89	
1920s	90,957	8,865	9.74	2.12	
1930s	362,785	71,664	19.75	8.49	
1940s	43,150	4,896	11.34	1.00	
1950s	18,180	6,523	35.88	0.42	
1960s	168,388	27,720	16.46	3.94	
1970s	813,299	125,226	15.39	19.03	
1980s	328,104	58,236	17.74	7.67	
1990s	327,369	68,791	21.01	7.66	57.63
2000s	233,317	27,069	11.60	5.46	5.46
TOTAL	4,272,714	681,930			

Nearly all decades are covered by the corpus texts with the exceptions of the 1780s and 1850s. There is a substantial difference in the level of representation by decade which ranges from 0.12% to 19.03% of the total corpus by token. The majority of the corpus, just over 57%, is from the twentieth century. Nearly a fifth of the whole corpus, 19%, dates from the 1970s.

5.2.2.2 Genre

In Table 5.3 below, the corpus is divided into prose or verse and into four genres;

- Religious: incl. sermons, catechisms
- Imaginative: prose fiction, modern poetry

- Expository: description, instruction, analysis, biography
- Traditional: folktales, songs

Certain texts contain a number of prose and verse elements that were not easily divided by genre and thus 6% of the corpus is counted as mixed prose/verse here.

Table 5-3 Corpus data by genre

	Prose	Verse	Prose/Verse	% of corpus
Religious	479,021	176,322	0	15.3%
Imaginative	754,375	73,111	48,577	20.5%
Expository	876,000	0	1,659	20.5%
Traditional	515,895	1,129,460	95,366	40.7%
Mixed	0	0	124,760	3%
Total tokens	2,625,291	1,378,893	270,362	100%
% of corpus	61.4%	32.3%	6.3%	

The high percentage of verse in the corpus reflects the dominance of poetry in the Gaelic literary tradition and in Gaelic publications.

5.2.2.3 Dialect

Scottish Gaelic dialects are considered to be particularly rich in variety, and at the same time, similar enough for the speaker population to consider it to be one language. Table 5.4 below shows the distribution of dialects in the corpus. This unfortunately cannot be compared to real-world data without a large scale analysis of census data which is not available. The regions and districts used here are based on the *Survey of the Gaelic Dialects of Scotland (*SGDS). The rationale behind the choice of regions is explained as follows:

> For the islands, areas are distinguished on a geographical basis, but socio-geographical and linguistic criteria are used in establishing the mainland districts. (Ó Dochartaigh 1997: 69)

The first division is across Scotland, using the 'Highland Line' to delimit the Gaelic-speaking area. The mainland areas are then divided by county and then by 'traditional' districts. While SGDS has just one region of 'Mainland Inverness-shire', I have divided this into North & East Inverness-shire and West Inverness-shire for better specificity and so that the greater percentage of island dialects of Skye & Raasay are more clear. Conversely, I have grouped some of the smaller

neighbouring mainland areas together.[21] The spread of dialectal representation in the corpus is as follows:

Table 5-4 Corpus figures by dialect

Region & District	Tokens	% of Corpus	Regional % of corpus
Western Isles			38%
St Kilda	64,326	1.5%	
Lewis	741,795	17.3%	
Harris	314,111	7.4%	
North Uist	134,032	3.1%	
Benbecula	2,273	0.1%	
South Uist	288,786	6.7%	
Barra	84,288	1.9%	
Sutherland & Caithness	21,265	0.5	0.5%
Argyll			10.7%
Coll	21,503	0.5%	
Colonsay	2,615	0.1%	
Islay	35,652	0.8%	
Jura	51,688	1.2%	
Mid-Argyll	3,076	0.1%	
Mull & Iona	93,492	2.2%	
Tiree	107,354	2.5%	
Appin & Benderloch	139,318	3.3%	
Ross-shire			2%
Easter Ross	72,767	1.7%	
Wester Ross	10,934	0.3%	
North & East Inverness-shire			0.7%
North Inverness-shire	0		
Badenoch	7,206	0.2%	
Strathspey	21,856	0.5%	
West Inverness-shire			12.9%
Skye & Raasay	394,109	9.2%	
Small Isles	68,876	1.6%	
Lochaber	44,164	1.1%	
Morvern	16,243	0.4%	
Sunart & Ardnamurchan	4,556	0.1%	
Moidart	24,280	0.5%	
Perthshire	198,467	4.7%	4.7%
Unknown	229,913	-	5.4%
Various	1,002,237	-	23.4%
Learner*	71,532	-	1.7%
Corpus Total	4,272,714	-	100%

* Learners with no known specific dialect affiliation.

[21] They are Glenelg & Knoydart, Morar & Arisaig and Sunart & Ardnamurchan.

Almost a third of the corpus does not have a dialect attributed: either because the information about the author is lacking, or because the text is in a magazine or collection format where many authors are represented in the text.

The majority of the texts represent the Gaelic of the Isles: 56.1% of the corpus when counting the Western Isles, Skye & Raasay and the Inner Hebrides.

5.2.2.4 **The type/token ratio**

There are 4,274,546 tokens (individual running words in text) and 678,925 types (unique word forms) in the corpus.

The Type/Token Ratio (TTR) is calculated as the number of types divided by the number of tokens, and is an indicator of how lexically varied the vocabulary in the corpus is. The result is often multiplied by 100 to express the type/token ratio as a percentage (as it will be in this thesis); the closer the ratio is to 1:1, (or 100% if expressed in percentages), the more varied the vocabulary is. This allows for vocabulary variation to be measured between corpora and texts. The two published works with the highest TTR are both wordlists produced by Museum nan Eilean; *Croitearachd* [Crofting] (1991), 52.42% and *Iasgach* [Fishing] (1991), 52.79%. Due to their nature as wordlists, repetition is minimised and the texts themselves are short: 394 tokens and 249 tokens respectively. The published text with the lowest TTR is *Tiomnadh Nuadh* [New Testament] (1767) at 4.66%. This is likely due to it being the longest text in the corpus, with 240,774 running words (tokens), where repetition becomes more likely.

5.2.2.5 **Representativeness**

A corpus is only a sample of the language that is under analysis. If any generalisations from that sample are to be made, it is crucial to understand how representative that corpus is of the language overall. Biber *et al*. (1998) and McEnery and Wilson (2001) amongst others have noted the importance of defining the limits of the corpus under study; without this clarification results can be misinterpreted as being representative of a much broader language sample than is actually evidenced in the data. A key problem for Gaelic corpus linguistics is that we are still relatively unsure of the total composition of the written language. With the worked carried out by DASG, however, we can be confident that the

current corpus resources for Scottish Gaelic have an expansive breadth of authorship, dates, genre and dialects.

Geoffrey Leech (1992) argued that corpora provide a powerful methodology from the point of view of the scientific method as they are open to objective verification of results. Or, as noted by McEnery & Wilson,

> Corpus-based observations are intrinsically more verifiable than introspectively based judgements. (2001: 14)

With this in mind, the principal strength of the corpus used here is its breadth over a wide time-span and the substantial amount of objective data it provides from published texts printed between 1750 and 2007. It provides a contrast to the more introspective-based evaluations of Scottish Gaelic orthographic history. The corpus used here prefers complete texts over samples of texts as this results in a data set of orthographic usage which is as wide as possible. The published nature of the works also means that they are, in the main, written and/or edited by literate, well-educated writers. This lends itself to the primary research goals which are to investigate standardisation at work in orthography.

As with almost all other corpora, the corpus used here is partial in the sense that it is an incomplete record of the language (as natural languages are not finite) (see McEnery & Wilson 2001: 10). The corpus does not contain all written materials in Gaelic, thus, the earliest or latest example of a spelling in the corpus does not attest necessarily to the earliest or latest form in written Scottish Gaelic. The corpus does not provide data on speech, unpublished texts, or informal writing (personal letters, emails), as the corpus comprises published materials only. The corpus is also limited in its coverage of children's literature, Gaelic periodicals, journalism and news reports.

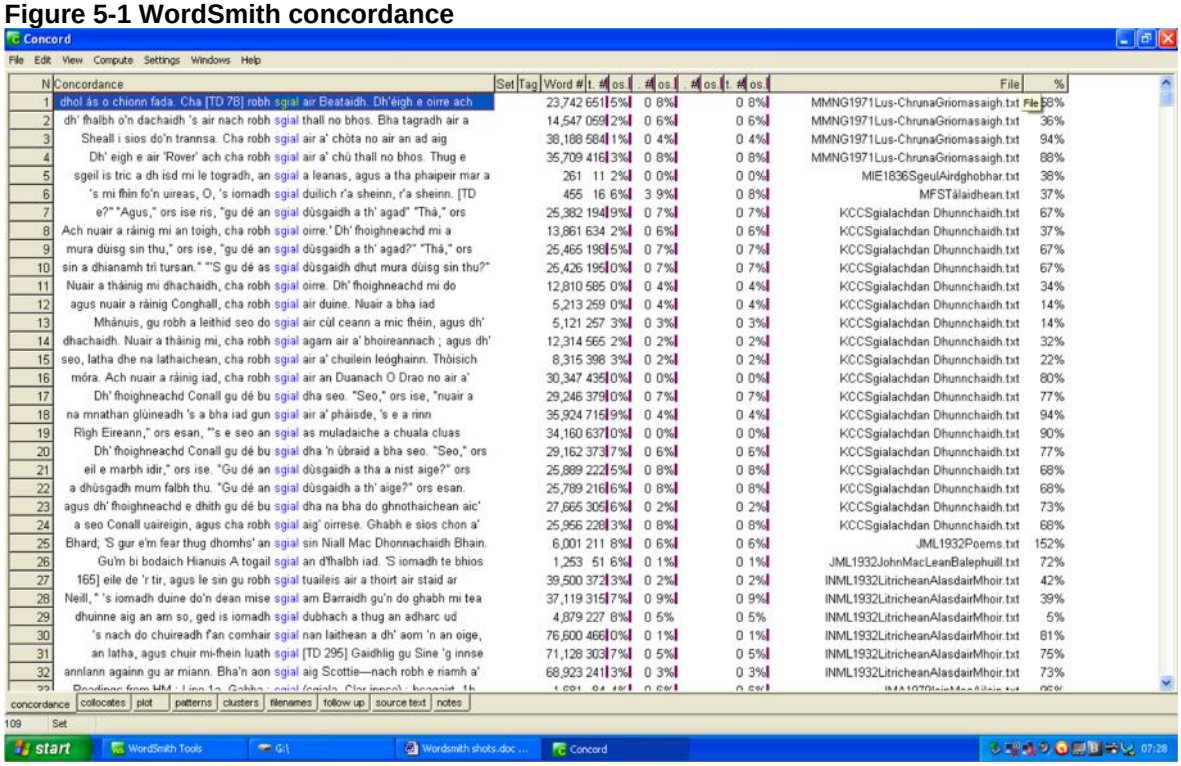
5.3 Analysis

5.3.1 WordSmith Tools

The analysis of corpus data was first carried out using the WordSmith Tools concordancer, Version 5 (Scott 2008). The concordancer allows for instances to be extracted as .xls files where occurrences can then be tagged and counted. Despite

major sections of the texts in other languages (mainly English) being removed, there are still quotes, notes and references in other languages, particularly English and Irish. Also, older and arcane spellings in Scottish Gaelic are sometimes found. By seeing occurrences in context in the concordance data, irrelevant occurrences could be removed before analysis began, i.e. sections that were not in Gaelic (e.g. English, Irish, Latin); printing errors (e.g. *an-schocair*, *nsch eil*, for *a-shocair* and *nach eil* respectively) and loan words with no orthographic change (e.g. *pistol*, *elastic*, *asbestos*, *scrap*). Occurrences within their immediate context also meant homographs were more easily semantically separated and data could be lemmatised in order that variations from mutation, plurals, slenderisation etc. could be counted together.

Figure 5-1 WordSmith concordance



Searches can be carried out on WordSmith using exact matches or by using * as a wildcard for any letter. Thus, a search for *ia* returns all words starting with, containing or ending with <ia>. WordSmith can then sort the results

alphabetically. Once WordSmith had been used thus to retrieve the relevant occurrences, the data was exported as an Excel file (.xls).

Figure 5-2 Sample of spreadsheet data

WordSmith Tools – 7/3/2012

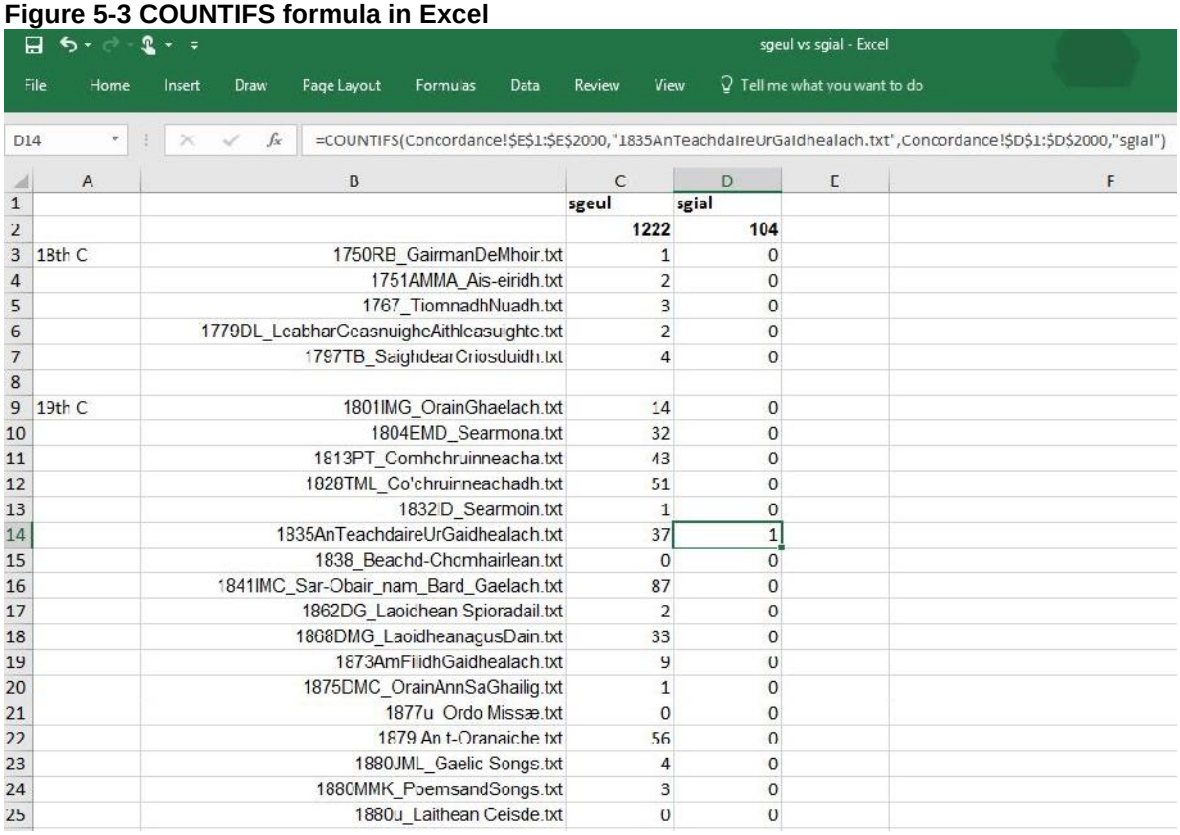
N	Concordance	Set	Tag	Text	Text division	Page no.
121	m ach dha na raodain — bucais, bascaidean, agus barailean g	medial sc	bascaid*	1979TC_DeireadhanFhoghair.txt		
97	Thosgail fcur de na gilidhean bascaid bidh a bha 'nan cois	medial sc	bascaid*	1980_OighreachdeGabhailtee.txt	1980IMML_ReudnaPairce.txt	
100	nn an laimh bhuidhe bha ann am bosca dubh a bha 'n oisean na	final sc	bosca*	1932NML_LitricheanAlascairMhoir.txt		
161	abhaist chuir Peigi mo nighean bosca mor dhachaich a Claschu	final sc	bosca*	1932NML_LitricheanAlascairMhoir.txt		
162	Thug Calum Sheonais a nall am bosca a Breascleit latha Noll	final sc	bosca*	1932NML_LitricheanAlascairMhoir.txt		
179	ath air Seon Angus. Oidhche na brioscaid aig Murdie. Glaim n	medial sc	brioscaid*	1970_LuachnaSaorsa.txt	1970MM_GuthanDeagaoLathaguLat	
178	Rl. Gheibh, gheibh. IAIN. Agus brioscaid? MAIRI. Gabh gu foi	medial sc	brioscaid*	1971_TiranAigh.txt	1971DC_AirTirean Mhailaig.txt	
149	iad a bhith a' cur pocann lan bhrioscaidean air an darc is	medial sc	brioscaid*	1972EW_A'BhratachDhealrach.txt		
150	ch gheibheadh sinne an smùrach bhrioscaidean a bhitheadh air	medial sc	brioscaid*	1972EW_A'BhratachDhealrach.txt		
180	on air (bseachdh a' faighinn brioscaid is còco, agus ged a	medial sc	brioscaid*	1973AC_SuathadhRiomadhRubha.txt		
148	n cofaidh eile dhi, chuir e dà bhrioscaid air fuinnsear, ag	medial sc	brioscaid*	1973IM_AnAghaidhCheimneach.txt		
151	an is bhròcan tacaideach; bùth bhrioscaidean-milis agus oral	medial sc	brioscaid*	1979TC_DeireadhanFhoghair.txt		
182	bcatha a's a' bhaile seo, agus brioscaidean-milis dha Nellie	medial sc	brioscaid*	1979TC_DeireadhanFhoghair.txt		
197	gaorid do na feara; oir ann sa choscradh an Eirinn, do mharb	medial sc	coscradh*	1779DL_LeabharCeasnuigheAithleasuighte.txt		d.17
220	ir i idir mi, ach rinn i air a deasc, 's cha tug i sùil tuil	final sc	deasc*	1970_BriseadhnaCloiche.txt	1970CF_MaryKate.txt	
218	n bha àite abhaist each air cùl deasc a' mhaighistir-sgoile	final sc	deasc*	1973TD_CreachMhomamFiadh.txt		
219	n t seithir a chi fhàg e aig an deasc agus tharruing e pios p	final sc	deasc*	1973TD_CreachMhomamFiadh.txt		
225	a' cheist fhoighneachd. Bha na deascaicheen ann an sgoil Bha	final sc	deasc*	1973TD_CreachMhomamFiadh.txt		
216	Bha fear eile na shuidh' aig dasc. Shuir e 'chomag ris a	final sc	deasc*	1974DIMD_FoSgaila'Swastika.txt		
217	rair no coignear na suidhe aig dascaichean a gabhail t-ainm,	final sc	deasc*	1974DIMD_FoSgaila'Swastika.txt		
234	e leoir shoillein gu do thuig deisciobuil Chriost na briath	medial sc	deisciobail*	1779DL_LeabharCeasnuigheAithleasuighte.txt		
337	imeasg do neach air bith d' a dheisciobluibh, bhi 'g agairt	medial sc	deisciobail*	1779DL_LeabharCeasnuigheAithleasuighte.txt		
340	adh ris an fhion a thug é d' a dheisciobluibh, Toradh na fio	medial sc	deisciobail*	1779DL_LeabharCeasnuigheAithleasuighte.txt		
353	na h-uile dilseomc gu sibh mo dheisciobuilse, ma bhios grad	medial sc	deisciobail*	1779DL_LeabharCeasnuigheAithleasuighte.txt		
237	, agus lamh ria na sheasamh an deisciobuil a b' ionmhuinn le	medial sc	deisciobail*	1828TML_Co'chruinneachadh.txt		

sc | non-Gaelic | names | initial sc | lemmas | removed | 2000-2007 | 1982-1990 | 1951-1999

Figure 5.2 shows an extract of an annotated spreadsheet. The filenames were created with the format of date preceding the title. This meant that results could easily be seen in chronological order by using Excel's sort function on the 'Text' column containing the filenames. In the column 'Set', the occurrence is marked with the feature to be analysed, in this case initial, medial or final <sc>. In the 'Tag' column, each occurrence is assigned to a lemma regardless of case, mutation, pluralisation etc. Any spelling variation other than the variation the one being analysed is ignored e.g. *maicroscop* and *miocroscopach* in this example. Further columns can include information on sub-divisions of the texts, page references to the publications, and any other notes.

In another tab on the spreadsheet, a formula (using COUNTIFS) was entered to calculate totals of texts and lemmas in each text as shown in the following figure.

Figure 5-3 COUNTIFS formula in Excel



	A	B	C	D	E	F
1			sgeul	sgial		
2			1222	104		
3	18th C	1750RB_GairmanDeMhoir.txt	1	0		
4		1751AMMA_Ais-eiridh.txt	2	0		
5		1767_TiomnadhNuadh.txt	3	0		
6		1779DL_LeabharCeasnuighcAithleasuighte.txt	2	0		
7		1797TB_SaighdearCriosduidh.txt	4	0		
8						
9	19th C	1801IMG_OrainGhaelach.txt	14	0		
10		1804EMD_Searmona.txt	32	0		
11		1813PT_Comhchruinneacha.txt	43	0		
12		1828TML_Co'chruinneachadh.txt	51	0		
13		1832D_Searmoin.txt	1	0		
14		1835AnTeachdaireUrGaidhealach.txt	37	1		
15		1838_Beachd-Chomhairlean.txt	0	0		
16		1841IMC_Sar-Obair_nam_Bard_Gaelach.txt	87	0		
17		1862DG_Laoichean Spioradail.txt	2	0		
18		1868DMG_LaoidheanaçusDain.txt	33	0		
19		1873AmFiidhGaidhealach.txt	9	0		
20		1875DMC_OrainAnnSaGhailig.txt	1	0		
21		1877u_Ordo Missæ.txt	0	0		
22		1879 An t-Oranaiche.txt	56	0		
23		1880JML_Gaelic Songs.txt	4	0		
24		1880MMK_PoemsandSongs.txt	3	0		
25		1880u_Laithean Ceisde.txt	0	0		

The data collated in this way could then be used for charts and graphs. Patterns and exceptional occurrence could then be investigated more closely by examining texts individually and qualitatively.

5.4 Summary

This chapter has outlined the choice of corpus linguistics as a tool for investigating the standardisation of orthography. The digitisation projects of Faclair na Gàidhlig and DASG which provided the texts for this study's corpus has been described. The contents of the corpus provide a wide-ranging overview of written texts in Scottish Gaelic in the modern period which form the evidence basis for the description of changing spelling conventions.

6 Acceptable Variation: <eu> and <ia>

In this chapter I trace how the preserved long /eː/ and broken long /ia/, have been transliterated in the orthography as <eu> and <ia>. As this feature indicates dialectal difference, it is a useful one with which to consider how Scottish Gaelic orthography has reconciled the competing ideas of the phonographic ideal (leading to the representation of different varieties) and the push of standardisation towards uniformity without variation.

Section 6.1 summarises the breaking of the long /eː/ and its significance to Scottish Gaelic dialect studies. Section 6.2 summaries how previous prescriptive and descriptive texts have aimed to cover the phenomenon and which arguments have been used for and against variation. Section 6.3 then analyses the corpus data to see how usage has matched or diverged from description. It focuses on individual word pairs to see when each spelling has been most in use over the period contained in the corpus. Although the corpus does not cover texts before 1750, some early uses of <ia> in MSS have been identified where they are reproduced or quoted in later texts.

As the primary interest is in the standardisation of the use of these two variants, other forms, such as <éa>, which have been used occasionally over the same period will not be considered here.[22] It will also be limited to variation where the <eu> form is part of a monosyllable, e.g. *beul*. Compound words have different factors to consider, such as whether the vowel is diphthongised when the stress is moved; compare *beul*, *beul-aithris*.

6.1 The Breaking of Long /eː/

The occurrence of /eː/ or /ia/ in words with historical /eː/ is a distinguishing feature separating Scottish Gaelic dialects. The feature is derived from the 'breaking', or diphthongisation, of Old Gaelic stressed long é, [eː], before non-palatal consonants. According to the Rev. Charles M. Robertson (1885-1927), who authored some important early papers on Scottish Gaelic dialects, the breaking can be found in 110 words in Scottish Gaelic (1907: 89). In the *Survey of the Gaelic*

[22] For example in Carswell (1567) the norm is <é> with occasional uses of <éu> and <éa> including *béul* (Thomson 1970: xiv).

Dialects of Scotland (SGDS), the questionnaire included, *a' cheud* 'first', *deug* 'teen', *beul* 'mouth', *feur* 'grass', *sgreuch* 'screech', *gun deunadh* 'that he would do', *Seumas* 'James', *sè* 'six' (Jackson 1968: 66). It was the only feature that the Survey leader, Kenneth H. Jackson, published a description of using the SGDS data (Ó Dochartaigh 1997: 53). From the data, Jackson (1968) identified a zone where words with long /eː/ are best preserved which stretches from the south west to the north east of Scotland (Argyllshire across to Perthshire, Strath Spey and north to Easter Ross and Sutherland). In older texts, the areas are referred to as 'northern' and 'southern' although modern dialectology describes these as *central* and *peripheral* areas (following Jackson 1968: 67). The central areas have tended towards the diphthong pronunciation while peripheral areas have preserved the older pronunciation e.g. *beul*, 'mouth'; Uist /bial/ vs. Arran /bɛːl/.

6.2 <eu> and <ia> in the Literature

6.2.1 The Codification of <eu>

This section shows how the southern (or peripheral) dialect writers who codified the norms in the early eighteenth century were aware of the dialectal variant <ia> but did not consider it an acceptable spelling. The norms which were created at the end of the eighteenth and start of the nineteenth centuries were set by writers from peripheral areas, particularly Perthshire and Argyllshire: for example, the Rev. Dr John Smith (1747–1807), a native of Glenorchy; Rev. James Stewart of Killin (1700-1789), originally from Glenfinlas in the Trossachs; and Robert Archibald Armstrong (1788–1867), born at Kenmore, Perthshire. In the early nineteenth century, we can find references to the <eu>/<ia> contrast in guides to pronunciation. The Rev. Dr Alexander Stewart acknowledges it in his grammar:[23]

> The sound of eu is like (2) e alone: long, as, 'teum' *to bite*, 'gleus' *trim*, *entertainment*. One of the most marked variations of Dialect occurs in the pronunciation of the diphthong *eu*; which, instead of being pronounced like long *e*, is over all the North Highlands commonly pronounced like *ia*; as, 'nial, ian, fiar', for 'neul, eun, feur.' (Stewart 1812: 7-8)

[23] It is not noted in the first edition of 1801 but appears in the second edition in 1812.

The Rev. Dr Alexander Stewart (1764-1821) was a native of Blair Atholl, Perthshire and later minister of Dingwall, Easter Ross (1805-20) which made him a speaker of a peripheral dialect but familiar with a northern, central one (Meek 1993c: 792). A contemporary of Stewart's, Alexander MacLaurin (1740-1820) was from Comrie, Perthshire and lived in Edinburgh where he would have met Gaelic speakers from varied backgrounds (Thomson 1994: 180). He also noted the dialectal variation in his school guide for the SSPCK:

> In the North Highlands, *eu* is pronounced like *ia*; as nial for neul, fiar for feur, &c. (McLaurin 1816: 54)

In the mid-nineteenth century, Archibald Farquharson named the <eu> convention explicitly as the 'standard':

> Besides these, there are many words where *eu* may be changed into *ia*, as *feur, geur, neul* (grass, sharp, cloud), *fiar, giar, nial*. The former is the standard Gaelic, but the latter is more common in the west and north. (Farquharson 1868: 23)

Farquharson (1801-1878) was another Perthshire native whose job as a minister took him to different districts including many years in Tiree (MacLean 1915: 116). Although <ia> is not presented in the above examples as a valid orthographic alternative, these writers used the digraph <ia> as a guide to pronunciation which they clearly expected to be understood. This is because <ia> was already in use in some other words to represent the historical diphthong /ia/ in words such as *biadh*, 'food', *grian*, 'sun'. These are usually realised as /iə/ and thus generally contrasts with broken é which is usually realised as /ia/. By the end of the century, it was recognised by MacBain that the codification of /ɛː/ as <eu> was as a result of the peripheral dialects' influence on the 'literary language':

> The crucial distinction [between north and south] consists in the different way in which the Dialects deal with *é* derived from compensatory lengthening; in the South it is *eu*, in the North *ia* (*e.g., feur* against *fiar, breug* against *briag*, &c.) […] The Southern Dialect is practically the literary language. (MacBain 1911: vii)

Later in the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, this standard spelling was challenged by writers of northern dialects as the following section describes.

6.2.2 Dialects and Acceptable Variation

In Section 2.2.1.2, it was noted that there are models of orthography where variation can exist within a standard. In Section 4.3, the various positions that Scottish Gaelic writers have taken on the suitability of dialectal variation was documented, particularly the argument that dialect variant spellings were appropriate in poetry and folklore which I have termed MacKinnon's paradigm. The <eu>/<ia> distinction is so iconic that it was commonly referenced when discussing the nature of acceptable variation.

In MacKinnon's article 'On the Orthography of Scottish Gaelic', published in *The Celtic Review* in 1909, we can see the elucidation of the ideology of the standard in relation to dialects. MacKinnon was intolerant of 'localisms' and he derided 'the tendency to the excessive use of localism in the orthography of Scottish Gaelic which threatens to bring our limited literature into disrepute' (1909: 13). However, he considered that a less 'excessive' use in certain areas such as folklore was acceptable:

> When Mr. Campbell [John F. Campbell] began to collect his Popular Tales it was a sound literary instinct that suggested the presentment of them in dialectal form. (1909: 13)

When he goes on to specify two acceptable exceptions to the standard, it is the variation of <eu>/<ia> that he uses to illustrate his point.

> (1) In writing lyric verse the ring of the line must be preserved. The poet will use, and ought to use, not only such double forms as *eun* and *ian, beul* and *bial*, but all local sounds that lend grace and melody to his rhymes.
>
> (2) When illustrating dialect, or registering dialectal material for linguistic and historical purposes […] (1909: 17)

This paradigm that MacKinnon sets out had been alluded to by earlier writers. Many examples can be found providing evidence that this was a deliberate practice, not a mark of partial literacy or a misunderstanding of the standard spelling conventions. In each of the following quotes, the distinction between <eu> and <ia> is the example given by the writer when justifying their spelling approach. In his *Collection of Gaelic Proverbs and Familiar Phrases* (1881),

Alexander Nicolson also argued for the appropriateness of variant spellings in terms of MacKinnon's paradigm:

> (...) an occasional divergence from the canonical norm, and even varied spellings of the same word, have seemed to me not only excusable but desirable. The phrases in which these words occur belong to the simplest vernacular forms of speech, and ought to be so given as to represent faithfully the varieties of phrase and pronunciation found among Gaelic-speaking people. The greater part of the two thousand three hundred sayings here first collected were received in MS., mostly from good Gaelic scholars, who spelled sometimes in different ways. Among these varieties of spelling are *béul* and *bial*, *bréug* and *briag*, *féur* and *fiar*, *sgéul* and *sgial*, *rìs* and *rithist*, &c. To adhere uniformly to any of these would sometimes spoil the rhyme or rhythm on which the charm of a proverb often depends. (Nicolson 1881: xi)

The issue of rhyme and rhythm is also the important factor for the author of the next example which comes from the introduction to a set of folk tales in the *Celtic Magazine*. The author's interest here is in stories and songs 'in the pure dialect of the district' (Alastair Og 1877: 28). Pre-empting any criticism for his use of non-standard forms, his argument for the use of <ia> is not to challenge the standard but to sustain rhyme and harmony:

> Certain very expressive words peculiar to the district will be noticed, and it will be remarked that the words *beul, meur, feuch*, and such like, are pronounced *bial, miar, fiach*, and so on. Such words as these may easily be altered in prose writings, without any injury to the text, but it is impossible to do so in poetry, the sound being so very different, without altering the harmony and consonance of the piece. This will account for our giving the Gaelic Songs throughout the Ceilidh in the dialect of the district in which they were composed, and our answer to any who may consider the orthography faulty and not in accordance with the now almost universally received standards. (Alastair Og 1877: 28)

The variation is also considered an advantage to poets. By having two forms representing two sounds, <eu> for /eː/ and <ia> for /ia/, the poet has more flexibility in rhyming choices (rhyme in Gaelic poetry is created mainly by assonance). In his notes on the Harris dialect of Iain Morison (Gobha na Hearadh), George Henderson also describes how /ia/ accords with Morison's dialect, yet in his poems he can 'take advantage' of both.

> 1. The dialect of the poems is distinctly the northern; it has *ia* as equivalent for the *ē* (long open *e*), which arose through compensatory

> lengthening, *e.g.* ciad, nial. Both forms, northern and southern, are taken advantage of, for the sake of rhyme. (Morison 1896: 348)

Another example of this function in poetry, where both forms are available to the poet, dates back to the eighteenth century. Angus MacLeod in the edition of *The Songs of Duncan Bàn MacIntyre* (1952) observes that MacIntyre alternates between both vowels 'as rhyme demands'.

> and the poet clearly used both *-ia-* and *-eu-* forms as rhyme demands, e.g. both *ciataichead* and *ceutach*. (MacLeod 1952: xliv)

MacIntyre himself was illiterate and the first edition of his work was produced in 1786 by Rev. Dr John Stuart of Luss (1743-1821) who subsequently took part in the translation of the Old Testament (1801) and the revision of the New Testament (1796).

Resistance to the <ia> variation can also be found, however. In a review of *Sgialachdan á Albainn Nuaidh* [Stories from Nova Scotia] (1970) by C.I.N. MacLeod, Seumas Robasdan criticises MacLeod's use of <ia> saying:

> Gheibhear -ia- air a litreachadh an àite -eu- gu cunbhalach anns an leabhar so, mar shamhladh: bial, ian, nial. Tha fios gu bheil an dòigh-litreachaidh so a' co-fhreagairt ris mar tha na faclan air a labhairt, ach cuiridh mi an aghaidh an fhasain so airson na reusain a leanas: (1) 's abhaist dhuinn -ia- a litreachadh ann am faclan leithid liath, ciar, grian, air a bheil fuaimneachadh /iə/ (2) a thaobh fuaim is ciall le chéile, cuiridh mi deafar eadar: feur ("feur gorm"), fiar (cam); feuch (dh'fheuch mi am biadh"), fiach ("fiach trì tasdain"); seun (cuimhneachan air a' bheannachadh a ghléidheas duine an àm cunnart), sian ("na seachd siantan"), (3) gheibhear facal leithid 'geur' air a bheil fuaimneachadh /eː/, ann an cuid cheàrnaidhean air Ghaidhealtachd co-dhiù; cha fhreagradh an litreachadh 'giar' idir ris mar a tha am facal air a labhairt anns na ceàrnaidhean sin." (Robasdan 1970: 383)
>
> *-ia- is found spelt in place of -eu- consistently in this book, for example: bial, ian, nial. Certainly this spelling corresponds to how the words are said, but I am against this fashion for the following reasons: (1) we are used to using -ia- in spelling words such as liath, ciar, grian, which are pronounced* /iə/ (2) *in terms of sound and meaning together, I distinguish: feur (grass), fiar (crooked); feuch (try), fiach (worth); seun (a charm), sian (violent weather), (3) a word like 'geur' is pronounced* /eː/ *in at least some parts of the Gaidhealtachd*; *the spelling 'giar' would not correspond to how the word is said in those areas*.

Despite the context of folkloric stories in the text, Robasdan does not accept this variation but makes a case for preserving the <eu> spelling. Also in the 1970s, Donald Archie MacDonald made it clear in his introduction to Pàdruig Moireasdan's *Ugam agus Bhuam* (1977) that he wished to represent Pàdruig's speech.[24] However, there are nine specified examples where he chooses to use a more conventional spelling over one which is more dialect specific, and this list includes using <eu> in place of <ia>.

> 7) Far an can sinn, am bitheantas, bial, sgial, etc. tha mi air a bhith 'sgrìobhadh beul, sgeul, etc. (1977: 19)
>
> *Where we say, generally /bial/, /sgial/, etc. I have written* beul, sgeul, etc.

The nature of variation between <eu> and <ia> as a dialect marker makes the feature a useful one to illustrate the relationship between standard and non-standard forms. As section 6.3 will show, the corpus examples of <ia> primarily fall into the two contexts in MacKinnon's paradigm: for rhyme in poetry and for texts with a particular linguistic or dialectal interest.

6.2.3 <eu> and <ia> in GOC

The GOC report of 1981 recognises <ia> as an existing variant form of <eu>:

> In the case of words spelt with eu (for example, **beul, ceud, meud**) there would be no great gain in making a change in the spelling generally (to **bial, ciad, miad**, for example, though such spellings are commonly enough found in contemporary sources and have to be recognised, therefore, as occurring forms). (SEB 1981)

Its wordlist, however, lists only 'beul', 'beul-aithris' and 'beulaibh' and not their <ia> forms. While it does not, then, explicitly prohibit the use of <ia>, neither does the report support or encourage its use. What GOC 1981 does recommend is the use of the two spellings to distinguish between homophones:

> 3.3 When there are homophones, however, these should be differentiated in spelling where such differentiation is feasible. For

[24] 'Am bitheantas, cho fada agus a tha e ann an comas a' litreachaidh sin a dheanamh, tha mi air mo dhìchioll a dheanamh air cainnt Phàdruig fhéin a thoirt a follais air an duilleig mar a tha i air an teip.' (1977: 18) (*Generally, as far as it is possible for the spelling to do so, I have tried to make Padruig's own speech as clear on the page as it is on tape.*)

> example, in the case of **ceud** = 100 / **ceud** = 1st, **ceud** = "100" should be retained and "1st" should be written **ciad**; and **mìos** = "month" while the word for "basin" should be written **mias**; **feur** = "grass"; **fìor** = "true"; **fiar** = "squint". (SEB 1981)

By the 2005 recommendations however, 'eu rather than ia' was explicitly the recommended form (SQA 2005: 4A) and this was repeated in GOC 2009. The use of the two forms to minimise ambiguity by distinguishing between homophones was maintained in the later reports (see Section 6.3.5 *feur* vs *fiar*).

6.3 <eu> and <ia> in the Corpus

6.3.1 Lemma Frequency

In Table 6.1 below, the frequency of occurrences for the most common pairs of <eu>/<ia> variation across the corpus are shown. The data in this table does not distinguish semantic differences such as *ciad* 'first / *ceud* 'hundred', or *feur* 'grass'/ *fiar* 'crooked' (6.3.5 shows differentiation between *feur*/*fiar*).

Table 6-1 Frequency of eu/ia word pairs in the corpus

<eu>	Freq.	<ia>	Freq.
ceud	1,851	ciad	1,008
beul	1,481	bial	252
sgeul	1,224	sgial	104
geur	881	giar	21
deug	619	diag	163
meud	440	miad	52
feur	350	fiar	147
breug	206	briag	45
deur	184	diar	43
meur	154	miar	49
neul	131	nial	42
freumh	87	friamh	27

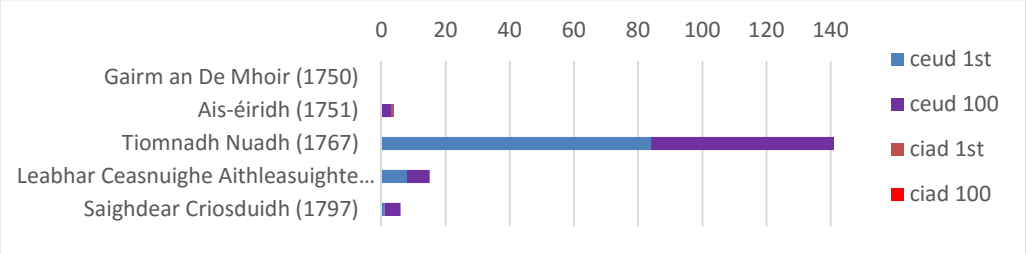
The general picture for <eu>/<ia> variation in the corpus is that <eu> is more common in all lemmas. In the following sections, the word pairs of *beul*/*bial*, *sgeul*/*sgial*, *geur*/*giar*, and *feur*/*fiar* will be discussed in turn.

6.3.2 *ceud* vs *ciad*

The lemmas *ceud* and *ciad* can both refer to either 'first' or 'hundred'.[25] The GOC 1981 report codified a distinction between them, assigning *ceud* as 100 and *ciad* as first. There are 714 occurrences of ceud (as 100) and 202 occurrences of ciad (as 100) in the corpus. There are 953 occurrences of ceud (as first) and 773 occurrences of ciad (as first).

In the eighteenth century texts, *ceud* is the norm for both meanings as the following chart shows.

Figure 6-1 Frequency of *ceud/ciad* in 18th-century corpus texts



In *Gairm an De Mhoir* (1750), neither form is used, *cead* is used for both meanings. MacMhaighstir Alasdair also mainly uses *cead* for 'first'.[26] On one occasion, however, he uses *ciad* (first) in the poem 'Moladh an ughdair do 'n tsean chánoin Ghailic':

> ’S a rèir Mhic Comb,
> An t-ùghdar mòr ri luaidh,
> ’S i ’s freamhach óir,
> ’S ciad ghrámair glóir gach sluaigh (Mac-Donuill 1751: 7)

As the next section will show, *Ais-éiridh* (1751) is also the first corpus text to use *bial*. This confirms the expectations of where <ia> would be found according to dialect studies and MacKinnon's paradigm: MacMhaighstir Alasdair's dialect of Moidart is within the central dialect area and he is using <ia> in verse, although it

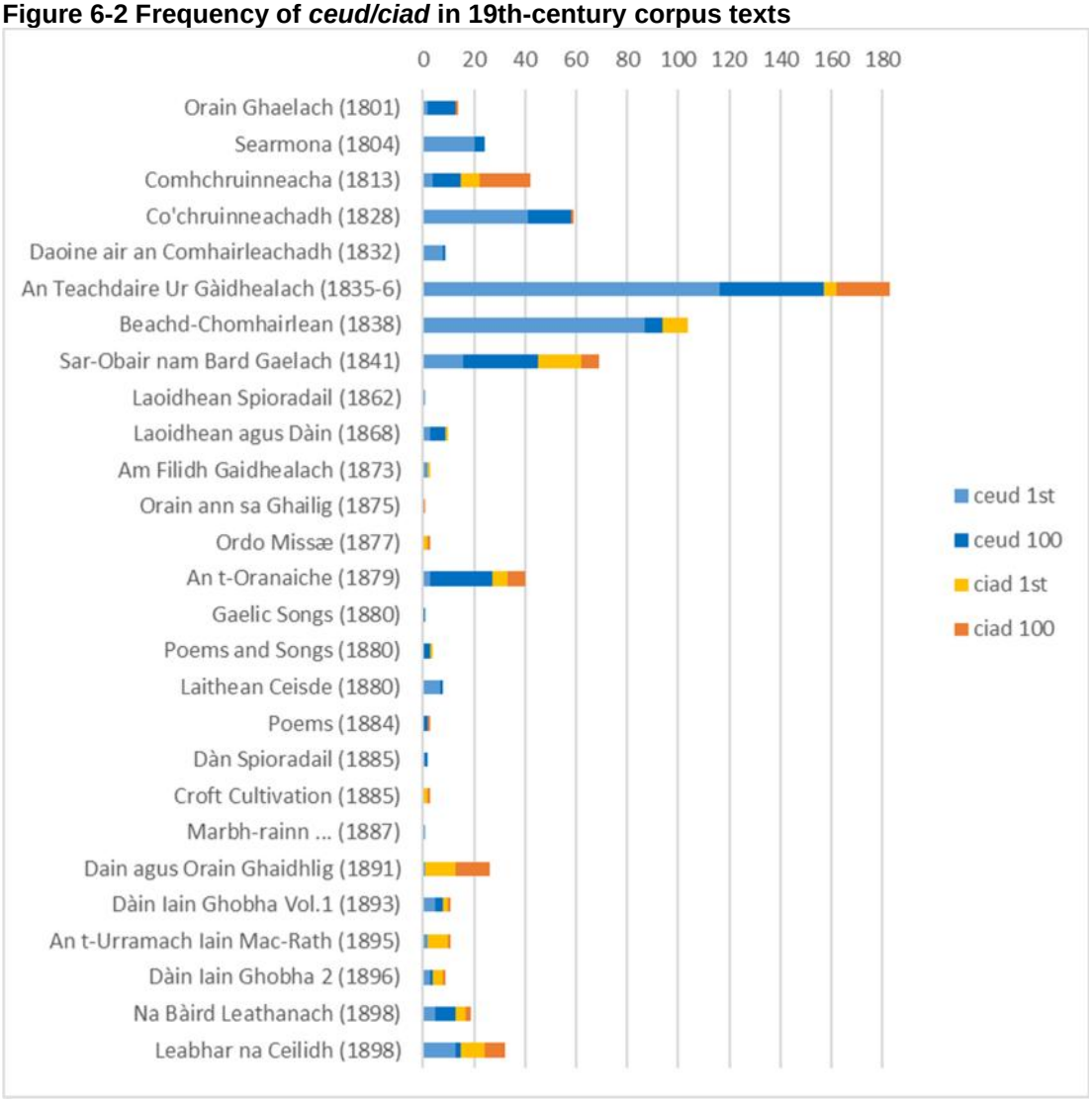
[25] Dwelly redirects *ciad* to the headword *ceud* but also offers a second definition: (CR) ’Opinion, impression – Strathtay. *Ghabh mi droch chiad dheth*, I formed a bad opinion of him’ (1911 s.v. ciad) sourced from the Rev. C. M. Robertson. This use has not been found in these corpus results and appears to be obsolete.

[26] e.g. ’Chead Choirnel a bha ’ g a Ph — — sa’ (Mac-Donuill 1751: 112)

does not appear to be for rhyme in this instance. The remaining eighteenth-century texts use *ceud* for both 'first' and 'hundred'.

In the nineteenth century there are many more occurrences of *ciad* but there is no distinction in meaning between the two forms and their two meanings.

Figure 6-2 Frequency of *ceud/ciad* in 19th-century corpus texts



The first nineteenth century text to use *ciad* in significant numbers is Patrick Turner's poetry collection *Comhchruinneacha do dhain taghta Ghaidhealach* (1813). Turner was a native of Cowal who travelled throughout the Highlands collecting poetry (MacLean 1915: 361). His use fits with MacKinnon's paradigm as it is poetry and *ciad* is often (but not always) used for rhyme as in the following example:

> Gu ’n robh mais ann a t-fhiamh,
> ’Sin a’s tlachd ort measg chiad,

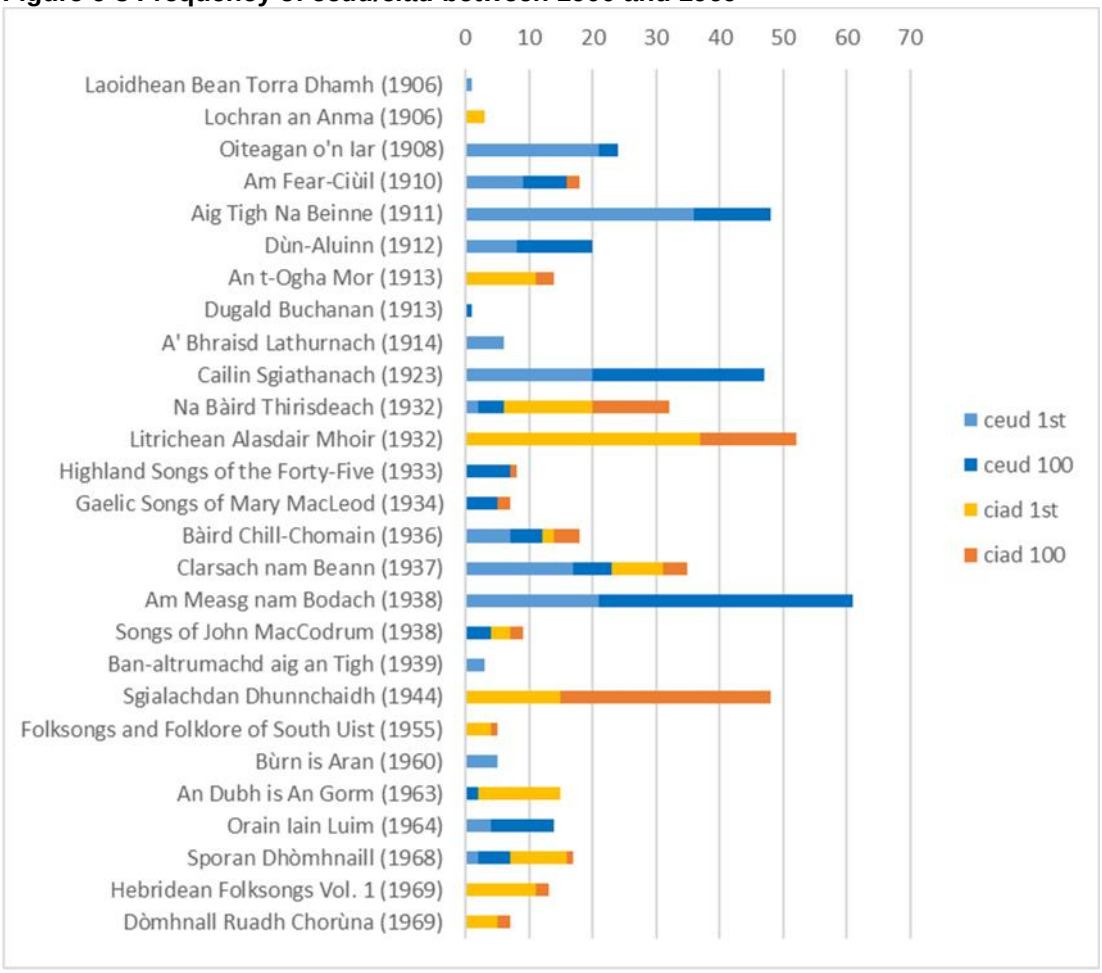
Rud nach cuala’ mi riamh air triùir. (1813: 129)

This is, however, the only <ia> form that Turner uses. As the next sections will show, *ciad* is substantially more common in the first half of the nineteenth century than the other lemmas with <ia>. This is reflected in Armstrong's Dictionary (1825) which does not have headword entries for <ia> spellings generally but does have one for *ciad*. Armstong gives its meaning as 'A hundred. More frequently written ceud' (Armstrong 1825 s.v. ciad). *Ciad* is the first of the broken long *e* <ia> lemmas to be recognised.

Most of the times where *ciad* appears in the nineteenth century it is in books of poetry, although even in these contexts, *ceud* is the norm; i.e. in *Orain Ghaelach* (1801), *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach* (1841), *Laoidhean agus Dàin* (1868). All of the examples of *ciad*, whether as 'first' or 'hundred', all appear in verse until *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* (1835-6). Here, is it used in some contexts that fit within MacKinnon's paradigm as 'dialect materials' such as prose dialogues e.g. 'Duilleag nam Balachan' by Taracul Udlaidh (1835: 172) but occasionally in other prose contexts such as news and letters; e.g. 'Guth O MhacTalla' (1835: 235)

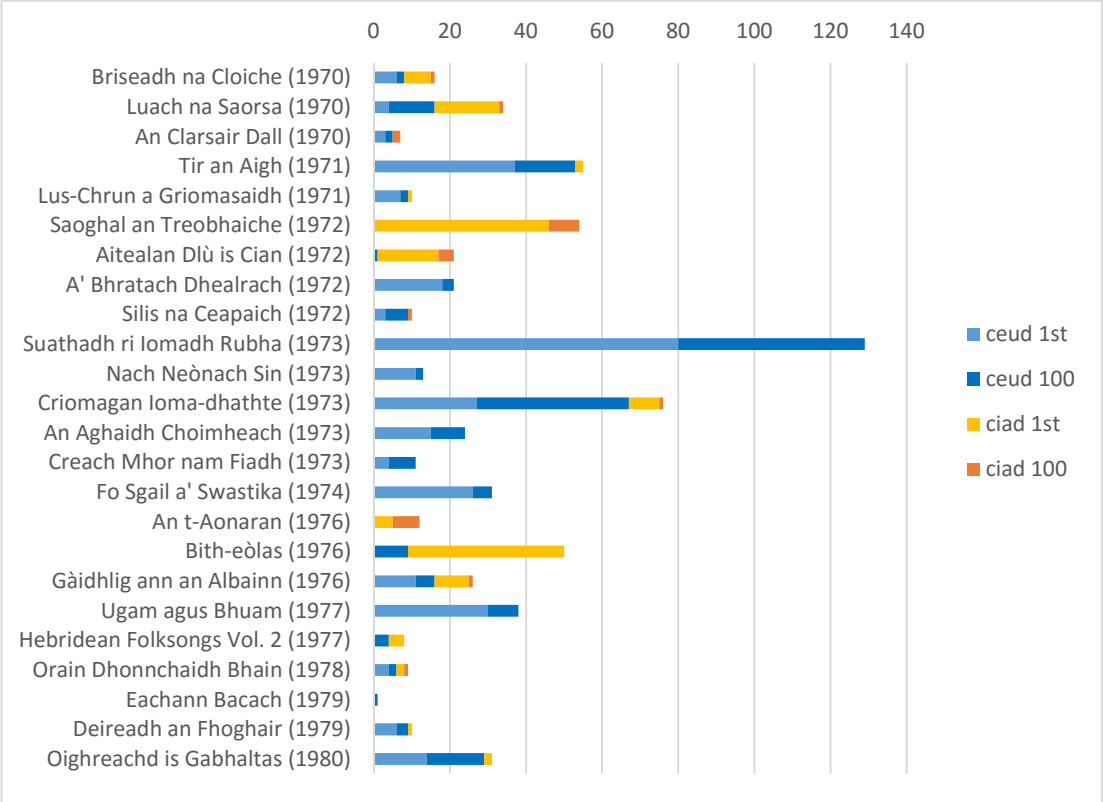
The <ia> form continued to be used with no apparent distinction between meanings for the rest of the nineteenth century along with the <eu> form. In the last decade of the century, the <ia> form is the most common form of *ciad* in the corpus. In the first couple of decades of the twentieth century, however, *ciad*, becomes less common despite its use in *Lòchran an Anma* (1906) and *An t-Ogha Mor* (1913), both of which as will be seen in following sections, only use <ia> forms. This reduction in prominence of *ciad* may have been influenced by its codification as *ceud* in MacBain (1896 & 1911) and Dwelly (1911).

Figure 6-3 Frequency of *ceud/ciad* between 1900 and 1969



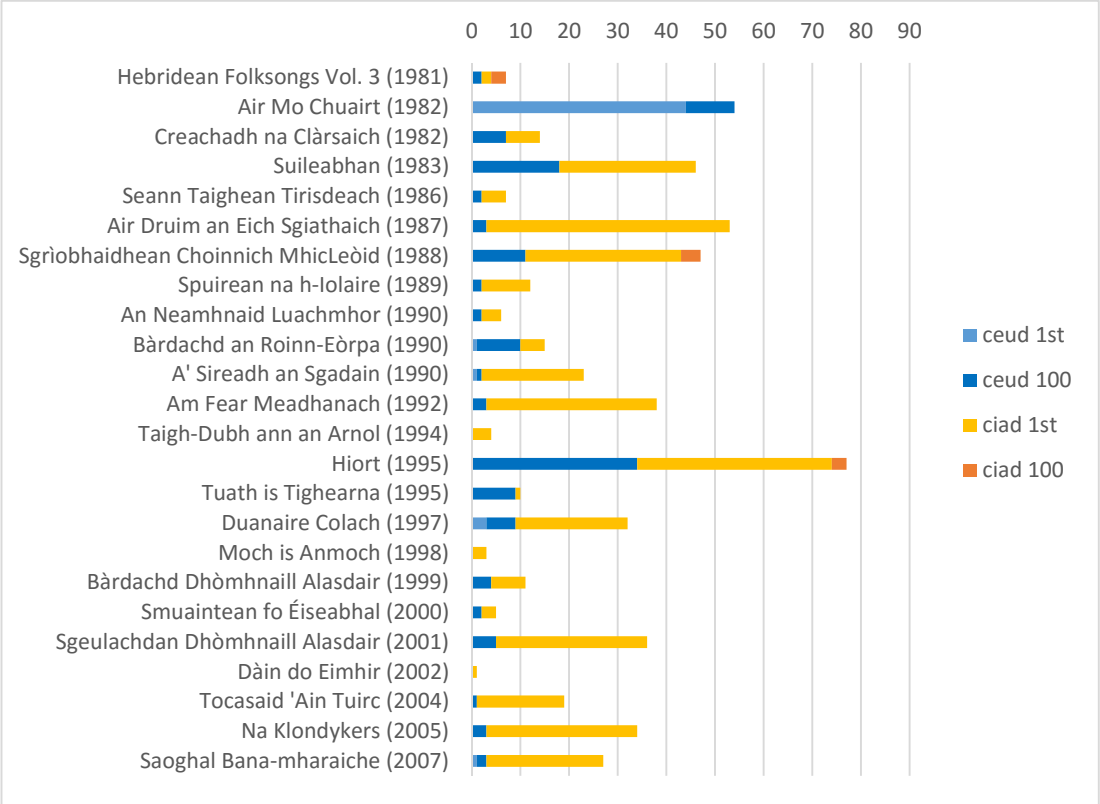
Neither *Dùn-Aluinn* (1912) nor *Aig Tigh na Beinne* (1911) uses any <ia> of the lemmas under analysis. In contrast, *Lochran an Anma* (1906), *An t-Ogha Mor* (1913) and *Litrichean Alasdair Mhoir* (1932) use *ciad* exclusively: these three texts are frequent users of <ia> forms as the following sections will illustrate. By the 1960s, *ciad* is beginning to establish itself as the norm over *ceud*. This change can be followed in the writings of Iain Mac a' Ghobhainn (Iain Crichton Smith) who has several texts in the corpus. In his collection of stories *Bùrn is Aran* (1960), he only uses *ceud*, but in *An Dubh is An Gorm* (1963), *ciad* is more common. By the publication of his novella *An t-Aonaran* in 1976, he uses *ciad* exclusively.

Figure 6-4 Frequency of *ceud/ciad* between 1970 and 1980



The decade preceding the first GOC reforms shows a mixed picture but with *ciad* appearing in even more contexts outwith MacKinnon's paradigm such as the essays in *Aitealan Dlù is Cian* (1972) agus *Criomagan Ioma-dhathe* (1973). Most significantly, however, is the first text to make a clear distincion between *ciad* (first) and *ceud* (hundred): *Bith-eòlas* (1976). This biology textbook was translated by Ruaraidh MacThòmais [Derick Thomson] who later chaired the GOC sub-committee. The adoption of this distinction is clearly seen in the texts published from 1982 (see folllowing chart).

Figure 6-5 Frequency of *ceud/ciad* post-GOC



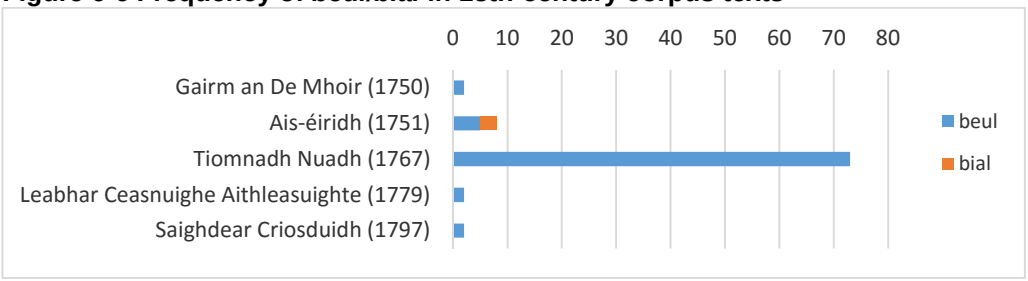
The distiction is adhered to decisively. The only exceptional occurrences are in *Sgrìobhaidhean Choinnich MhicLeòid* (1988) and *Hiort* (1995). The writings of Kenneth MacLeod were edited by T. M. Murchison in *Sgrìobhaidhean Choinnich MhicLeòid* (1988). While the spelling is generally modernised, the small number (4 occurrences) of *ciad,* 'hundred', are likely to be old spellings from MacLeod's original texts. There are 3 occurrences of *ciad,* 'hundred', in *Hiort* (1995) which are not from older quotations or in poetry, but appear to be simple errors. Overall, the codification of the semantic difference into two existing variant spellings has been a successful reform.

6.3.3 *beul* vs *bial*

The difference between *beul* and *bial* is only one of dialectal pronunciation. Both have the semantic meaning of 'mouth' or 'opening'.[27] There are 1,481 occurrences of *beul* and 252 occurrences of *bial* in the corpus. In the eighteenth century texts, it is *beul* which occurs predominantly.

[27] Dwelly has an entry for *bial* meaning 'water', however this is tagged as obsolete.

Figure 6-6 Frequency of *beul/bial* in 18th-century corpus texts



The occurrences in *Ais-éiridh* (1751) are the oldest instances of *bial* in the corpus. This text has 5 *beul* and 3 *bial*. As noted in the previous section, MacMhaighstir Alasdair spoke a central dialect. The use of dialectal forms for rhymes in MacKinnon's paradigm is illustrated here, for example, in this verse where he rhymes *bial* with *fial, triall,* and *cliamh:*

> Na tostachan siggeanta fial,
> 'G an aiseag go rige mo bhial;
> Ba mhireagach stuiggidh, is triall,
> Am marsal le ciogguilt roi' m' chliamh (Mac-Dhonuill 1751: 148)

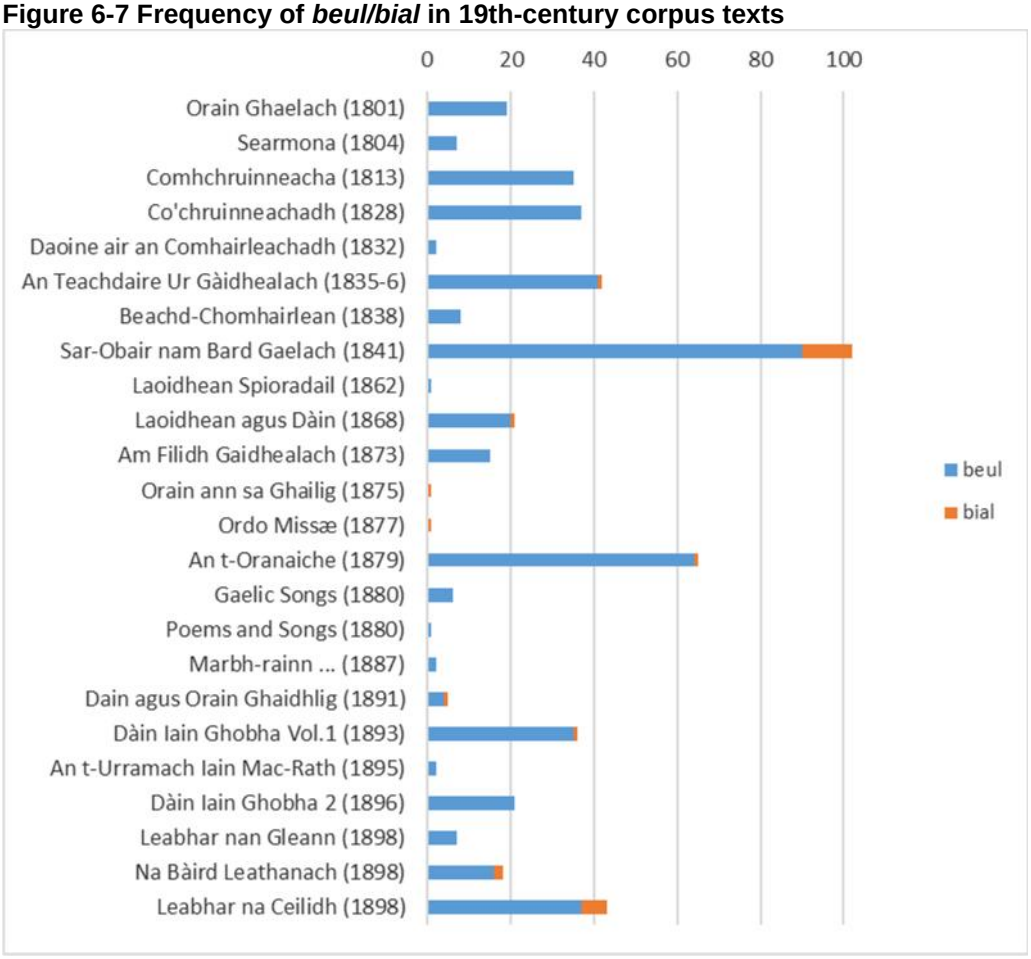
He also uses *beul* for rhyme as in the next example where it rhymes with *fein, téud* and r*é*:

> Bha smeorach cur na smúid dhith,
> Air baccan cuil lea fein;
> An dreadhunn-donn go súrdoil,
> ’S a rifeid chiuil na bheul;
> Am briccein-beith’ is lúb air,
> ’S e ’g gleusadh lú a théud;
> An coileach-dubh ri dúrdan;
> ’S a chearc ri túchan ré. (Mac-Dhonuill 1751: 83)

We can see that MacKinnon's paradigm of acceptable variation (in poetry and dialectal material) is therefore in action from the start of Modern Scottish Gaelic orthography.

In Figure 6.2, the continued dominance of *beul* through the nineteenth century is evident.

Figure 6-7 Frequency of *beul/bial* in 19th-century corpus texts



The occurrences of *bial* are mainly in poetic contexts although even in these contexts, *beul* is the norm, i.e. in *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach* (1841), *Laoidhean agus Dàin* (1868), *An t-Oranaiche* (1879), *Dàin agus Orain Ghàidhlig* (1891), *Dàin Iain Gobha 1* (1893), *Na Bàird Leathanach* (1898) and *Leabhar na Ceilidh* (1898). While *Orain ann sa Ghailig* (1875) looks as though it uses only <ia>, there is only one instance of *bial* where it is used to rhyme with *diadhachd, blianach, sian*. Including the other lemmas, *Orain ann sa Ghailig* (1875) has 3 <eu> occurrences and 3 <ia> occurrences.

Ordo Missae (1877) also has only one instance of *bial* but also only uses <ia> in *ciad* (2 occurrences as 'first', 1 as 'hundred') and it is the earliest text in the corpus that does not fall within MacKinnon's acceptable variation paradigm. The text is the Catholic Order of Mass in Gaelic. While its dialect origin is unknown, the use of <ia> suggests a central dialect area source. Its nature as a Catholic text is also possibly significant. Other writers in the later nineteenth century who promote the Bible as a standard are following Protestant precedent and the rulings of the Church of Scotland on approved versions. A Catholic translator is perhaps less

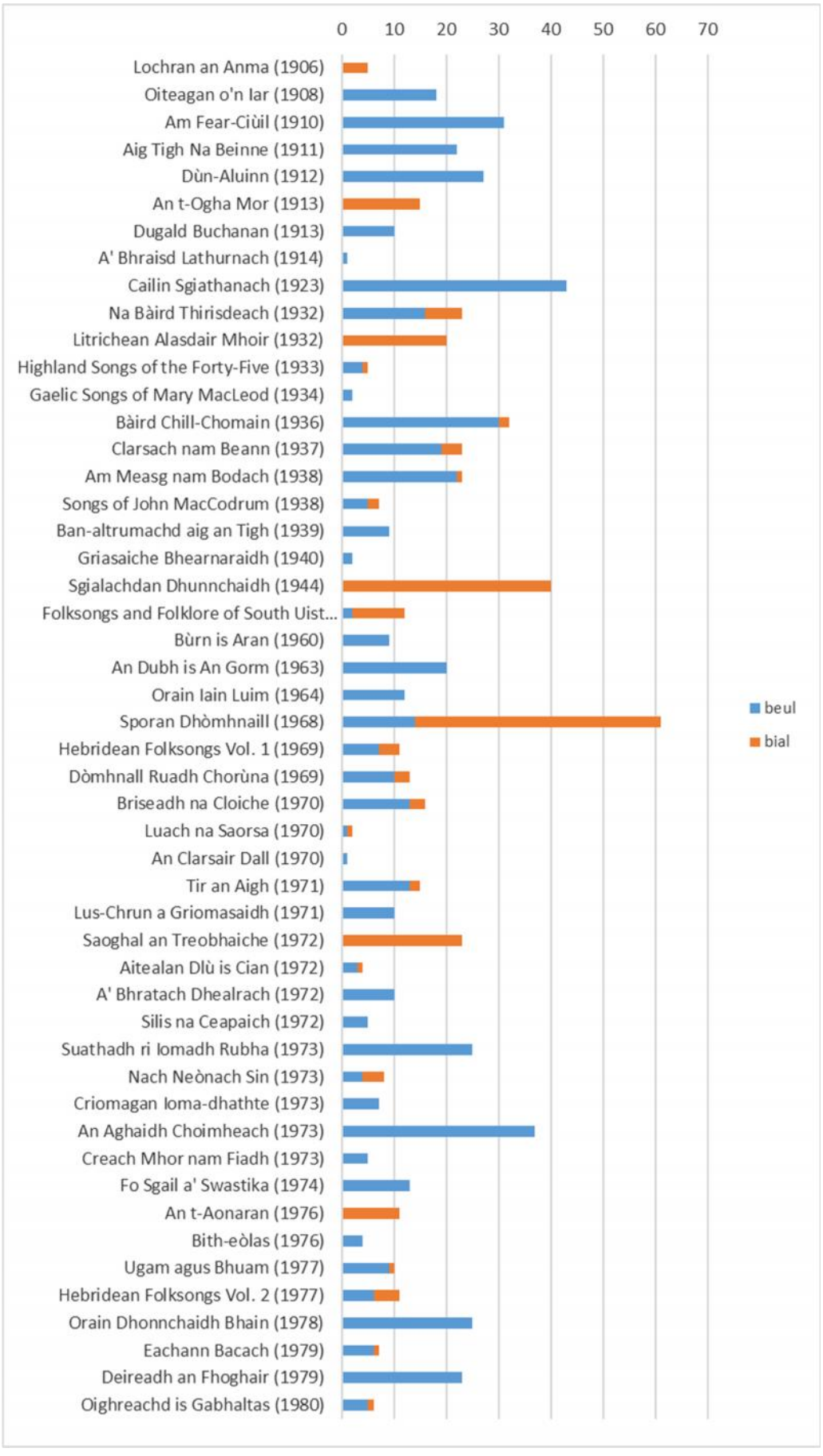
likely to be inclined to consider Protestant texts as the last word on the matter and be more open to non-standard uses of <ia>. Similarly, *Lòchran an Anma* (1906) which only uses the <ia> forms of *bial* (6 occurences) and *ciad* (3 occurences) is a book of Catholic prayers.

Between 1900 and 1980 (see Figure 6.3) the frequency of *bial* increases with five texts using *bial* only and another two using *bial* more often than *beul*; *Folksongs and Folklore* (1955) and *Sporan Dhòmhnaill* (1968). Of the 51 texts in the corpus that date from 1900 to 1980 inclusive, 25 of them use *bial*. Of those, 15 texts are poetry and folkloric texts. However, 10 of them are not within this paradigm but are more clearly challenging <eu> as a norm. They include:

An t-Ogha Mor (1913)	fiction
Lòchran an Anma (1906)	religious prose
Litrichean Alasdair Mhoir (1932)	newspaper columns
Briseadh na Cloiche (1970)	fiction
Luach na Saorsa (1970)	essay and autobiography
An t-Aonaran (1976)	fiction
Tìr an Aigh (1971)	fiction
Aitealan Dlù is Cian (1972)	essays
Nach Neònach Sin (1973)	fiction
Oighreachd is Gabhaltas (1980)	academic essays

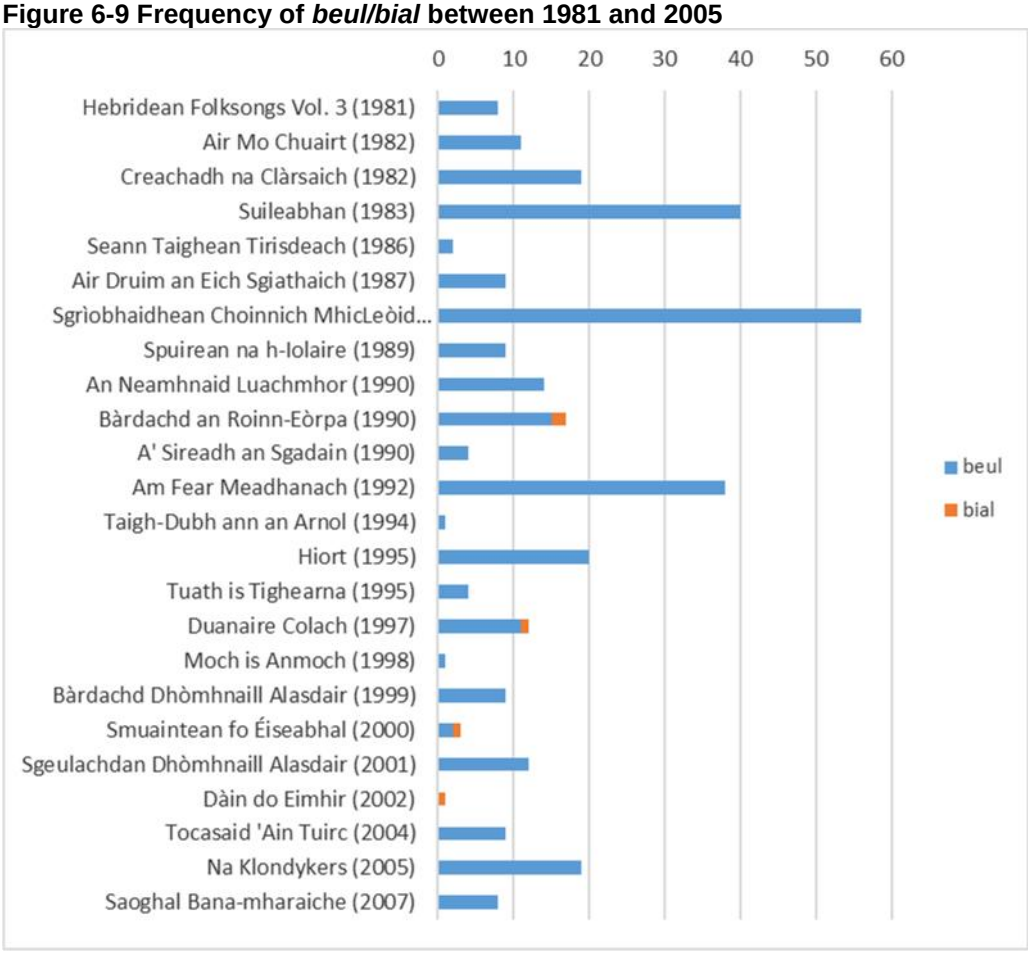
The range of literary contexts in these works move beyond MacKinnon's paradigm of acceptable variation. It is significant that most of these are from the 1970s and therefore in the period immediately preceding the first GOC report. This pattern will be repeated in the data of the other <eu>/<ia> lemmas.

Figure 6-8 Frequency of *beul/bial* between 1900 and 1980



After the first GOC report in 1981, *bial* recedes and reverts to MacKinnon's paradigm, with *bial* appearing only in *Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa* (1990), *Duanaire Colach* (1997), *Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal* (2000) and *Dàin do Eimhir* (2002).

Figure 6-9 Frequency of *beul/bial* between 1981 and 2005



The most recent example is in Christopher Whyte's 2002 edition of Sorley MacLean's *Dàin do Eimhir*. MacLean's dialect of Raasay is within the central dialect area. Whyte is explicit about his editing decisions and specifies that while he has modernised the spelling generally he kept:

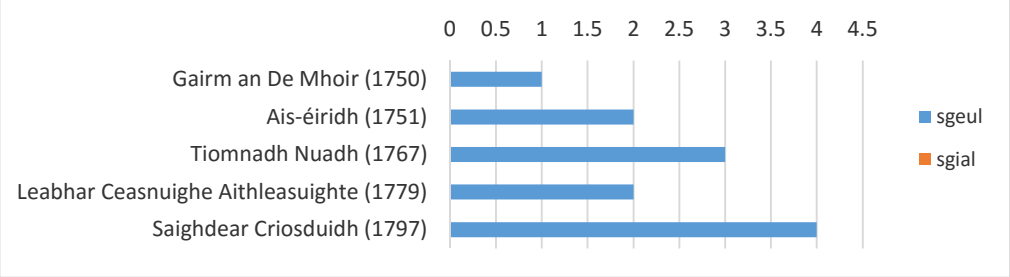
> the careful distinction made in MacLean's later versions of his texts between diphthong ('bial') and monophthong ('eu') pronunciations of the same word (MacLean 2002: 124)

6.3.4 *sgeul* vs *sgial*

The difference between *sgeul* and *sgial* is only one of dialectal pronunciation.. They both have the meaning of 'story'. There are 1,224 occurrences of *sgeul* in the

corpus and 104 of *sgial*. Although there are no occurrences of *sgial* in the eighteenth-century corpus texts, the oldest reference to *sgial* in the corpus does come from the eighteenth century and appears in Ó Baoill's edition of MacLean poetry, *Eachann Bacach* (1979). In reference to the poem 'Gabhaidh mi Sgeula dem' Shagart' by Iain Mac Ailein, Ó Baoill notes a variant spelling in the MS made by Dr Hector Maclean of Grulin, Eigg, who died about 1785 (Ó Baoill 1979: 310). The MS is believed to have been in progress from around 1738 until Maclean's death (Ó Baoill 1979: 43).[28] Eigg falls in the central dialect area where SGDS (Point 94) records broken *e*.

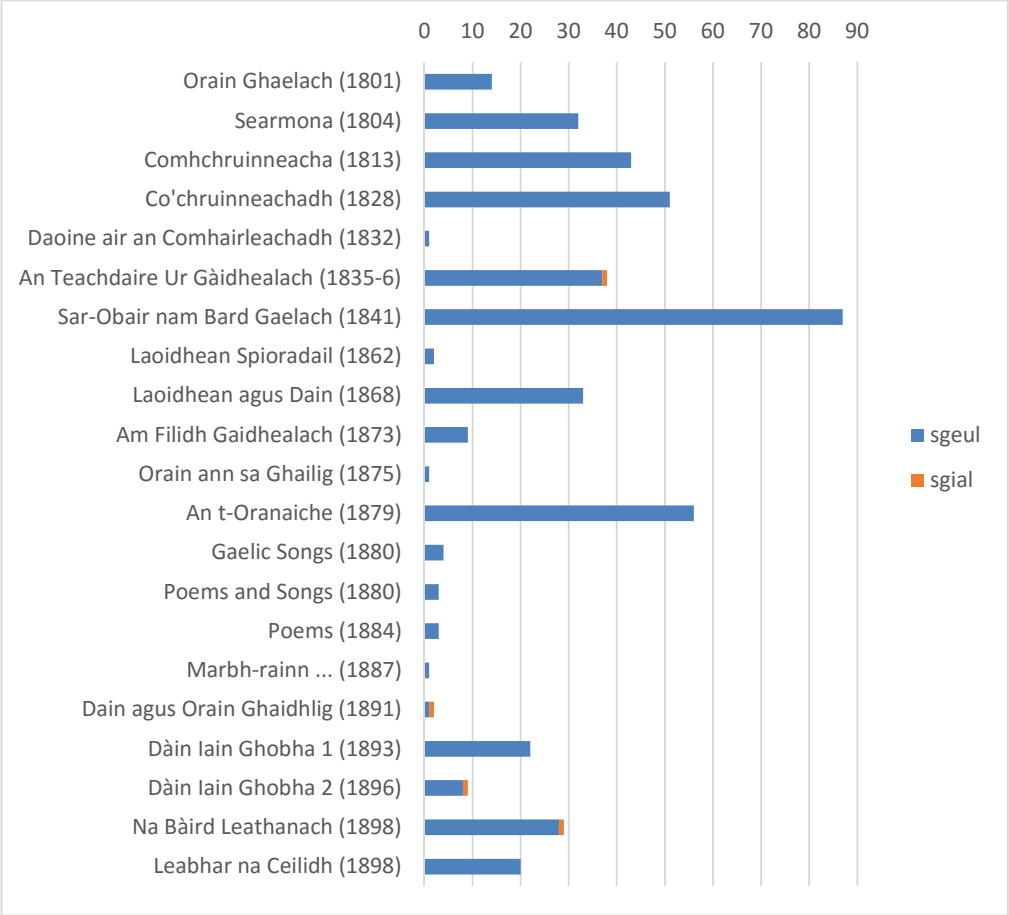
Figure 6-10 Frequency of *sgeul/sgial* in 18th-century corpus texts



As Figure 6.6 below shows, *sgial* is also rare in the nineteenth century. Although there is one early occurrence in 1835, it does not reappear until the last decade of the century albeit appearing only once per text and in books of poetry. In its appearance in *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* (1835-6), an early Gaelic periodical, it appears in the folk tale entitled 'Sean Sgeul' [Old Tale] by an author credited only as Mac 'Ic Eachainn, Airdghobhar (MacEachen, Ardgour). Although the author is not identified beyond the surname (or patronymic) MacEachen, the district of Ardgour falls within the central dialect area where the SGDS data for Ardgour (Point 78) also recorded broken *é*. The story also contains occurrences of *ciadabh, bial, sia, diag* and *ciadna* confirming the extensive spread of the diphthong in this area in the early nineteenth century.

[28] Elsewhere, Ó Baoill specifies the unusual spelling of the 'HM' MS: "Tha litreachadh annasach ann an HM … Is ann an Gàidhlig dhùchasach na h-Albann a rinn Eachann an dàn, tha mi smaoineachadh, ach tha àiteachan ann cuideachd far an tug e cruthan fhacal on Ghàidhlig Chlasaicich (Ó Baoill 1997: 49). *(There is unusual spelling in HM ... It was in Scottish Gaelic that Hector wrote the poem, I believe, but there are also occasions where he took word forms from Classical Gaelic*)

Figure 6-11 Frequency of *sgeul/sgial* in 19th-century corpus texts

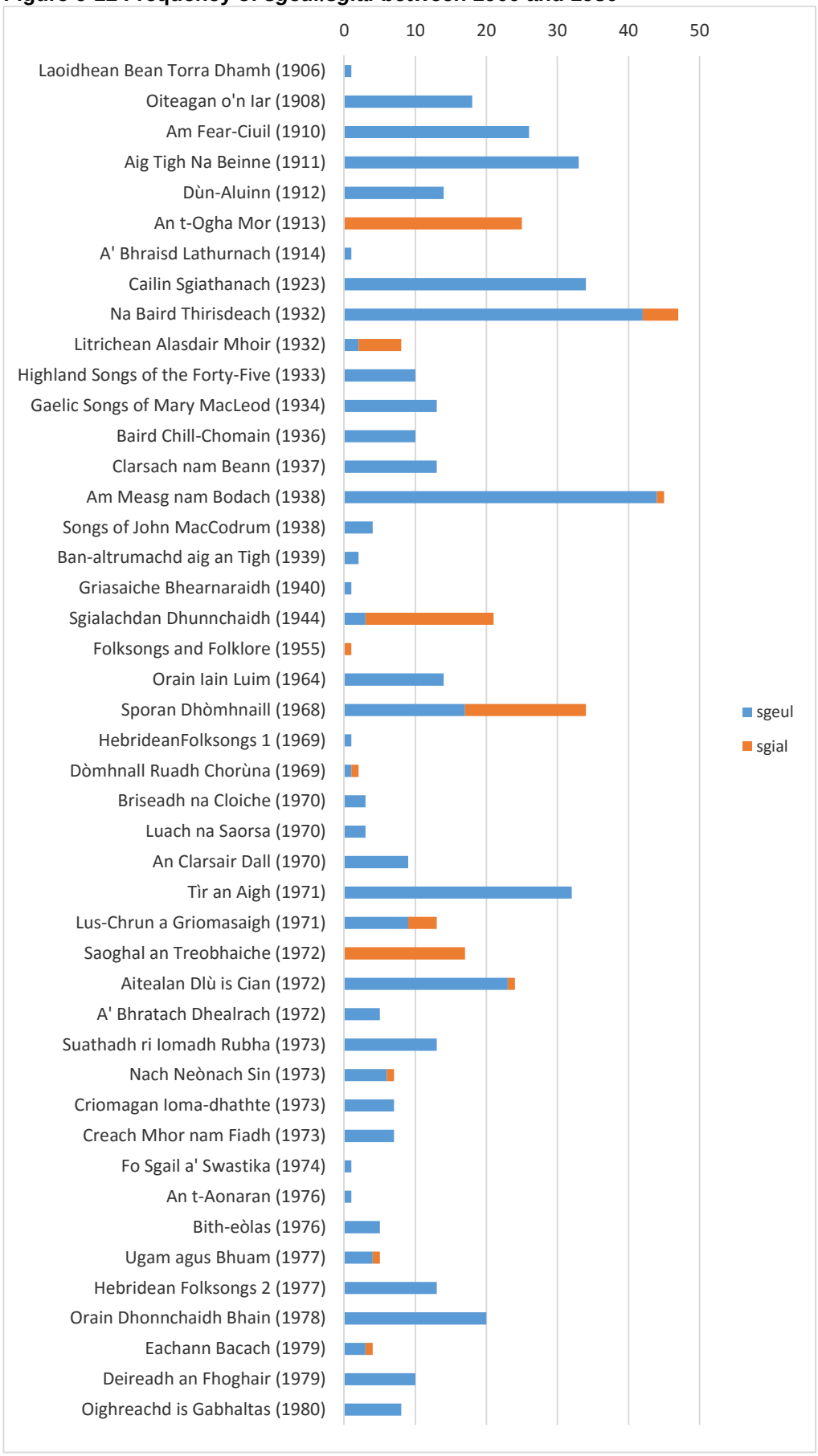


As with *bial*, the use of *sgial* grows in the twentieth century, although there are only three texts that use it exclusively; *An t-Ogha Mor* [The Great Grandchild] (1913), *Saoghal an Treobhaiche* [The World of the Ploughman] (1972), and *Folksongs and Folklore* (1955) (with only 1 occurrence). In the novel *An t-Ogha Mor* (1913) the author, Aonghas MacDhonnachaidh (Angus Robertson) made an explicit choice to use his dialect of Skye in his prose and specifically <ia> over <eu> (see preface 1913: v). For all the lemmas analysed here, *An t-Ogha Mor* uses only the <ia> forms. *Saoghal an Treobhaiche* (1972) with 17 occurrences, is also prose, however it can be classified as dialectal material from Uist as the editor (and transcriber) John Lorne Campbell's interest is in reproducing modern Gaelic vernacular speech and that is reflected in his orthographic choices.[29] In the twentieth century overall, then, the variation largely fits MacKinnon's paradigm.

[29] Campbell proudly describes the book as 'by far the longest text in modern colloquial Scottish Gaelic that we possess.' (1972: 2)

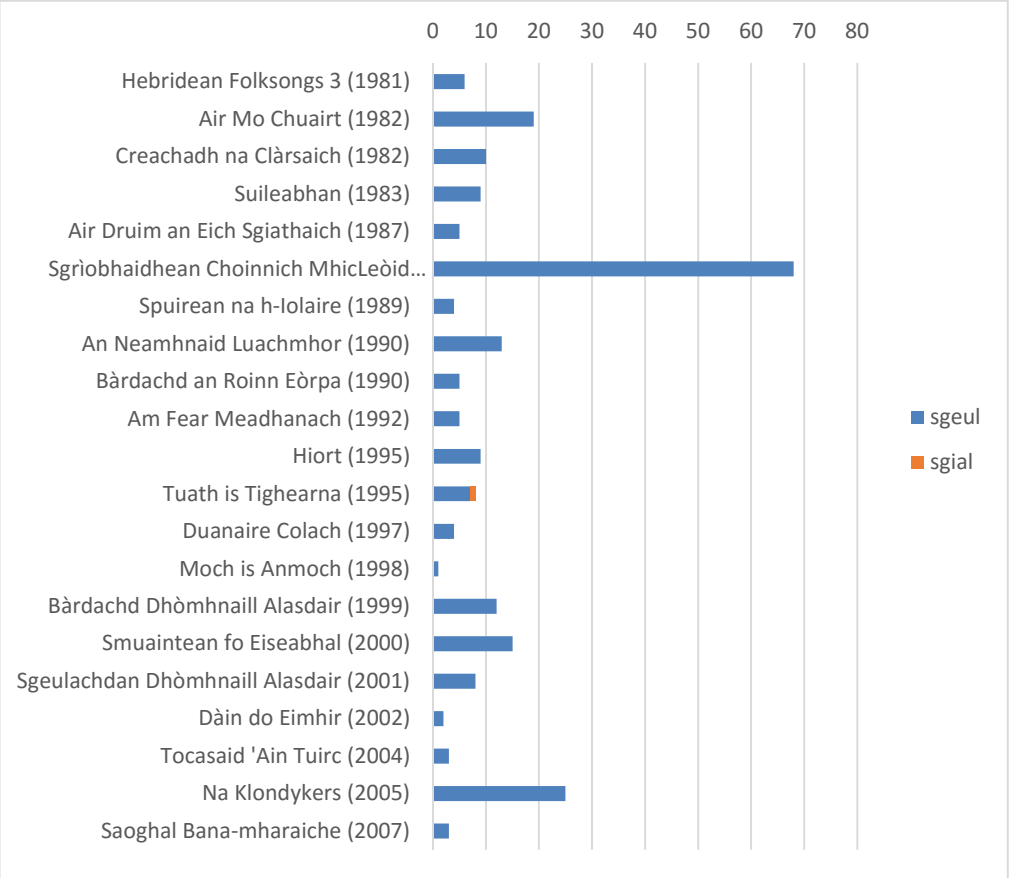
Although *sgial* appears in *Ugam Agus Bhuam* (1977), it is only on one occasion, where the editor states that it is a form he will not be using.

Figure 6-12 Frequency of *sgeullsgial* between 1900 and 1980



After the first GOC reforms, *sgial* appears only once more in the corpus.

Figure 6-13 Frequency of *sgeul/sgial* post-GOC

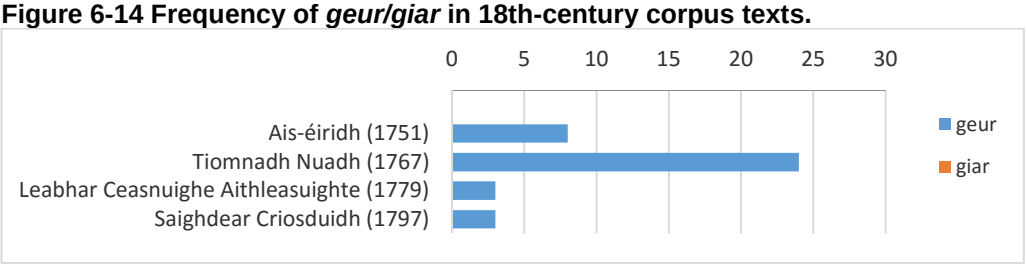


The last appearance of *sgial* is in the poetry collection *Tuath is Tighearna* (1995) (7 *sgeul*, 1 *sgial*). Again, the example fits MacKinnon's paradigm as it is in a nineteenth-century poem, 'Oran Muinntir Bheàrnaraidh' by Murchadh MacLeòid (87, line 54) and is used for rhyme.

6.3.5 *geur* vs *giar*

In total there are 881 occurrences of *geur* and only 21 of *giar*. Both have the meaning of 'sharp'. There are no occurrences of *giar* in the eighteenth century texts.

Figure 6-14 Frequency of *geur/giar* in 18th-century corpus texts.



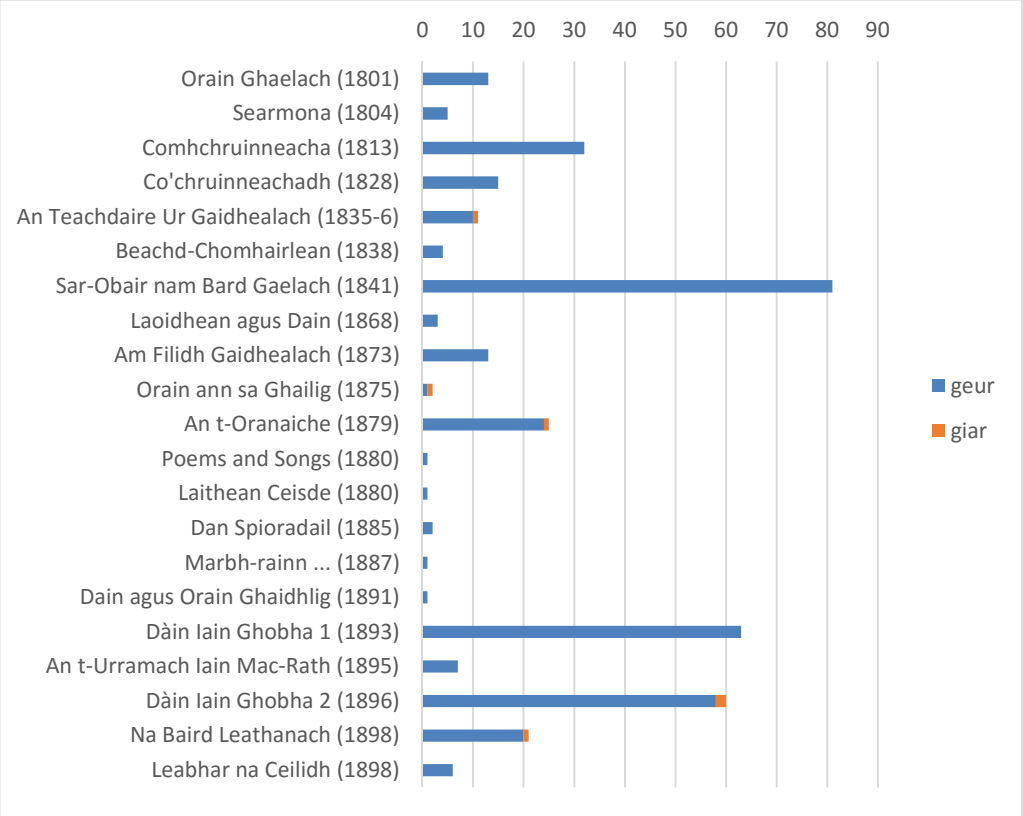
As with *sgial*, *giar* does not appear in the corpus until *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* (1835-6) (*geur*: 10, *giar*: 1). The single occurrence appears in the unattributed poem entitled 'Trasg' where it is used to rhyme with *biadh*:

> Cha 'n è! 'S e trasg do choirce thabhairt
> Do 'n anam acrach, sguab a's biadh;
> 'Bhi trasg o chonnsach', fuath a's gamhlas,
> Do chridhe nàimhdeil 'cheusadh giar; (1835-6: 29)

The same poem also uses *beul* to rhyme with *céin*, demonstrating the use poets made of variation in pronunciation.

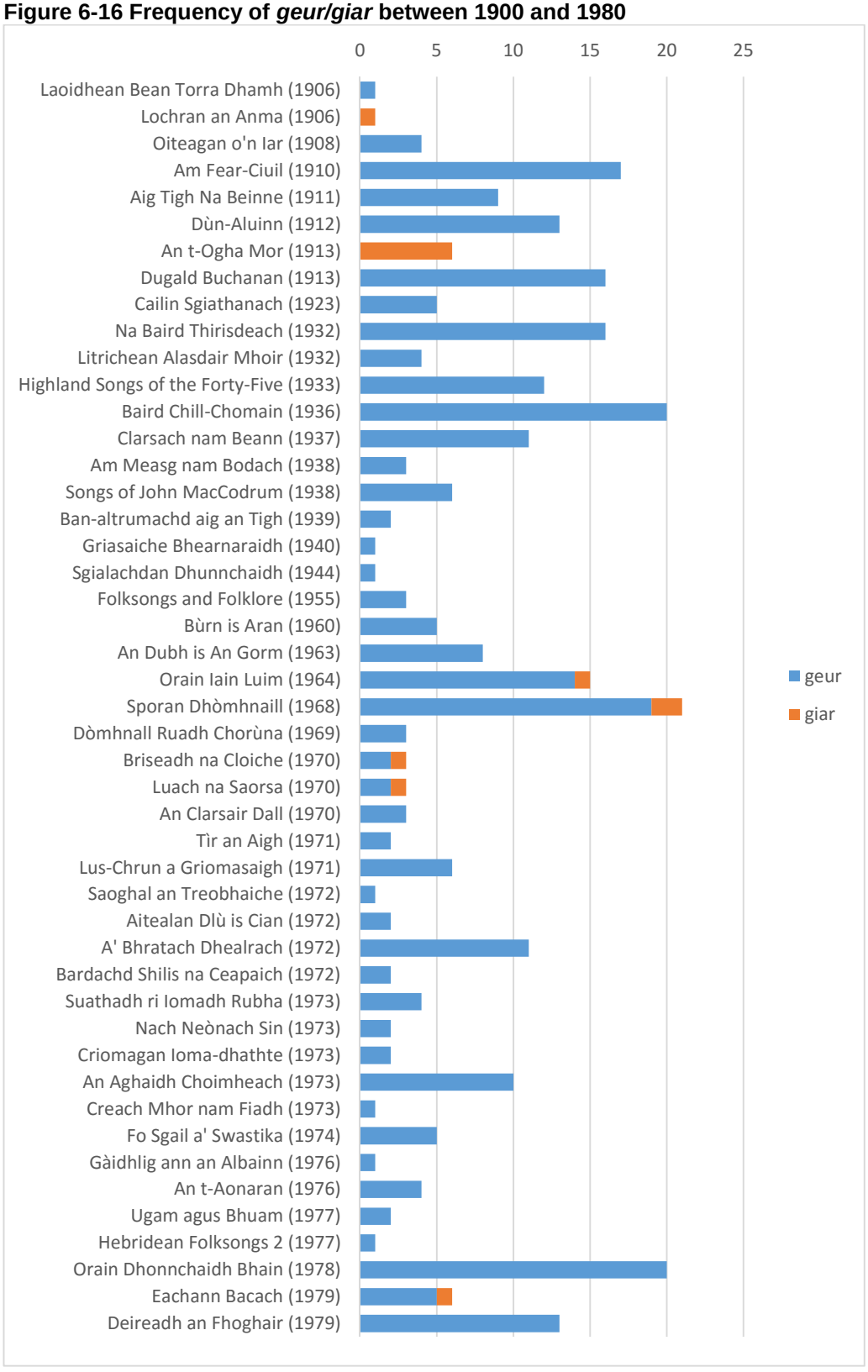
Giar remains rare in the nineteenth century, appearing only in poetic contexts in the texts *Orain ann sa Ghailig* (1875), *An t-Oranaiche* (1879), *Dàin Iain Ghobha 2* (1896) and *Na Bàird Leathanach* (1898) where in each example it is used for rhyme.

Figure 6-15 Frequency of *geur/giar* in 19th-century corpus texts



As Figure 6.11 shows, in the twentieth century, *Lòchran an Anma* (1906) and *An t-Ogha Mor* (1913), both of which only use <ia> forms, are the only two texts to use <ia> exclusively with *giar*.

Figure 6-16 Frequency of *geur/giar* between 1900 and 1980



The one appearance of *giar* in *Eachann Bacach* (1979) is in 'Moladh na Pìoba' by Iain Mac Ailein of Mull (c. 1650 – c. 1738). In this case it is not an archaic spelling, the MS originals having *geur* (Ó Baoill 1979: 305), but appears to be part of Ó

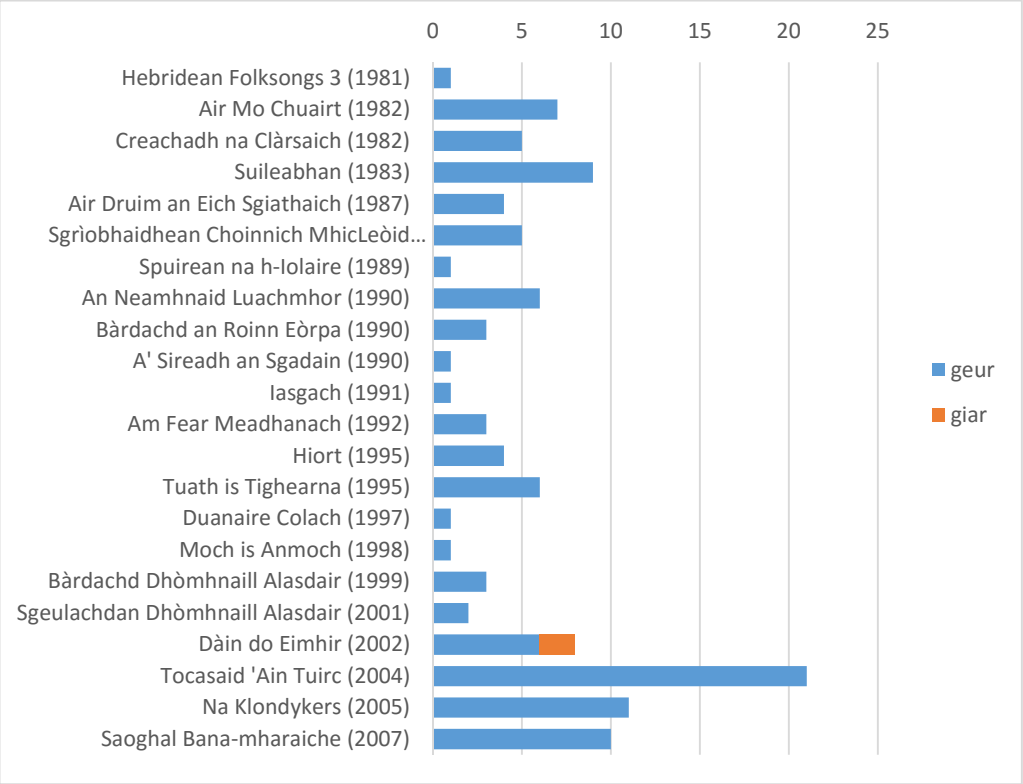
Baoill's modernisation. It is used to rhyme with *cian* in the quote below, and with *bial* and *miar* further on:

> 'S dearbha gu robh e stuidearra trom
> 'S a shusbainte giar,
> 'M fear a smuaintich an toiseach gun coisneadh i bonn
> 'S fortan do chian (Ó Baoill 1979: 303)

Ó Baoill modernises the orthography generally in this edition of poetry.[30]

After GOC, *giar* falls out of use and only appears, as with the example of *bial*, in MacLean's collection of poetry *Dàin do Eimhir* (2002) (*geur*: 6, *giar*: 2).

Figure 6-17 Frequency of *geur/giar* post-GOC



Compared with *bial* and *sgial*, *giar* is more limited to MacKinnon's paradigm. Several of the texts in the 1970s which use *bial* and *sgial* do not extend <ia> to <giar>; for example *Tìr an Aigh* (1971) (Skye), *Saoghal an Treobhaiche* (1972) (Uist), *Aitealan Dlù is Cian* (1972) (Skye) and *Nach Neònach Sin* (1973) (Harris).

[30] '…I have attempted to present in an acceptable modern spelling. This means rejecting local dialect forms and archaic forms (like chuaidh, go bhfuil) present in the sources, except where they are clearly part of the rhyme of metrical system' (Ó Baoill 1979: viii)

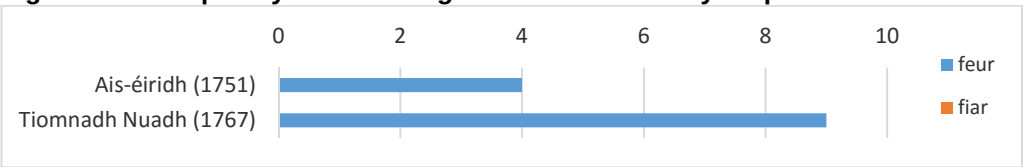
6.3.6 *feur* vs *fiar*

In total, there are 327 occurrences of *feur* and 147 of *fiar*. While *feur* has the primary meaning of 'grass',[31] *fiar* can be both 'grass' and the adjective 'crooked, curved, bent', or the verb 'to bend, twist, make crooked'.[32] In the first GOC report, the historical differentiation between *feur* and *fiar* was re-established:

> When there are homophones, however, these should be differentiated in spelling where such differentiation is feasible. (...) For example (...) **feur** = "grass"; **fìor** = "true"; **fiar** = "squint". (SEB 1981: 4)

This was repeated in GOC 2005 and 2009. Of the occurrences of *fiar* in the corpus, 62 are with the meaning 'squint'. This leaves 327 occurrences of *feur*, 'grass' and 72 of *fiar*, 'grass'.

Figure 6-18 Frequency of *feur/fiar 'grass'* in 18th-century corpus texts



There are no occurrences of *fiar*, 'grass' in the eighteenth century. Figure 6.14 below shows that the earliest occurrence of *fiar*, 'grass', is in *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach* (1841) where *feur* is more common (*feur*: 25, *fiar*: 2) where it rhymes with *sliabh* in 'Cuachag nan Craobh' by Uilleam Ros:

> Gur gile do bhian na sneachd air an fhiar,
> 'S na canach air sliabh mointich (MacKenzie 1841: 293)

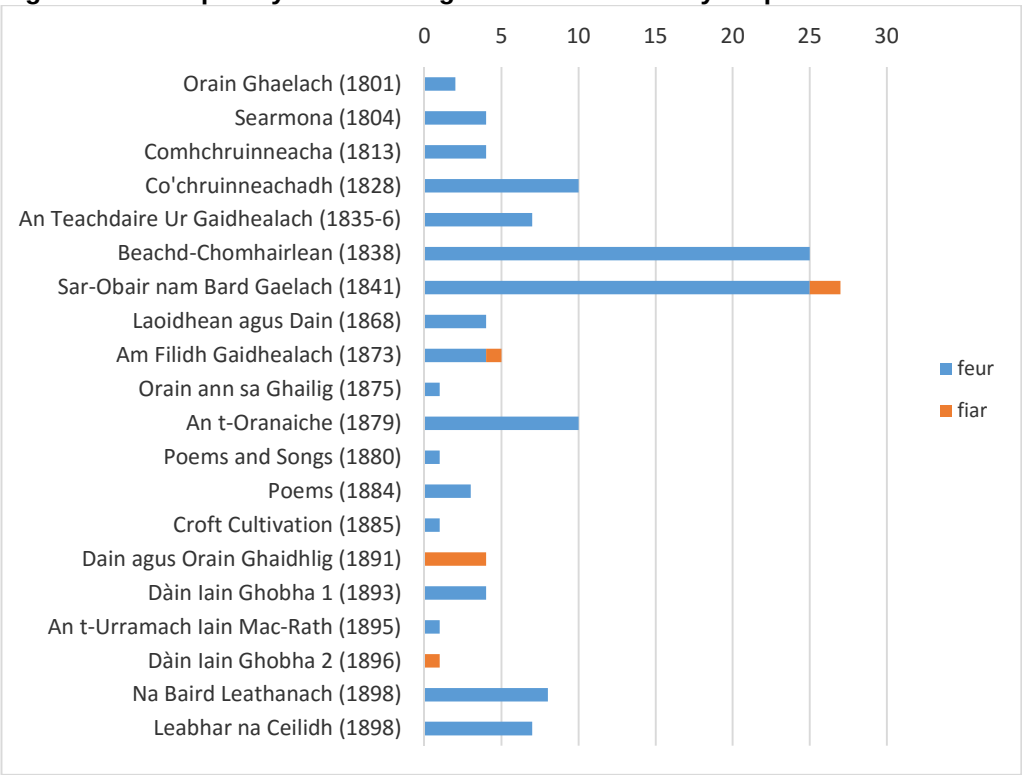
Ros was from Skye and the editor, MacKenzie, from Gairloch, both central dialect areas. The other example is from 'Oran air Blar na h-Eiphit' by Alasdair Mac-Iomhnuinn <sic> [Alexander MacKinnon] (MacKenzie 1841: 344). MacKinnon (1770-1814) was from Morar, another central dialect (MacKenzie 1841: 339-40). As with the previous lemmas, the nineteenth-century occurrences appear in poetical works, *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach* (1841), *Am Filidh Gaidhealach* (1873), *Dàin agus Orain Ghàidhlig* (1891) and *Dàin Iain Ghobha 2* (1896). In fact the single occurrence in *Am Filidh Gaidhealach* (1873) is in the same line of poetry by

[31] 'Grass. 2 Herbage. 3 Hay'. (Dwelly 1911: s.v. feur).

[32] 'Bend, twist, make crooked. 2 Pervert. 3 Go astray or aside'. (Dwelly 1911: s.v. fiar)

Uilleam Ros that appeared in *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach* (1841). Both *Dàin agus Orain Ghàidhlig* (1891) and *Dàin Iain Ghobha 2* (1896) are collections of poems from central dialect areas, Skye and Harris respectively.

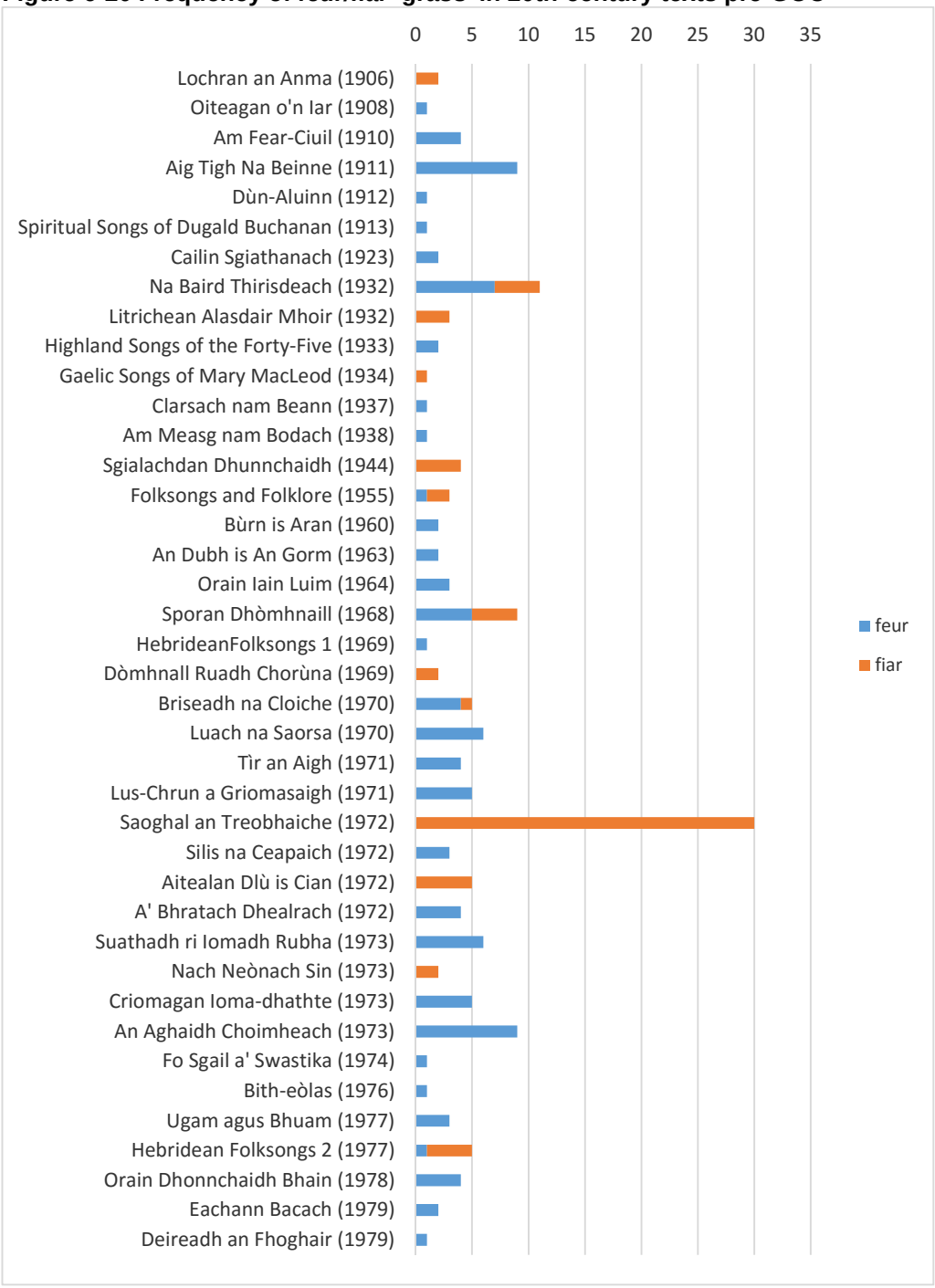
Figure 6-19 Frequency of *feur/fiar* 'grass' in 19th-century corpus texts



The twentieth century sees an increase in the occurrence of *fiar*, similar to the previous word pairs. Many of the texts previously noted as using <ia> are found again with this lemma; i.e. *Lòchran an Anma* (1906), *Litrichean Alasdair Mhoir* (1932), *Sgialachdan Dhunnchaidh* (1944). The particularly high frequency of *fiar* in *Saoghal an Treobhaiche* is because it is the autobiographical account of a farm labourer, a domain in which grass and hay are more frequently referred to.

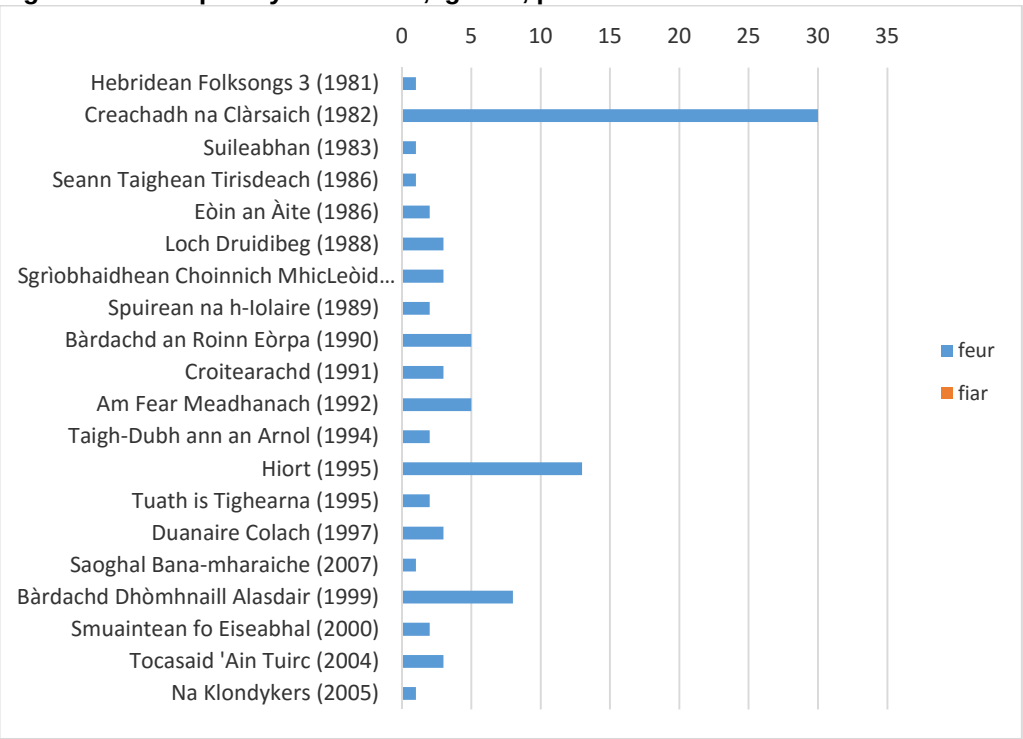
The most recent occurrence of *fiar* is in *Hebridean Folksongs 2* (1977) where is it the more common form (*feur*: 1, *fiar*: 4). The texts that move outside MacKinnon's paradigm are *Litrichean Alasdair Mhoir* (1932), which is a collection of light-hearted newspaper columns, and the modern literary works of *Briseadh na Cloiche* (1970), *Aitealan Dlù is Cian* (1972) and *Nach Neònach Sin* (1973).

Figure 6-20 Frequency of *feur/fiar* 'grass' in 20th-century texts pre-GOC



As Figure 6.16 below shows, there are no uses of *fiar* with the meaning 'grass' in the corpus texts after GOC 1981. Within the corpus texts then, the recommendation in GOC to remove homographs and to use the <eu>/<ia> variation to distinguish between, *feur*, 'grass' and *fiar*, 'squint', has been followed. While there are 7 occurrences of *fiar* in the corpus post-GOC, they all have the meaning of 'squint'.

Figure 6-21 Frequency of *feur*/*fiar*, 'grass', post-GOC



6.4 Summary and Conclusions

The corpus data which shows variation between <eu> and <ia> illustrates that Gaelic spelling usage previously allowed for a level of variation within the standard. The corpus evidence supports the central and peripheral dialectal distinction as <ia> occurrences only appear in central dialect texts or texts where the dialect is unknown. The use of <ia> was also largely restricted to what I have termed MacKinnon's paradigm, except in the case of *ciad*. The nineteenth century saw a growth of texts in these contexts being produced, spurred on by the interest in folklore following John F. Campbell's *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* (1860) and the creation of Gaelic associations such as An Comunn Gàidhealach who were interested in preserving and promulgating the oral culture of the Highlands. These are the texts where the growth in the use of <ia> in contrast to <eu> can be seen. Uniformity is a key feature of the ideology of the standard, however, and in the nineteenth and early twentieth century variation was only welcome in certain contexts. This is seen in MacKinnon's paradigm.

There was also a period where the value of dialects pushed back against <eu> as the standard form. In the 1970s particularly, there was a trend for central dialects

to use <ia> to bring the spelling of certain lemmas closer to the phonology of their speech. This happened in the wider linguistic context of a diminishing population of speakers of peripheral dialects both in real terms and as a percentage of Gaelic speakers. The use of <ia> expanded beyond the 'acceptable variation' use in poetry and dialectal materials to using it in prose writing. By the 1970s, the variation was spreading outwith MacKinnon's paradigm into literature more generally. This can be illustrated by the texts of Iain Mac a' Ghobhainn (Iain Crichton Smith). Two of his works which were published in the 1960s, *Bùrn is Aran* (1960) and *An Dubh agus an Gorm* (1963), contain none of the <ia> lemmas analysed here. When his short novel *An t-Aonaran* was published in 1976, however, he uses *bial* 11 times with no uses of *beul*.

This attempted normalisation of a marked dialectal form had the potential to replace the existing <eu> form or to establish itself as an equal variant, not dependent on 'appropriate' contexts. In Chapter 2.2.1.3, the concept of *polynomie* and dialect variation as source of sociolinguistic value was discussed. Given the value placed on dialects as seats of language authority in the Gaelic community, the expansion of <ia> forms in the 1970s can be understood as a consequence of this. Given the value of dialects, it could have been possible to have 'polynomic' spellings. This is to some extent endorsed by GOC 1981, except for where it advocated using <eu> and <ia> to differentiate between homophones as with *feur*/*fiar*. The notion of polynomie for minority languages is complicated, however, by the equally accepted notions of 'right' and 'wrong' in language (the ideology of the standard) that has been central to Western education. In the case of the <ia> variant, this expansion of <ia> was rapidly reversed in the 1980s and there was the entrenchment of the conservative <eu> practice. While in Dwelly (1911) the headword entries for *bial*, etc. refer readers to the <eu> form, in Colin Mark's Gaelic-English Dictionary (2003), <ia> forms are not listed at all. Mark might have pre-empted GOC 2005 and 2009's removal of <ia> but is, in fact, following the usage that has preferred only one form in the orthography. The current online dictionary at LearnGaelic.net (a partnership between the official bodies of the BBC, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the Board of Celtic Studies and Bòrd na Gàidhlig) automatically redirects *bial* to *beul*, *sgial* to *sgeulachd*, *nial* to *neul* and *friamh* to *freumh*.

The pressures for continuity with established spelling, the concerns in education over poor literacy standards and the expectation of all stakeholders (teachers, parents and pupils) for there to be clear 'rights' and 'wrongs' to be taught has meant the removal of <ia> variants, despite the phonographic impetus that would bring those spellings closer to the majority of contemporary dialects. To return to Coulmas' notion of real writing systems being compromise, historic and pragmatic, we can see that the <eu>/<ia> variation and its standardisation in Gaelic spelling can be interpreted in these terms. There was compromise in that <ia> was, and continues to occasionally be, a variation appropriate to poetry and a conventional representation of dialectal /ia/ (a 'marked' norm). It is historic in that the conservative form, based on dialects that receded during the twentieth century, has been maintained as the unmarked standard form. It is pragmatic in that the opportunity to remove an ambiguity, that between *feur,* 'grass'/*fiar*, 'squint', has been adhered to.

7 Uniformity vs Continuity: <st>, <sp> and <sg>

7.1 Introduction

In the *Rules for Reading the Gailic Language* prefacing his 1795 dictionary, Robert Macfarlan drew attention to an interchangeability in the use of these consonant clusters:

> It may be further noticed, that *sb, sp, sd, st, sc* and *sg,* are sometimes written the one for the other, or used indifferently; but as *b, d,* and *g*, when joined to an *s*, have a softer sound than the other, care should be taken, when to use the one and when the other. (Macfarlan 1795: 18)

His comments on usage reveal both the real writing practice of variable usage and the belief in an improved system where different spellings should serve particular purposes.

In Scottish Gaelic writing, there are three pairs where <s> is followed by stop consonants: <sb>/<sp>, <sg>/<sc> and <sd>/<st>. Each cluster has, however, only one phonetic realisation, respectively /sp/, /sk/ and /st/, as the opposition between the voiceless and voiceless aspirated consonants is neutralized after /s/.[33] Any variation in spelling, therefore, is not due to any dialectal variation or pronunciation change but is an orthographic matter. Regarding loan words, however, it is a feature influenced to some extent by the spelling in the language of origin. All six of the clusters have been used in all word positions at different points in the language's history. Variation between each pair can be seen in the Old and Middle Gaelic citations that form the basis of the *Dictionary of the Irish Language* (DIL) produced by the Royal Irish Academy. The early printed works in Scottish Gaelic, *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh* (1567) and *Adtimchiol an Chreidimh* (c.1630), also demonstrate varied and inconsistent usage.

The corpus analysis in this chapter shows how the usage of these clusters became standardised and more consistent. This process of standardisation first reduced the clusters to only <sp>, <st>, <sg> word initially. Then the use of the other pairs

[33] Macfarlan's comments suggest a distinction that some native speakers have also claimed to perceive. However, it is possible that their perception is influenced by their knowledge of spelling: a form of spelling pronunciation. An investigation into perceived and phonological distinctions between the consonant groups is beyond the scope of this study.

was standardised in medial and final position, with usage being reformed and codified in the GOC reports of the late twentieth century to <st> only (except in proper nouns), <sg> only, and <sp> with some exceptions.

The first GOC report covered only <st>/<sd> (SEB 1981: 2.2). Details from all three reports are given in the relevant sections below. The decisions in the GOC reports to reduce and simplify the usage of these clusters, particularly <sd> and <st>, demonstrates the increased desire for consistency, regularisation and simplicity in the second half of the twentieth century.

7.2 Corpus Analysis of *s* + stop consonants clusters

WordSmith Tools was first used to retrieve the consonant clusters <sb>, <sp>, <sc>, <sg>, <st> and <sd> in any word position.

Some instances were returned where <'s>, a form of both the copula, *is*, or the reduced form of *agus*, 'and', was printed attached to the initial letter of the following word as in the following table. While this feature raises interesting questions regarding the representation of word boundaries, it is not relevant to this investigation and so these instances were discarded from the analysis.

Table 7-1 Examples of *is* attached to following consonant

Occurrence	Standard spelling	Text
'scha mho	's cha mho	Beachd-Chomhairlean (1838)
scòir dhuibh	's còir dhuibh	Searmona (1804)
'sdòcha	's dòcha	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Bàrdachd Neruda
'sdù'	's dùth	An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach (1835-6)
sgun	's gun	Co'chruinneachadh (1828)
sdu	Is tu (?)	Duanaire Colach (1997)

Other instances were retrieved where the process of compounding placed <s> before <c>, <g>, <p> or <b>. These results were removed before the analysis as these examples do not reflect the same phonological context as the stop consonant clusters investigated here. For these, the more standard form (as shown in the headword in Dwelly) would be to separate the two elements with a hyphen or with a space in the case of *os cionn*. Table 7.2 below shows these instances.

Table 7-2 Compounds with medial <sc>, <sg> and <sb>

Lemma	Dwelly headword	Text	No. of occurr.
osbar	os barr	Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasuighte (1779) Comhchruinneacha (1813) An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach (1835-6) Laoidhean agus Dàin (1868)	4
oscionn / osceann	os cionn	Saighidear Criosduidh (1797)	1
		Searmona (1804)	19
		An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach (1835-6)	6
		Beachd-Chomhairlean (1838)	3
		Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach (1841)	3
casbhuidhe	cas-bhuidhe	Comhchruinneacha (1813) Orain Dhonnchaidh Bhàin (1978)	2
fearaschuideachd	fearas-cuideachd	Na Bàird Leathanach (1898)	1
basbhualadh	bas-bhualadh	Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod (1934) Songs of John MacCodrum (1938) Na Klondykers (2005)	3
cìoschain	cìos-chàin	Orain Iain Luim (1964)	1
glascharn	glas-chàrn	Orain Iain Luim (1964)	1
claisghorm	clais ghorm	Orain Iain Luim (1964)	1
cascheann	cas-cheann	Orain Iain Luim (1964)	1
sliosbhord	n/a	Orain Iain Luim (1964)	1
cluasbhiorach	cluas-bhiorach	Orain Dhonnchaidh Bhàin (1978)	2
cascheum	cas-cheum	Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal (2000)	1
fàschoill	fàs-choille	Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal (2000)	1

Some other words were returned that have clusters of <sbh> that do not represent /sp/ and are not conventionally separated. Although the GOC reports of 2005 and 2009, if taken literally, would replace <sb> in *all positions*, it is unlikely that they would be interpreted to apply in this situation where the cluster is <s+bh> not <sb>.[34]

Table 7-3 Compounds with <sbh>

Lemma	Freq.	No. of texts	Dates	Gloss
asbhuain	12	10	1835-1982	stubble, 'out-reaping'
easbhaidh	182	45	1779-2007	lack, defect
uireasbhaidh	137	50	1804-2001	want, poverty
caisbheart	15	8	1893-1995	footwear

Proper nouns were not included in this analysis as these are considered exceptions by the GOC recommendations, e.g. Alasdair, Gilleasbaig (SQA 2005: 3).

[34] *easbhaidh, easbhaidheach* and *uireasbhaidh* also appear in the 2005 and 2009 GOC wordlists.

Assimilated loan words are included where the writer appeared to be using them as Gaelic lexical items, i.e. if there was any orthographic or morphological assimilation of the word (other than lenition) e.g. *inspeactar, telesgop, diosteampair*. Where compounds such as *fior-sgeul* appear, they have been lemmatised and analysed as the element with the relevant consonant cluster e.g. *sgeul*.

Each consonant cluster will be considered separately, considering the data word-initially first, followed by word medially and finally. As some texts would use a word many times and others only once, the primary analysis here uses the frequencies of texts, rather than individual occurrences, to avoid skewing the data.

7.3 The <sc> and <sg> clusters

7.3.1 Variability in <sc> and <sg>

The long-standing variability in Old and Middle Gaelic sources in the use of <sc> and <sg> can be seen in the entries of the *Dictionary of the Irish Language* (DIL) (1913-1976). Words with citations using both <sc> and <sg> forms include such common words as *scríbaid* (modern *sgrìobh*, 'write'), *scriptuir* (modern *sgriobtair*, 'scripture'), *scris* (modern *sgrios,* 'destroy'), *scaipid* (modern *sgap*, 'scatter') and *soiscél* (modern *soisgeul,* 'gospel') (see DIL s.v. *scríbaid, scriptuir, scris, scaipid, soiscél*).

In his detailed description of the first printed text in Gaelic, *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh* (1567), R. L. Thomson notes that initial 'sg- is the norm, with only *scāilighe, scaiteach* and rarely *scrīobhadh, scrīobhtūir* having sc-' (Thomson 1970: xiii). In fact, the more often a word appears, the more likely it is that both consonant forms will be used. Four words appear ten times or more: of them *sgribtúir*, 'scripture', *sgandal',* 'scandal', and *sgrīobh,* 'write', all appear with both <sg> and <sc>, *sgris* alone (modern *sgrios*, 'destroy') appears with <sg> only. *Scailighe* and *scaiteach* appear only once each, however following the evidence of the other lemmas, it seems likely that an <sg> form would be likely if they were repeated in the text.

Through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Scotland it seems that the use of <sg> was extended to more widespread and consistent use. Lhuyd's Dictionary in 1707 lists 103 <sc> headwords and 203 <sg> headwords. By the early nineteenth century, use of <sc> was the exception rather than the norm. In the Highland Society Dictionary of 1828, the initial entry for <sc> says 'For most words beginning with Sc, vide Sg.' and although it lists specifically *scairt, scairteach, scaiteach, scamhan, scòrr*, each entry redirects to the <sg> form. MacLeod and Dewar's 1831 dictionary includes *scairt* and *scor* as headwords but both those entries redirect to their <sg> equivalents as well as noting 'For most words beginning with Sc, see Sg.' (MacLeod & Dewar s.v. Sc.)

Use of <sc>/<sg> was not covered in the 1981 GOC report. In the 2005 and 2009 reports, it was recommended that <sg> be used in all positions and no exceptions were noted or made in the wordlist.[35]

We can expect the corpus to demonstrate that <sg> is also the norm. The examples with <sc> will be considered to see when the shift from <sc> to <sg> is made and if there are or were any regular exceptions or patterns in the use of <sc>.

7.3.2 Initial <sc> and <sg>

For initial <sg->, the corpus returned 117 lemmas from 20,027 occurrences whereas for initial <sc->, the corpus only returned 27 lemmas from 197 occurrences. This establishes that <sg-> is clearly the norm word-initially.

The most common lemmas with <sg>-only forms in the corpus are listed in table 7.4 below. The first appearance of each of these lemmas in the corpus is before 1835 and they are not rare in the corpus, each appearing in over 10 texts.

Table 7-4 Words that only appear as <sg->

	sg- lemma	No. of texts	Dates	Gloss
1	air sgàth	95	1779-2007	for the sake of
2	sgadan	57	1801-2007	herring
3	sgàil	83	1779-2005	shade
4	sgàin	63	1779-2005	burst
5	sgainneal	26	1813-2001	scandal, reproach
6	sgàirneach	13	1828-1988	scree
7	sgal	42	1835-2004	blast of sound
8	sgalag	29	1813-2007	skivvy

There were 27 lemmas in the corpus that had examples of initial <sc>. The following table shows all these <sc> lemmas and their <sg> equivalent forms together with the dates of appearance and the number of texts they appeared in. The table is ordered in descending order of frequency of <sg> lemmas.

[35] 'The letters **sg** should be used in all positions in place of **sc**: *ba**sg**aid, co**sg**, pa**sg**an, **Sg**alpaigh, **sg**ian*' (SQA 2005: 3).

Table 7-5 <sc-> lemmas and their <sg-> equivalents

	sc- lemma	no. of texts	dates	sg- lemma	no. of texts	dates	gloss
1	scriobh	2	1797, 1804	sgrìobh	234	1779-2007	write
2	scoil	1	1804	sgoil	168	1804-2007	school
3	scap	2	1804, 1813	sgap	93	1801-2005	scatter
4	scaoil	1	1997[36]	sgaoil	92	1779-2007	spread out
5	scar	1	1813	sgar	75	1779-2005	separate
6	scillin	1	1804	sgillin	71	1801-2007	shilling
7	scian	1	1832	sgian	64	1813-2007	knife
8	scòrnan	1	1838	sgòrnan	62	1779-2007	throat
9	scleò	1	1801	sgleò	57	1801-2007	mist
10	screuch	1	1828	sgreuch	49	1828-2005	scream
11	scread	1	1813	sgread	36	1813-2004	shriek
12	scàrlaid	8	1804-1972	sgàrlaid	32	1804-2000	scarlet
13	scrioptur	9	1750 -1896	sgrioptur	28	1779-2007	scripture
14	sceilp	1	1932	sgeilp	16	1911-2001	shelf
15	scafal	1	1813	sgafal	4	1964-2001	scaffold
16	sceum	1	1932	sgeama	4	1972-2005	scheme
17	scona	1	1973	sgona	3	1992-2005	scone
18	scallach	1	1868	sgallach	2	1841, 1938	bald
19	scuch	1	1838	sguch	2	1838, 1990	sprain
20	scinn	1	1887	sginn	2	1896, 1912	protrude
21	sciallt[37]	1	1977	sgialt	1	1944	sense
22	scorpionaibh	1	1910	sgoirpion	1	1937	scorpion
23	scallach	1	1868	sgallach	1	1938	trouble-some
25	sceannach	1	1868	-	-	-	glaring
26	scalpan	1	1923	-	-	-	chaff
27	score-ig	1	2007	-	-	-	scored

[36] From a 1786 text reproduced in Ó Baoill (1997).

The corpus shows no lemmas which are regular exceptions to the norm of initial <sg>. For numbers 1-11 in Table 7.5, it is clear that these are rare uses of <sc> as the <sg> form in the corpus is far more common. These lemmas also do not appear after 1838 whereas the <sg> forms are in use up to the twenty first century texts. Examples 12 and 13, the loan words *scàrlaid*, 'scarlet', and *scriptur*, 'scripture' are the most common initial <sc> lemmas, however, even they are more commonly found as <sg>.[38] Their relative frequency as <sc>, however, indicates that loan words which have <sc> were more likely to feature <sc> in their Gaelic spelling, at least when they were first adopted. The other loan words from 'scaffold', 'scheme' and 'scone' also occur more often as <sg> in the corpus. The <sc> occurrences are again the older forms, showing that modern texts prefer to adhere to initial <sg>. The only initial <sc> form to be used after the GOC report of 2005 is another loan from 'score', *score-ig*. This appears in the phrase 'Score-ig e an goal' in *Saoghal Bana-mharaiche* (2007) where the editor uses the English spelling with a Gaelic suffix to make the word transparent to the reader.

Where initial <sc> is found, it is usually earlier than the first use of the initial <sg> form. As can be seen by the dates, the older initial <sc> form had already become rare in the nineteenth century and almost disappeared in the twentieth. There is a chronological development from variation between <sc> and <sg> towards initial <sg> only. From the corpus texts we can see the final stages of this shift over the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

7.3.3 Medial and final <sc> and <sg>

The corpus returned 156 lemmas from 21,183 occurrences of medial or final <sg> (149 medial, 7 final) and 23 lemmas from 294 occurrences of medial or final <sc> (18 medial, 5 final).

There are seven lemmas which appear in more than ten texts and only occur in an <sg> form. They are shown in descending order of frequency in Table 7.6 below.

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[37] From Pàdruig Moireasdan's *Ugam agus Bhuam* (1977). Glossed in the text as *ciall*, explaining that this is a common form in Uist (1977: 21). Retaining the <c> allows for the link to *ciall* to be more apparent.

[38] Whether loaned from English *scripture* or Latin *scriptura*, the <sc> form would have been familiar to Gaelic writers.

Table 7-6 <sg> only lemmas in more than 10 texts

	sg lemma	no. of texts	dates	gloss
1	a-measg	197	1779-2007	among
2	cosg	83	1797-2007	spend
3	an asgaidh	48	1801-2005	no cost
4	casgair	39	1779-2004	slaughter
5	crùisgean	26	1813-2004	cruse lamp
6	aimlisg	21	1813-2001	disorder
7	braoisg	11	1813-1978	grin

They all have their first appearance early in the corpus and continue to be in use in the later corpus texts.

A further five lemmas have both <sg> and <sc> forms in the corpus but are clearly shown in the results in the table below to be normally <sg>.

Table 7-7 Variation in <sc>/ <sg> forms

	sc lemma	text	dates	sg lemma	texts	dates	gloss
1	feascair	1	1797	feasgar	142	1813-2007	afternoon
2	truscan	4	1779-1828	trusgan	56	1813-2000	clothing
3	ploscairtich	2	1804, 1979	plosgairtich	35	1828-2007	throb
4	lascaire	2	1801, 1879	lasgaire	22	1801-1988	dandy
5	ioscaid	2	1896, 1898	iosgaid	13	1841-1973	thigh
6	pronnasc	6	1779-1973	pronnasg	12	1835-1979	sulphur
7	brioscaid	7	1970-1989	briosgaid	13	1932-2007	biscuit

Again, the majority of <sc> forms are in the early corpus texts. Exceptions are the relatively late uses of *lascaire* and *ioscaid* in the late nineteenth cenutry. The late use of *ploscairtich*, 'throbbing', in *Deireadh an Fhoghair* (1979) is exceptional as it is not used in an archaic context. For some other lemmas, including *pronnasc* and *brioscaid*, the pattern is unclear with the corpus showing results over many decades and in relatively small numbers.

The following table shows the lemmas which appear in fewer than 10 occurrences in either form.

Table 7-8 <sc> and <sg> lemma with low frequency

sc lemma	no. of texts	dates	sg lemma	no. of texts	dates	gloss
deasc	6	1970-90	deasg	3	1987-2005	desk
oscarra	3	1835-1968	osgarra	3	1978-2007	heroic
maicroscop[39]	2	1972-1976		-	-	microscope
toscair	1	1913	tosgair	4	1835-1972	ambassador
disc	1	1970	-	-	-	disk
babhscadh	1	1896	-	-	-	fright
ascart	1	1891	asgart	2	1923-1978	coarse lint
guscul	1	1971	gusgul	6	1813-1988	refuse
flasc	1	1971	flasg	7	1813-2005	flask

In these cases, the low frequency of the lemmas means that the norm cannot be identified.

There remains a group of lemmas where <sc> appears to be more common which are shown in Tables 7.9, 7.10 and 7.11.

Table 7-9 Dates for occurrences of *bascaid* and *basgaid*

Texts	1800-1899	1900-1980	1981-90	1991-99	post-2000
bascaid	3	12	3	2	0
basgaid	0	3	1	3	3

Overall there are 20 occurrences of *bascaid* and 10 occurrences of *basgaid*, however, the data does not indicate that the word is an exception to the norm. Rather, it illustrates the continuing shift from <sc> to <sg>. During the nineteenth century *bascaid* occurs with a <c> only. However, the last dated text to use it is in 1994. It is *basgaid* with <g> that continues to be used after this into the twenty-first century. Whereas the original loan follows a pattern of replacing English <k> with Gaelic <c> (as in *cidsin*, 'kitchen'), the trend in the twentieth century has been to replace that pattern with the phonological pattern of <sg> for /sk/, demonstrating the regularising tendency of the last century that culminates in the GOC recommendations of <sg> in all positions.

Some lemmas that resist the <sg> norm due to the prefix as- or eas- coming before a lemma beginning with <c> (in the following Table 7.10). None of them have

[39] This is listed as *maicreasgop* in the GOC 2005 & 2009 wordlists.

variants with <sg> appearing in the corpus; this would obscure the non-prefixed forms of *caraid, creidimh* etc. which explains their resistance to norm of <sg>.

Table 7-10 Prefixed *as-* and *eas-* before <c>.

Lemma	No. of occurrences	No. of texts	Dates	Gloss
ascaoin	30	17	1779-2000	unkind
eascaraid	32	18	1832-1973	foe
ascreidimh/ eascreidimh	7	5	1835-1932	irreligious
eascruthach	1	1	1990	abstract
eascòrd	1	1	1896	disagree

The corpus also contains forms of *eas-* followed by a hyphen. This would be the preferred GOC-compliant form where the stress falls on the second syllable, although this is not necessarily the case. Colin Mark's dictionary (2003) uses a hyphen after *eas-*, but does not for *ascaoin*. The *Co-fhaclair Gàidhlig* (2011) and the LearnGaelic.net dictionary list *eascaraid* as a headword.

There remains one more lemma that appears to be an exception to the <sg> norm with no clear explanation.

Table 7-11 Frequency of *deisciobal*

sc lemma	No. of texts	Dates	sg lemma	No. of texts	Dates	Gloss
deisciobail	19	1779 -1995	deisgibal	1	1828	disciple

The word for 'disciple', *deisciobail,* only has one example of <sg> early in the nineteenth century. Carswell used both in 1567, but the <sc> form has resisted the widespread change to <sg> that other religious, and Latin or English loans such as *sgriobtair* (scripture) have undergone.[40] In MacLeod and Dewar (1839), there is an entry for *deisgiobul* which redirects to the <sc> form *deisciobul*. Its only appearance in the corpus with <sg> is notably aberrant as the text in which it appears, *Co'Chruinneachadh* (1828) also uses *deisciobul* four times. It was not listed in any of the GOC wordlists. While the recent corpus texts are not of a religious nature where the word might be likely to be found, outwith the corpus the <sc> form is still the norm in recent versions of the Bible[41] and in 'Na Duilleagan Gàidhlig', the Gaelic supplement of the Church of Scotland's *Life and Work* magazine. It is also the form given in the *Co-Fhaclair Gàidhlig* (2011), in Mark's

[40] Carswell uses *descibul* l.3314 and *deisgibluibh* l.1923 (line numbers in Thomson 1970).

[41] e.g. National Bible Society of Scotland (1992)

2003 dictionary and on the LearnGaelic.net dictionary. It is not clear why *deisciobal* should resist the reform of <sg>: it could be that its religious connotations and use in religious texts led to the spelling being conservative. However, other lemmas with religious connotations, such as *sgriobtair* (scripture), were fully adopted as <sg>.

7.3.4 Summary of <sc> and <sg>

It is clear then that <sg> in all positions has been the norm since the early nineteenth century. Some conservative uses mean that <sc> still appeared occasionally in the nineteenth century, particularly in the first half. However, loans from English with *k* account for some later twentieth century occurrences with only *deisciobail* strongly resisting the norm. The GOC recommendation for <sg> in preference to <sc> therefore codified the conventional usage of modern Scottish Gaelic.

7.4 The <sb> and <sp> clusters

7.4.1 Variability in <sb> and <sp>

The consonant clusters <sb> and <sp> both represent phonological /sp/. While both were used in early Gaelic books, by the time of the earliest corpus texts, <sp> was the more common form, the use of <sb> remaining only in a few words.

The variability in early Gaelic texts that was noted in reference to <sc> and <sg> is also apparent in this case. In the *Dictionary of the Irish Language* (1984), there are no headword entries beginning with <sb>; however, variation between <sb> and <sp> is often attested in citations, e.g. in the entries for *sprúileach*, 'fragments', *taisbénad*, 'display', and *cusbóir*, 'subject'. According to R.L. Thomson, initial <sb> was more common than <sp> in *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh* (1567) (Thomson 1970: xiii). However, of the four lemmas which have initial <sb>, *sbēclāir*, 'mirror' and *sbor*, 'spur', occur only once each and the other two show variation: 'special' appears as *sbesialta* (3 times) and *speisialta* (5 times); 'spirit' appears as *sbiorad* (27 times) and *spiorad* (13 times). As was the case with <sc> and <sg>, the more frequently a word occurs, the more likely it is to appear in both forms. Thomson does not give an overall picture of medial and final <sb> or

<sp> in the book but he does say that in *easbul* (apostle) they are both used 'about equally' (Thomson 1970: xiii).

MacLeod and Dewar's 1839 dictionary redirects <sb> to <sp>, except for *sbàirn* (struggle) and *sbrogaill* (crop, double chin) which would indicate that initial <sb> forms were known yet atypical in the early nineteenth century.

A description of the use of <sb>/<sp> was not included in the 1981 GOC report. In the 2005 report, <sp> was defined as the norm with a short list of exceptions using <sb> explained by their 'frequency and familiarity':

> The letters **sp** should be used in all positions in place of **sb**:
> _ *cus**p**air, cus**p**ann, **sp**eal, us**p**ag*
> However, because of their frequency and familiarity, the spelling of the words *deasbad, easbaig, Gilleasbaig* and *taisbeanadh* should be left unchanged. (SQA 2005: 3)

The 2009 report amended the list of exceptions, removing *Gilleasbaig*, 'Archibald', (which was retained in the wordlist) and adding *susbaint*, 'substance' (SQA 2009: 4). The attached wordlists in the 2005 and 2009 reports, however, also included *isbean*, 'sausage' and *leasbach,* 'lesbian'. The 2009 wordlist also added *cusbann*, 'customs', as an alternative to *cuspann*.

We can expect the corpus to demonstrate that <sp> is the norm word initially. The GOC recommendations suggest that variability in medial and final <sb> and <sp> will be, at least to some extent, particular to different words.

7.4.2 Initial <sb> and <sp>

The corpus returned 59 lemmas beginning with <sp> from 6,337 occurrences and only one lemma with one occurrence of initial <sb> in the corpus. The only <sb> occurrence is *sbruileach* (fragments) which appears in 1804 in Eobhann MacDiarmaid's *Searmona* [Sermons]. As was noted earlier, the DIL entry for *sprúileach* has citations with both <sb> and <sp>. It is clear that in the period covered by the corpus, 1750 to 2007, that initial <sp> is the norm.

7.4.3 Medial and final <sb> and <sp>

The corpus returned 26 lemmas with medial or final <sp> from 759 occurrences and 16 lemmas with medial <sb> from 504 occurrences which indicates a mixed picture with regard to norms here. The corpus returned no lemmas with final <sb>.

There are 16 lemmas which appear as <sp> only and they are listed in Table 7.12 below.

Table 7-12 Lemmas with only <sp> in the corpus

	Lemma	No. of occurr.	No. of texts	Year	Gloss
1	connspann	43	15	1813 - 1997	hero
2	uspairn	10	9	1841 - 2004	struggle
3	farspag	8	6	1841 - 1995	gull
4	cusp	6	5	1841 - 1978	chillblain
5	riaspach	5	5	1841 - 2000	disordered
6	rusp	3	3	1813 - 2004	file
7	coimhearspa	3	2	1841 - 1972	hanging back
8	conspàirn	2	2	1841 - 1873	rivalry
9	inspeactar	3	2	1970 - 1992	inspector
10	ìosp	2	2	1813 - 1841	padlock
11	correspondadh	1	1	2007	correspond
12	duspainn	1	1	1973	uproar
13	hanspeic	2	1	1944	(unidentified)
14	prionspal	1	1	1932	principle
15	taspallach	1	1	1923	witty
16	ùspair	1	1	1911	ugly fellow

Examples 1 to 5 suggest that <sp> is the conventional norm for these lemmas.[42] For the other lemmas which have low frequency in the corpus, there are some loan words from English: *prionspal*, *correspondadh*, *inspeactar*, but too few examples to establish any conventional pattern.

The following table, Table 7.13, shows all 16 medial <sb> lemmas and their <sp> equivalents. For lemmas 1 to 5, it is clear that the <sp> form for these lemmas is the norm. Unlike medial <sc>, however, there is not a clear chronological pattern across the <sb> variants shifting from one form to the other. For lemmas 6 to 11, the corpus returns were very low with only one or two occurrences; therefore no conclusions can be drawn.

[42] *connspann, farspag, cuspa* all appear in LearnGaelic.net.

Table 7-13 Lemmas with medial <sb> in the corpus and their <sp> variants

	sb lemma	No. of texts	Dates	sp Lemma	No. of texts	Dates	Gloss
1	cusbair	6	1779-1896	cuspair	96	1797-2007	subject
2	connsbaid	1	1828	connspaid	25	1779-2000	dispute
3	osbag	1	1990	ospag	17	1835-1995	sigh
4	osbadal	2	1970, 1972	ospadal	16	1944-2007	hospital
5	cusbann	1	2001[43]	cuspann	8	1813-1973	customs
6	presbiter	1	1898	-	-	-	prebytery
7	clisbeach	2	1938, 1970	-	-	-	unsteady
8	isbean	1	1987	-	-	-	sausage
9	basbair	1	1841	-	-	-	fencer
10	crùsbal	1	1896	-	-	-	crucible
11	connsbeach	1	1841	connspeach	1	1835	wasp
12	taisbean	65	1779-2007	-	-	-	display
13	deasbad	39	1804-2005	deaspad	1	1893	debate
14	easbaig	31	1779-1997	easpaig	5	1779-1898	bishop
15	susbaint	22	1813-2007	suspaint	2	1923, 1932	substance
16	prosbaig	8	1891-2005	prospaig	1	1970	telescope

Lemmas 12-16 in the table have <sb> as the established norm, including the four exceptions covered by GOC. *Taisbean* is clearly the established norm as no spellings with <sp> appear at all. *Deasbad* has just one occurrence in a book of poetry from 1893. *Easbaig* is slightly more mixed as the <sp> spelling does appear in several nineteenth century texts, although even then it was not the dominant form. *Susbaint* is both the older form, occurring in five nineteenth-century texts, and the more common one.[44] The corpus suggests *prosbaig* as another exception to the <sp> norm. It does not appear in the GOC wordlists as an exception but appears to be in widespread use. It is listed as *prosbaig* in Bòrd na Gàidhlig's *Co-fhaclair Gàidhlig* (2011) and the LearnGaelic.net dictionary.

[43] Used in *Sgeulachdan Dhòmhnaill Alasdair* [The Stories of Donald Alasdair] (2001). The *Co-fhaclair Gàidhlig* lists only *cusbann* as a headword although the 2009 GOC wordlist allows for both <sb> and <sp>.

[44] In this case, there is the possible influence of English *substance* that establishes <b>.

7.4.4 Summary of <sb> and <sp>

This cluster of <sb>/<sp> was the first of the three consonant cluster pairs to standardise and settle on norms of usage as can be seen from the number of occurrences. The relatively smaller number of lemmas with /sp/ may have been a contributing factor to its regularisation. The use of <sb> word-initially ended at the start of the nineteenth century. Medially and finally, although both forms are used, they are lexically fixed with established conventions for using either one or the other (*cusbann*/*cuspann* is the only debatable exception to this).

Comparing the corpus data to the GOC recommendations for <sb> to <sp>, the recommendation and the list of exceptions in the reports are clearly following existing conventions and their frequency and familiarity to readers. As the exceptions where <sb> is the norm are few, GOC prioritises the conservative spelling over simplification and uniformity that would break established practice.

7.5 The <st> and <sd> clusters

7.5.1 Variability in <st> and <sd> clusters

Both <st> and <sd> are used to represent phonological /st/. Variation in initial <st>/<sd> was known before 1567; DIL has citations with <sd> forms for: *stáb, stábla, sdad, sdagún, staigre, stailc, sdair, stairide, stait, staitemail, stalcach, stán, staraige, starga, stásion, stéd,* etc. While in *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh*, initial <sd> 'is regular, and *st-* occurs only in *stiūradóir*' (Thomson 1970: xiii), there do not appear to be any <sd-> forms in *Adtimchiol an Chreidimh* c.1630 (Thomson 1962). Although medial <sd> is more common than <st> in *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh,* Carswell is happy to interchange the two; if a lemma appears more than 4 times, it is shown with at least one of <sd> and <st> (e.g. *minisdir, freasdal, criosd, feasda, baisd, ēisd*).

The <st>/<sd> pair was the first consonant cluster to be explicitly revised by GOC. It does so, according to the 1981 report, to address 'confusion' over the use of the pair. We can assume this means that Gaelic school pupils were using the two forms interchangeably or that writers were uncertain over the 'correct' form for a given word. As there is no phonological difference between <sd> and <st> and as they do not distinguish homophones, the 'confusion' is not likely to mean a lack of

comprehension, rather an inconsistency in usage which has become intolerable to twentieth-century expectations. This 'confusion' over <st> and <sd> can be illustrated with the example in the corpus of *péist* (reptile). It is used in one text only, *Bith-eòlas* [Biology] (1976), but this text uses *péisd* in the singular (2 times) and both *péisdean* (16 times) and *péistean* (3 times) in the plural, while listing in its glossary *péist* - reptile.

The original GOC report recommended that:

> There is some confusion apparent in the present practice of spelling words with st/sd groups. Word-initially this is always <st>, and this should continue to be the case. Intervocalically and finally -st should be used: for example astar, rithist. (SEB 1981: 2.2)

The revised recommendations in 2005, and repeated in 2009, added exceptions and more examples to the <st>/<sd> pair:

> The letters <st> should be used in all positions in place of **sd**:
> - *aos**t**a, a-rith**ist**, è**ist**, fura**st**a, ga**st**a, pò**st**a, **st**aidhre, tuara**st**al, tubai**st***
> An exception would arise in a compound place name where the final element is 'dal' or 'dail'. eg:
> - *Grama**sd**al, Laca**sd**al, Loch Bagha**sd**ail*
> Exceptions may also be found in the case of established forms of personal names and nomenclature on signage, eg:
> - *Ala**sd**air, Colai**sd**e, Fionnla**sd**an, Taigh-ò**sd**a, Ùi**sd**ean*
> - Likewise, *Crìo**sd**(a), Crìo**sd**aidh* etc.
> (SQA 2005: 3A)

The compound place-name element where *–dal* or *–dail* follows an <s> is also explicitly covered in the Ordnance Survey's Gaelic Names Liaision Committee.[45]

In the corpus, there is an example of confusion post-GOC where a strict adherence to the recommendations can also lead to morphological anomalies. In Watson's *Saoghal Bana-mharaiche* (2007), the singular *sliasaid,* undergoes syncope when forming the plural, bringing the *s* and *d* together which the writer renders *sliastanan.*

[45] Replacing 'sd' with 'st' (SQA 2005 3A) does not apply at the junction of two distinct elements, e.g. Hìonnas + dal (from Norse dalr 'dale') = Hìonnasdal (Gaelic Names Liaison Committee 2006: 2)

> Chunnaic mi bràthair dha is bha aon do na **sliastanan** aige air falbh dheth. Bha e air aon **sliasaid**. (Watson 2007: 32) (emphasis added)
>
> *I saw a brother of his and one of his legs was off. He was on one leg.*[46]

7.5.2 Corpus Analysis of <st> and <sd>

In this section, *a-steach* and *a-staigh* have been considered as word initial <st> lemmas. They are often written as *a steach* and *a staigh* in the corpus. They do not have any <sd> forms in the corpus.

7.5.3 Initial <sd> and <st>

Carswell (1567) mainly uses initial <sd> even in loan words that have <st>, e.g. *sdaid*, 'state', *sdatūid*, 'statute', *sdiūradh*, 'steer' and *sduidēar*, 'study'. The only occasion where he uses <st>, in *stiūradóir* (steersman), occurs in a section that appears to be an original composition by him (Thomson 1970: l.3879). However, from then on, *sdiùir* not only seems to have been in common practice, it appears to be the last lemma to switch to <st> in the mid-nineteenth century.

The use of initial <sd> is rare but does occur in the corpus in 2 lemmas. The following table, Table 7.14 displays the occurrences from the corpus. There are 21 occurrences (no.s 4 to 6 below) from three published texts - MacMhaighstir Alasdair's *Ais-éiridh* (1751), *Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasaighte* (1779) and Eobhann MacDiarmaid's *Sermona* (1804). Two more occurrences are references to earlier manuscript forms cited in *Eachann Bacach* (1979).

[46] *sliastanan* is glossed in the book as the dialectal word for *casan*, 'legs'.

Table 7-14 Corpus occurrences of initial <sd>

	Corpus occurrence	Current orthography	Year	Location
1	sduidarrta	stuidear	c.1750	Eachann Bacach (1979) Appendix II, Moladh na Pìoba by Iain Mac Ailein (Ó Baoill 1979: 305). Form 'sduidarrta' appears in NLS MS 72.2.15 'around 1750' (Ó Baoill 1979: xxxi)
2	sduidaradh	stuidear	mid-1700s	Eachann Bacach (1979) Appendix II, Moladh na Pìoba by Iain Mac Ailein (Ó Baoill 1979: 305) Form 'sduidaradh' appears in NLS MS 72.2.2
3	sduir (x1)	stiùir	1751	Ais-éiridh (Mac-Dhonuill 1751: 137)
4	sdiuir (x 4)	stiùir	1767	Tiomnadh Nuadh (1767)
5	sdiur (x 3)	stiùir	1779	Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasaighte (1779)
6	sdiùr (x 17)	stiùir	1804	Searmona (1804)

Sdiuir is the only lemma MacMhaighstir Alasdair uses with <sd>, he uses 38 other <st-> lemmas and it appears with <st> two other times as *stiuir* and *stúradh*. *Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasaighte* only uses <sd> for *sdiuir*. MacDiarmaid's *Searmona* (1804) used <st> for *sdiuir* seventeen times. The following table shows further examples of initial <sd> located outwith the corpus that extend into the nineteenth century yet all consist of the same lemma, *stiùir*.

Table 7-15 Instance of *sdiuir* outwith the corpus

sd lemmas	Year	Location
sdiuir sdiuiradh	1778	(Shaw 1778: 8 & 10) An Analysis of the Gaelic Language
sdiùr	1816	(MacLaurin 1816: 13) Guide to the Reading of the Gaelic Language
fear-sdiuraidh sdiuradh	1857	('Naigheachdan' 1857a: 8) An Teachdaire Gàidhealach (Australia)

Initial <sd>, then, survives the longest in *sdiùir*, the one lemma which Carswell chose to use with initial <st> in *stiūradóir* (steersman).[47] Over the first half of the nineteenth century, this became the last lemma to change to initial <st>. An illustration of this is made by Tormod MacLeòid, (Norman MacLeod) *'Caraid nan*

[47] The word is repeated seven times in lines 3877-93. R. L. Thomson believed this section to be an original contribution by Carswell (Thomson 1970: 170). While Carswell himself notes that the printer had no Gaelic and so may have created errors (Thomson 1970: 112), it seems unlikely to account for the consistent use of <st> in this section. Carswell used <s*d*-> consistently for 7 other lemmas: *sdaid, sdàta, sdatūid, sdiūradh, sdoc, go sdrāsda, sduidēar*.

Gàidheal', in an essay entitled *'Mu na Druidhean'* which he included in two collections. Where the first, *Co'Chruinneachadh [...] ar son an Sgoilean* [Collection for Schools] (1828), uses <sd>, this is amended to <st> a few years later in *Leabhar nan Cnoc* (1834):

> [...] an uair nach robh riaghailt-**sdiùraidh** eil' aca' (MacLeòid 1828: 73-74) (bold added)

> [...] an uair nach robh riaghailt-**stiùraidh** eil' aca (MacLeòid 1834: 235) (bold added)

It is likely that adherence to the Bible as a model for spelling led to this exception. In *Tiomnadh Nuadh* (1767), there are 4 occurrences of *sdiuir* and none of *stiuir* in the body of the Testament. In the 'Rules for Reading', however, *stiuir* is used twice to illustrate vowels as 'stiuir, the helm', and 'stiuradh, steering' (Buchanan 1767: 7).

7.5.4 Medial and final <sd> and <st>

As it is clear that initial <st> established itself as the norm by the mid-eighteenth century, it is in the medial and final position that the GOC recommendation of 1981 had its impact. The corpus returned over 200 lemmas with either <sd> or <st>, most of which appear at least once in both forms. A large percentage of these lemmas only appear in a small number of texts. Reliable results can only be drawn from lemmas occurring at a reasonable frequency in the corpus; therefore only lemmas appearing in more than ten texts are included in the following analysis on intervocalic and final <st> and <sd>.

The corpus results show that the recommended change in use from <sd> to <st> had significant impact. Given this, it is helpful to look at the results pre-GOC (i.e. before 1981) and then to consider the results post-GOC (i.e. post-1981). Pre-GOC, we can consider the extent to which norms can be seen. Post-GOC we can see how and when the reform was implemented and whether any words have resisted the change to <st> and any other anomalies.

7.5.4.1 The use of <st> and <sd> pre-GOC

This section analyses only pre-1981 texts. Only lemmas appearing in more than ten texts are included in the analysis.

There are 21 lemmas which are predominantly spelt with <sd> which are shown in the table below. One pattern which emerges is the preference for *da* in the adjectival forms 15 to 21 in the table.

Table 7-16 Lemmas predominantly <sd>

	sd lemmas	No. of texts	st lemmas	No. of texts	Gloss
1	an-dràsda	120	an-dràsta	14	now
2	èisd	152	èist	8	listen
3	dleasdanas	34	dleastanas	0	duty
4	am-feasd	36	am-feast	0	forever
5	tuarasdal	37	tuarastal	0	wage
6	taigh-òsda	47	taigh-òsta	0	hotel
7	freasdal	63	freastal	0	attendance
8	tosd	66	tost	1	silent
9	feisd/feusd	30	feist/feust	2	feast
10	asda	42	asta	2	out of them
11	aisde[48]	55	aiste	15	out of her
12	misde	47	miste	4	bad
13	pàisde	51	pàiste	4	child
14	tasdan	35	tastan	6	shilling
15	gasda	85	gasta	6	excellent
16	cneasda	40	cneasta	1	humane
17	aosda	46	aosta	1	old
18	blasda	43	blasta	2	tasty
19	furasda	76	furasta	2	easy
20	gleusda	57	gleusta	12	tuned
21	pòsda	68	pòsta	3	married

7.5.4.2 <st> norms

There are 21 lemmas which are predominantly spelt with <st> (Table 7.17). There are two general patterns that can be seen in these results. The first group are those lemmas which have past participle *-te* endings. The second group are loan words that, in their English or Latin forms are spelt with a <t>. There remain,

[48] i.e. the prepositional pronoun. Aiste meaning 'essay' was counted separately.

however, lemmas such as *tubaist*, *astar* and *fhathast* that do not obviously demonstrate any extrinsic reason for an <st> over <sd> spelling.

Table 7-17 Lemmas predominantly <st>

	sd lemmas	No. of texts	st lemmas	No. of texts	Gloss
1	laisde	1	laiste	32	lit up
2	glaisde	0	glaiste	32	locked
3	brisde	1	briste	52	broken
4	brisd (verb)	7	brist (verb)	83	to break
5	absdoil	0	abstoil	34	apostle
6	baisd	1	baist	38	baptise
7	maighsdir	1	maighstear	92	mister
8	cisde	4	ciste	66	chest
9	caisdeal	0	caisteal	69	castle
10	minisdear	1	ministear	69	minister
11	ceisd	36	ceist	87	question
12	teisd	3	teist	43	testimony
13	fhathasd	37	fhathast	128	still
14	àbhaisd	2	àbhaist	109	ordinary
15	a-rithisd	32	a-rithist	98	again
16	asdar	8	astar	65	speed
17	tubaisd	7	tubaist	39	accident
18	-		imcheist	24	uncertainty
19	ròsd	15	ròst	24	roast
21	goisdidh	1	goistidh	10	hair

7.5.4.3 Latin loan words

Early scribes of Gaelic were familiar with Latin and the spelling of borrowings may have been influenced by the Latin spelling, establishing norms that would continue even when the writers were no longer familiar with the Latin origin or spelling. Table 7.18 below shows Latin origins as suggested by MacBain in his *Etymological Dictionary* (1911) and from a list of Latin-derived loan words by Dr. George Henderson in *Dàin Iain Ghobha* 2 (1896).

There are 13 lemmas of Latin origin of which 5 have no <sd> forms in the corpus: *abstoil*, *caisteal*, *imcheist*, *lòcust* and *mainistear*. While this demonstrates that the first three are clearly established norms, for *lòcust* and *mainistear*, however, the results are not conclusive as there are only a small numbers of occurrences, 3 and 1 respectively.

Table 7-18 Loan words from Latin containing <st> or <sd>

Lemma	st texts	sd texts	Origin	Ref.
maighstir	116	1	magister	MacBain
ceist	116	38	quœstio	MacBain
ministear	94	1	minister	MacBain
caisteal	90	0	castellum	MacBain
ciste	84	4	cista	MacBain
bèist	70	35	bestia	MacBain
teist	53	2	testis	MacBain
baist	44	1	baptizo	MacBain
abstoil	38	0	apostolus	MacBain
imcheist	36	0	from ceist	MacBain
lòcust	3	0	locusta	Henderson
feist	2	31	festia	MacBain
mainistear	1	0	monasterium	MacBain

Four of the lemmas; *baist, maighstir, ministear* and *teist* only have <sd> forms in 1 or 2 texts which may be accounted for as simply minor inconsistencies:

- *baisd*: one instance as *aith-bhaisdeadh* in *Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasuighte* from 1779 which is generally inconsistent in orthography. The form *baiste* is used 6 times in this text as *b(h)aisteadh*.

- *maighsdir*: one instance as *maghisdar* appears in a citation in the notes on the edited text of the poem 'Upon the Revolution', taken from the manuscript of Dr Hector MacLean (Dr Eachann MacGilleathain) MS - MG15G/2/2 Public Archives, Halifax, Nova Scotia. The MS is believed to be written in Mull between 1738-1768.

- *minisdear:* appears 9 times all in the text of *Dàin Iain Ghobha* vol. 2 from 1896. The *minisdear* examples all appear in the same poem 'An Daoi agus an Saoi'. This is unusual as *ministear* is used in the rest of the poems (it appears 6 times). This irregularity may be caused by the fact that this book was edited after the poet's death.

- *teisd:* appears 3 times in 2 texts: *Laoidhean agus Dain* (1868) and Màiri Mhòr nan Òran's *Dàin agus Orain Ghàidhlig (1891)*. The latter text uses *teist* five times and *teisd* once and the book has several printing errors which may account for this irregularity. The former, however, only used *teisd*.

- *ciste*: appears 4 times in 4 texts although two of these are different editions of the same poem, 'A Mhàiri Ghaoil' by John Campbell of Ledaig. All the texts with *cisde* also contain *ciste*.

There are two lemmas that, while still having a majority of <st> forms, also have a significant proportion of <sd> forms, *ceist* and *beist*. *Beist* is, in fact, one of the lemmas for which no norm is apparent from the corpus.

The only lemma in this group where the <sd> spelling was clearly the established norm is *feisd*. The form *feist* only appears in *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* (1835-6) and K. C. Craig's edition of *Sgialachdan Dhunnchaidh* [Duncan's Stories] (1944) which generally contains idiosyncratic and inconsistent spelling. This suggests that writers were not influenced by the Latin spelling of *festia*.

7.5.4.4 No clear norm

The last lemma to be discussed here that appears in over 30 texts is *béisd* or *biasd* which has no demonstrable preference for one form over the other. Nor is there a clear distinction based on the spelling of the vowel as <èi> or <ia>. This demonstrates that despite there being clear norms for a good number of the lemmas, there are also words for which the picture is quite mixed.

Table 7-19 *Bèisd* and *bèist* in the corpus

sd lemma	No. of texts	st lemma	No. of texts
béisd/biasd	33	béist/biast	54

The variation between these forms is evident in one of the earliest texts in the corpus *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* (1835-6) in which *béisd, béist* and *biasd* all appear. As this text is a periodical with various authors' different spelling choices, variation might be expected; however, it illustrates the options available and in use at the time. One of the authors, 'C.C.', uses mainly *béist* or *beist* but on two occasions uses *béisd* within the same story as the <sd> form. However, there are only two stories that use biasd (none for biast) one by 'Tuathach Cuaileanach' and one by 'Iain a' Chagainn', and both sign their locations as 'Bun Lochabar'.

7.5.4.5 English Loans

Similarly to Latin, many loan words from English that are spelled with <st> also have <st> in their Gaelic equivalents. This does not apply universally, but it accounts for many of the lemmas that contain <st> before 1981. English loan words that have not been assimilated in any way into Gaelic spelling are not considered here, e.g. *capstan*, *investigations*. I have considered them as Gaelic words if the spelling has been altered significantly e.g. *diostroidhear* ('destroyer') or if Gaelic morphology (plural endings etc.) has been applied.

In the following tables, Table 7.20 and 7.21, only pre-1998 texts are included. As shown earlier, <st> can be expected in the corpus texts from 1998 where there is largely adherence to the GOC recommendation. There are 21 loans from English that appear as <st> without any <sd> examples in the corpus.

Table 7-20 English loans appearing as <st>

	Gaelic lemma	English	pre-GOC texts	1982-2007 texts
1	astronautach	astronaut	1	-
2	chloroplast	chloroplast	1	-
3	ballaist	ballast	6	-
4	bairistear	barrister	1	-
5	blastadh	blast	1	-
6	ceimist	chemist	-	1
7	conastabal	constable	2	2
8	cost	coast	2	2
9	diosteampair	distemper	1	-
10	distriodhear	destroyer	-	1
11	faisisteach	fascist	-	1
12	firstaichean	firsts	1	-
13	forastair	forester	1	-
14	giustas	justice	1	-
15	hostail	hostel	-	1
16	ionnstramaid	instrument	5	3
17	ostrais	ostrich	1	-
18	piostal	pistol	7	-
19	plastaig	plastic	-	1
20	siostam	system	-	2
21	tost	toast	1	1

While some of these appear only in one text in the corpus, taken as a group they demonstrate that the <st> cluster is usually retained in the Gaelic spelling.

There are also five English loans words with an <sd> form in the corpus before the GOC recommendations as Table 7.21 shows.

Table 7-21 English loans appearing with both <sd> and <st>

English	Gaelic	pre-GOC texts	1982-2007 texts
breakfast	bracoisd	1	0
	bracaist	8	6
canister[49]	canasdair	1	0
	canastair	8	2
crystal	criosdal	1	0
	criostail	6	2
Protestant	Pròsdanach	1	1
	Pròstanach	6	1
bolster	bobhsdair	0	1
	bobhstair	3	1

For all of these lemmas derived from English loans, however, the <st> form is the most frequent in the corpus.

7.5.4.6 **Representing /ʤ/**

There is a group of words where there is neither <st> or <sd> in the corresponding English word but where <st/sd> has been used in the Gaelic spelling to represent /ʤ/ in English words. Unfortunately they do not appear in significant enough numbers to reveal a pattern. It seems that there has been no consistent approach to rendering /ʤ/ in Gaelic.

[49] According to the OED from Latin *canistrum*, from Greek *kanastron* in English from 15th century. However, unlike the religious words, it seems more likely that it came into Gaelic from English.

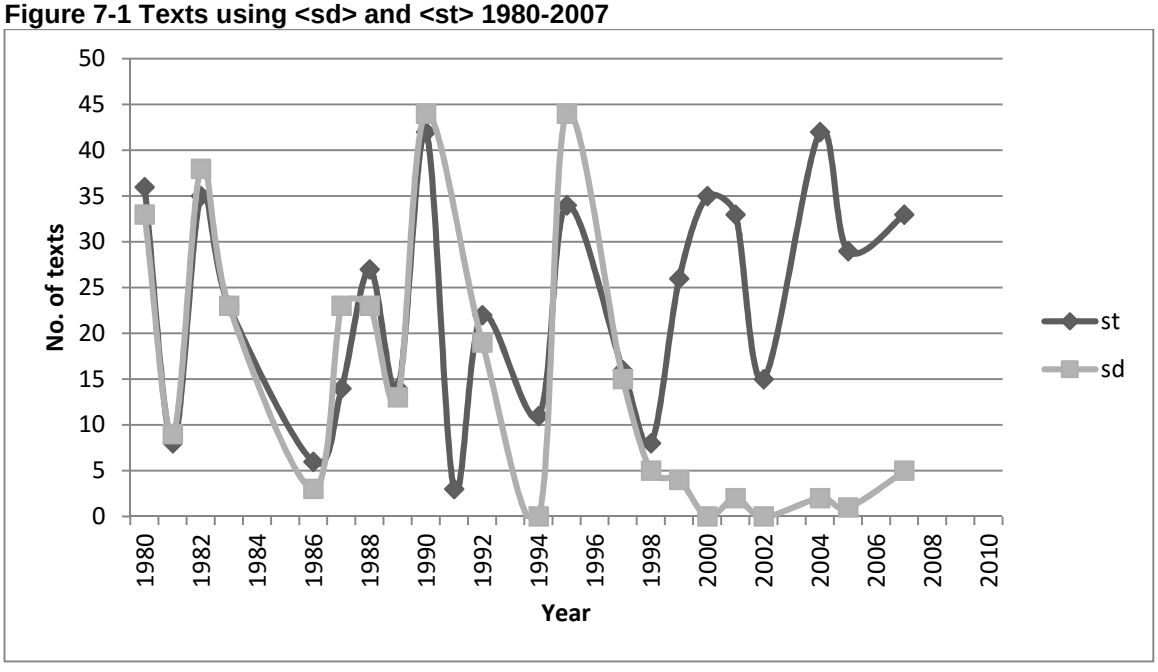
Table 7-22 English loans with /dʒ/

Lemma	pre-GOC texts	1982-2007 texts	Gloss
colaisde	20	11	college
colaiste	2	4	
sèisd	9	2	siege
sèist	-	-	
bunndaisd	-	-	poundage (for bounty)
bunndaist	2	0	
mairisde	-	-	marriage
mairiste	3	1	
lòisdean	1	0	lodging
lòistean	1	0	
curaisd	2	0	courage
curaist	1	0	
damaisde	-	-	damage
damaiste	3	0	
seirsdean	1	0	sargeant
seirstean	-	-	

7.5.4.7 **Post-GOC**

As it is clear that the GOC reform of 1981 makes such a radical break with the mixed picture of usage found previously, the change from <sd> norms to <st> norms allows us to see when the GOC reforms were widely taken up. It can be seen as a kind of shibboleth denoting whether a text has implemented the reform or not. The following graph charts the number of types of <sd> and <st> lemmas in each text in a given year in medial and final position:

Figure 7-1 Texts using <sd> and <st> 1980-2007



The 1981 GOC report was not intended to have an immediate impact but to be used in exams for the first time in 1988. The transition to GOC outside the school system into wider publishing is suggested by this example to take place roughly ten years after that.

7.5.4.8 **An-dràsta**

The change can be further detailed by looking at the data for *an-dràsta*, which was predominantly spelt with <sd> before the reforms.

Table 7-23 Frequency of *an-dràsda/an-dràsta* in the corpus

	Freq.	texts (total)	texts pre-1981	1981-97	1998-2007
an-dràsda	687	139	120	19	0
an-dràsta	164	22	13	0	9

It is important to note that this only demonstrates the picture in the corpus texts, however, and simply indicates a general picture of real-world implementation of the reform. In reality there would have been a more gradual cross-over period between pre-GOC and post-GOC texts in the mid- to late-1990s.

There remain, however, some <sd> spellings in the corpus after the main shift to <st> in 1998. Table 7.24 below gives the post-1998 texts that still include <sd> forms.

Table 7-24 Lemmas containing <sd> post-1998

Text	st lemmas	sd lemmas	non-GOC compliant
Na Klondykers (2005)	35	1	gun fhiosd' dha
Tocasaid 'Ain Tuirc (2004)	46	2	casd (x 2) tosd (x 2)
Sgeulachdan Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (2001)	37 Incl. tuarastal x2	2	dleasdanas tuarasdal
Bàrdachd Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (1999): poems	18	2	dleasdanas freasdal
Bàrdachd Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (1999): intro	10	2	tasdan colaisde (used in proper noun)

Of the non-GOC compliant words, we can account for *colaisde* ('college') as an exception covered by GOC to be acceptable in titles of colleges. While *tasdan* and *tuarasdal* are rare, *dleasdanas* is relatively common and appears to resist the reform. The instance of *casd* is a syncopated variant of *casad*. Instances of syncope can create *sd*/*st* clusters and are worth considering in detail.

7.5.4.9 Syncope

There are five lemmas where the <sd>/<st> cluster has arisen from syncope (see Table 7.25). There are not large numbers of these, but with the one exception of *sliasaid - sliastanan* already mentioned, the same consonant used in non-syncopated forms is retained. This accounts for some of the post-1998 uses of <sd>: *casd* which occurs twice in *Tocasaid 'Ain Tuirc* (2004) and *gluasd* in *Saoghal Bana-mharaiche* (2007).[50]

Table 7-25 <sd> and <st> clusters created by syncope

Non-syncopated form	Lemma	pre-GOC texts	1982-1997 texts	1998-2007 texts	Gloss
casad	casd	8	3	1	cough
	cast	-	-	-	
gluasad	gluasd	3	1	1	moving
	gluast	-	-	-	
sliasaid	slèisde[51]	14	0	0	thigh
	slèiste	0	0	1	
sluasaid	sluaisdean	1	0	0	shovel
	sluaistean	-	-	-	
gaoisid	gaoisd	1	0	0	hair of beasts
	gaoist	-	-	-	

These examples illustrate competing principles in orthography: a strict phonographic application of the 'one sound, one letter' rule that would require only one combination of <st> and <sd> and the desire for the reader to able to understand the connection between the non-syncopated and syncopated form.

Given that the corpus demonstrates that for some words the <sd> or <st> form was an established norm, it might seem that there was an option for the reforms to codify words as either <sd> or <st> forms. However, the corpus also contains over one hundred lemmas that have no clear preference for one form over the other. Attempting to choose which form a word should have would lead to an extensive wordlist which was not GOC's aim. It would also mean that teachers

[50] This is glossed in the text as 'Tha i gluaisd, .i. ‘tha i a’ gluasad’ ' (Watson 2007: 183).

[51] Both the genitive singular *slèisde* and the plural *slèisdean* have syncope and are counted together as the same lemma here.

would need extensive wordlists to drill school pupils in which words should be spelt with <sd> and which with <st>.

7.6 Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, it has been established that variation between the pairs of consonants clusters <st>/<sd>, <sc>/<sg> and <sp>/<sb> existed in the early texts published in modern Scottish Gaelic. As printing in Scottish Gaelic significantly increased with the evangelical publications of the later half of the eighteenth century, variability in these pairs of consonants clusters was reduced, sometimes to prefer one form only, sometimes lexically fixing the variation. The chronology of change for each pair is different; however, they follow the same path where a norm is established word-initially before the word medial and final positions are settled.

The first of the pairs to standardise word initially was <sb> and <sp>, with <sp> established as the standard convention before the period of the corpus. When exactly the transition is made requires further investigation. For <st> and <sd>, initial <st> is also the settled convention by the mid-eighteenth century. As there are texts, both published and unpublished, in the first half of the eighteenth century which are not yet included in the corpus, further work could establish more precisely when this convention is introduced. The exception of *sdiuir*, 'steer', is remarkable in this context for its non-conformity. Initial <sg> is also settled on as the norm during the eighteenth century.

In medial and final <sc>/<sg>, the patterns of use show a clear preference for <sg>. The pattern for non-conforming lemmas which use <sc> is that they are loan words from English, particularly where the pattern of adapting <k> as <c> is followed e.g. *deasc* 'desk', *flasc* 'flask', or *bascaid* 'basket'. The only other GOC-resistant word is *deisciobul*.

In medial and final position, the use of <sb> and <sp>, which appear in a relatively small number of lemmas, was again settled first and became lexically fixed. For <st> and <sd>, the variability did not settle in all lemmas. The greater number of lemmas compared with <sb>/<sp> made it more difficult for a pattern to be

lexically fixed. The first GOC report only covered <st> and <sd> as this was the feature whose variability was causing difficulty.

Cox's criticism of GOC (2009) includes the different choices made with regards to <sb>/<sp> and <sd>/<st>. Cox is not satisfied with the explanation in GOC 2005 and 2009 that frequency and familiarity allow for <sb> exceptions:

> The claims of frequency and familiarity in the use of -sb- in these forms seem to be largely spurious, however, otherwise it is difficult to see why other words were not also exempted on similar grounds (e.g. aosda, now aosta). (Cox 2010: 163)

Cox considers 'frequency and familiarity' spurious because the same decisions over <sb>/<sp> were not made in regards to <sd>/<st>. The exceptions to <sp> are frequent, familiar, but also crucially *of a small number*. The data shows that the much larger number of <st> and <sd> lemmas would be problematic in allowing for regularised variation. There is a parallel with the difficulty of literate English speakers with the difference between *its* and *it's*. It is not axiomatic that guidelines or rules that require the average person to distinguish by grammatical part of speech or phonological distinction are universally applied.

It is, of course, also relevant that the decisions were made at different times by different people, in response to different circumstances.

What the form of these s+consonant clusters represents is the culmination of a standardising process that demonstrates an ever-increasing attachment to consistency, clarity and uniformity.

8 Simplicity vs Phonography: the accent

In this chapter I will trace the written description in scholarly and literary works of how the grave and acute accents function in modern Scottish Gaelic, what arguments are drawn on in discussion of their usage and then analyse the corpus data to see how usage has matched or diverged from description.

The removal of the acute accent in the GOC reports was one of the most controversial and discussed elements; however, discussion of its use has mainly covered how it *should* be used; its actual use over the last three centuries has never been documented. The primary ideological battle evidenced in the use of the accent is between the phonographic ideal to represent distinct sounds, and standardisation's drivers of simplicity, uniformity and consistency in usage.

As the primary interest is in the standardisation of the use of these two accents, other accents used occasionally over the same period will not be included in this study.[52] Section 8.1 presents the written history and previous literature which discusses the use of the accent. Section 8.2 covers the corpus analysis carried out. Each vowel will be considered in turn, tracking its use and standardisation.

8.1 A History of the Accent in Scottish Gaelic Orthography

The recommendation of the first Gaelic Orthographic Conventions (GOC) regarding accents was one of the most contested points of those reforms. The 1981 report advised the use of the grave accent only, foregoing the use of the acute. Notable contemporary resistance to this recommendation includes the Gaelic columns of *The Scotsman* newspaper, edited by Ronald Black and widely-used online dictionary *Am Faclair Beag*, edited by Michel Bauer. The standard description of the use of the accents prior to the GOC reform is as follows:

[52] For example, the use of the breve on <ă> and the diaeresis or trema on <ë>, notably by John MacKenzie in *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach* (1841) and *Eachdraidh a' Prionnsa* (1844), e.g., Găël (Mac-Choinnich 1844: 122). Also in *Laoidhean Spioradail* (Grant 1862), *Leabhar na Feinne* (Campbell 1872), and *Am Filidh Gaidhealach* (MacKenzie 1873). Further examples can be found by searching Corpas na Gàidhlig online.

1. Grave accent used on <a>, <e>, <i>, <o>, <u> to indicate a long vowel:

<a> /a/	<à> /a:/
<e> /e/	<è> /ɛ:/
<i> /i/	<ì> /i:/
<o> /ɔ/	<ò> /ɔ:/
<u> /u/	<ù> /u:/

2. Acute accent: used on <e> and <o> to indicate a high-mid long vowel:

<é> /e: /
<ó> /o:/

Exceptions to this include no accent used to represent /i:/ when <i> is followed by <nn> or <ll> in word-final position, e.g. /i:/ in *binn*, *till*. This is the system often considered the 'traditional spelling'.[53] However, in the written descriptions of Gaelic orthography it takes some time for this 'traditional spelling' to be expressed as such.

In this section I analyse how the use of the accent has been described over the centuries. From the literature, I have identified 5 positions on the use of grave and acute accents seen in Modern Scottish Gaelic texts. They are:

1. only the acute accent to indicate vowel length
2. only the grave accent to indicate vowel length
3. the grave on all vowels, also the acute on <é> for /eː/
4. the grave on all vowels, also the acute on <é> and <ó> for /eː/ and /o:/ respectively (i.e. the 'traditional' model)
5. no accents at all

While many of the elucidations of these models can be found in grammars, dictionaries and textbooks, there are many comments also made in introductions and editorial notes. Generally speaking, the history of the accent in Scottish Gaelic traces a path from position 1 to position 4, with 5 appearing sporadically. As will be shown, these are sometimes presented descriptively and sometimes prescriptively.

8.1.1 Position 1: the acute accent only

This position inherits the conventions of Classical Gaelic although accents were not always used, or used consistently, in Classical Gaelic writings. In *Foirm na n-*

[53] e.g. 'The traditional spelling used both accents' (Bauer 2011: 376)

Urrnuidheadh (1567), which adapted Classical Gaelic to Roman type, Carswell used the acute accent primarily although seven grave accents also appear (Thomson 1970: xviii-xxi). As Scottish Gaelic entered the modern period, this convention of acute usage continued. It was explicitly advocated in the Rev. Robert Kirk's Scottish Gaelic wordlist published in Nicolson's *Scottish Historical Library* in 1702:

> Where a Vowel is accented, it is to be pronounced long; as a Greek Omega (Nicolson 1702: 335)

When Kirk had, in 1690, published an edition comprising O'Donnell's and Bedell's Irish Old and New Testaments in Roman script he had also used the acute accent throughout. In the rare printed texts in Scotland in the early eighteenth century, such as the collection of psalms *Sailm Dhaibhidh* [The Psalms of David] (Synod of Argyll 1715), the acute is predominant and forms the convention.

As described in Chapter 3, by the middle of the eighteenth century Classical Gaelic orthography was at odds with the impulse to spread literacy and the word of God in vernacular Scottish Gaelic. Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's spelling reforms took a large step away from these Classical conventions. However, in both the publication of his Gaelic-English vocabulary, *Leabhar a Theasgasc Ainminnin: A Galick and English Vocabulary* (1741), and his poetry, *Ais-éiridh na Sean Chánoin Albannaich* (1751), Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair maintained the Classical conventions of using the acute accent, describing its use as follows:

> And also all the vowels that have this accent (´) above them are to be pronounced long, in whatever part of a word it may occur. (Mac-Dhonuill 1751: ix-x)

There is only one instance of a grave accent, <ò> in *mheòbhair* (meomhair, *memory*) (Mac-Dhonuill 1751: 8) and its exceptional appearance implies it was used in error. Assuming MacMhaighstir Alasdair saw his own work through the press, the use of the acute would have been his decision.[54] The 1741 vocabulary was published by Robert Fleming in Edinburgh who was not a Gaelic speaker and did not publish Gaelic works in general. The publisher of *Ais-éiridh* (1751) is

[54] The manuscript in the National Library of Scotland, Adv. MS. 72.2.13, which contains some of MacMhaighstir Alasdair's poems and is believed to be in his own hand is written in *cló Gaelach* and uses the acute accent. An image of the MS can be seen in Dressler & Stiùbhart (2012).

unknown. It is the only text in the corpus to follow the practice of using the acute accent only.

Position 1, then, covers the period up to mid-eighteenth century. It is not advocated or used conventionally after the 1750s.

8.1.2 Position 2: the grave accent only

In Kirk's edition of Bedell's Bible published in 1690 there is no commentary on spelling. However, when it was republished by John Orr in Glasgow in 1754, it came with a postscript entitled *A Leughoir* (Dear Reader) with guidance on spelling conventions. Black attributes this to Orr himself (2010: 238). This is the first instance I have located where the use of the grave accent is explicitly recommended. It names the grave, acute and circumflex accents but then only describes the use of the grave accent.[55] Indeed it appears that the grave has taken the place of the acute throughout the 1754 publication, despite no other obvious orthographical or editorial changes.

Three of John Orr's other publications, *Sailm Dhaibhidh* (Macfarlance 1753 and 1765) and a catechism, *Leabhar-ceist na Mathair* [The Mother's Catechism] (Willison 1752), also use only the grave, which indicates that Orr's use of it is deliberate. However, this could make Black's suggestion that Orr was the surreptitious printer of *Ais-éiridh* (1751) less likely as that text uses the acute throughout.[56]

In Section 2.2.2, the use of orthography as an identity marker was discussed. It is conceivable that the switch from the acute to the grave was part of the process of marking Scottish Gaelic as distinct from its Classical Gaelic tradition and its Irish counterpart. By this stage, however, the use of the Roman font in printing as opposed to *cló Gaelach* was already a significant distancing factor. While it

[55] 'Tha an Sineadh-garbh, na chomhartha air an chuid Sin don fhocal is còir a Shineadh, mar so, tròcair, far am bheill an Sioladh (trò,) fada, agus (cair,) goirid, agus cuiridh se eidir-dhealughadh eidir focail, ann san aon dreach as fheugmhais, gidheadh, ag am bheill seadh air leath.' (Kirk 1754: [372]) [*The grave is a mark on that part of the word that should be lengthened, such as, tròcair, where the syllable (trò) is long and (cair) short, and it differentiates between words, in the same form, yet which have separate meanings.*]

[56] Suggested in Black (2010: 236).

remains a possibility, I have not found any convincing evidence that the use of the grave was motivated by this identity function.

Of the texts in the corpus, only one nineteenth-century text uses only the grave accent, *Marbh-rainn air daoine urramach* (1887). However, of the publication's 15 pages, the grave appears only on the first five, so the absence of the acute could be a printing limitation.[57]

After John Orr's break with existing convention, Position 2 can be seen again (if somewhat indistinctly) in Robert MacFarlan's *Alphabetical Vocabulary* (1795; see Section 8.1.3, p.166), but then not used conventionally until the late-twentieth century and the reforms of the *Gaelic Orthographic Conventions*. Use of the grave accent only to mark length is recommended by all three GOC reports and is the current norm.

8.1.3 Position 3: the grave with the acute for <e>

The first translation of the complete New Testament in 1767 took a clear position on the accent, favouring the grave but with a distinguishing role for the acute on <e>. The 1767 edition came with a guide to the *Rules for Reading* which sets out Position 3 for the first time. These recommend:

- à for /a:/
- ì for /i:/
- ù for /u:/
- è for /ɛ:/, the Greek Eta, or <ai> in praise
- é as the Latin <œ>
- ò for long /o:/

The full description for the use of the grave and acute for the two long sounds of <e> is:

> 1. *E* sounds long, like the Greek Eta, or *ai* in *praise*, in *è* or *sè* he, *rè* during the time of
>
> 2. *E* likewise often sounds long, as the Latin *œ,* or the first *e* in *scene,* as *ré* the moon, *cé* the earth, *té* a woman, *Dé* of God, *an dé* yesterday. That this sound of e may not be confounded with the preceeding, it will

[57] It was published in Dingwall by the Ross-shire Journal office.

> be proper to mark it with a different Accent, either when it stands as a vowel, or enters into a diphthong. (1767: [2])

The *Rules* note that long <o> has two values but does not use an acute accent to differentiate them, merely noting the exceptions of *mòr, ò, bò, lòn, stòl* and 'a few others' which are not specified (1767: [2]).

Using the corpus to count the instances of each accent in *Tiomnadh Nuadh* (1767), it is clear that both the translators and the printers were able to reach a good level of consistency in the use of the grave as the data in the following table, Table 8.1, shows.

Table 8-1 No. of accented vowels in *Tiomnadh Nuadh* (1767)

Grave	No. of occurrences	Acute	No. of occurrences
à	6,162	á	2 [58]
è	6,607	é	715
ì	1,603	í	0
ò	3,401	ó	0
ù	1,184	ú	0

The *Rules for Reading* also imply that the accent is only required for differentiation between short and long vowels when it is required to avoid ambiguity, not for the marking of length in a consistent fashion:

> All the vowels are sometimes long, sometimes short. When there is any danger of mistake, the long are generally marked with Accents; as *mìle* a thousand, *tìr* a country, *sàil* the heel, *bàs* death: the two last words are thereby distinguished from *sail* a beam, *bas* the palm of the hand. (1767: [1])

By the next edition in 1783, however, this focus on differentiation is removed and the accent is more 'generally' used for length:

> All the vowels are sometimes long, sometimes short. When long they are generally marked with accents. (SSPCK 1783: [x])

This indicates another thread in the standardisation of accents: early texts describe them as useful for differentiation between words which would otherwise be homographs, but this then became codified as regular long vowel representation. Not all subsequent texts followed the New Testament's guidance.

[58] These appear as ‘láimh’ and ‘grádh’. These appear to be printing errors as with the grave they occur 73 and 149 times respectively.

William Shaw's *Analysis of the Gaelic Language* (1778) does not cover the use of accents at all in his orthographic description. His use of both grave and acute accents in the body of the *Analysis* does not follow that laid out in the *Tiomnadh Nuadh* or any other apparent consistent position. He (or the printer) also uses accents in unusual places such as secondary syllables, e.g. *snamhàm* (1778: 101). In contrast, Shaw (1780) does not use any accents at all, or make reference to them, in his dictionary published two years later.

In Robert MacFarlan's 1795 *Alphabetical Vocabulary* with its 'directions for reading and writing the Gailic', the recommendation to use the grave consistently to mark vowel length is expressed, but this is a return to Position 2 espoused by Orr in 1754 — MacFarlan does not make a distinction between <è> and <é> and uses both in his example. Despite using the same examples as in the *Tiomnadh Nuadh* (1767) he does not follow those earlier Rules in differentiating between /ɛː/ and /eː/.

> *E* sounds like *ai* in praise, in *é*, or *sè*, he, *rè*, during the time of, &c. (MacFarlan 1795: 10)

It was at the turn of the century that Position 3 fully established itself as the convention. The Rev. Dr Alexander Stewart's influential *Elements of Gaelic Grammar* was first published in 1801, the same year as the completed Old Testament.[59] In it, he explicitly states that his orthography follows the 'Rules' laid out in the *Tiomnadh Nuadh* (1767) and describes the Position 3 convention.[60] Subsequently, Armstrong's dictionary (1825: ii) and MacLeod and Dewar's dictionary (1839: 437) continued this position.[61] The Highland Society's Dictionary (1828) is prefaced by Stewart's grammar and therefore also follows Position 3.

[59] Stewart's Grammar appeared in 5 editions and further reprints in the following 100 years, as well as forming the basis of Cameron Gillies' *Elements of Gaelic Grammar* (1902).

[60] 'In explaining the sounds of the letters I have availed myself of the very correct and acute remarks on this subject, annexed to the Gaelic Version of the New Test. 1767' (Stewart 1801: 3)

[61] Although MacLeod & Dewar do note that there are two long /o/ sounds: 'O, with the accent over it, sounds long, broad and open, like o in Lord. In many words it sounds differently from this, being like o in score. It might be useful to distinguish these sounds by a difference of accent, as is done in the case of accented E, but this nicety has not been practised in composition' (MacLeod & Dewar 1831: 437)

Variations from Position 3, however, continued to be suggested. An early book for teaching is MacLaurin's *The First Book for Children, in the Gaelic Language* (1811). In it, MacLaurin describes two accents to be used for two different purposes:

> Tha da ghnè fhuaim fhada ann, fuaim ghéur fhada, agus fuaim chiùin fhada; tha comhar fa leth aca, tionndaidhear an comhar géur chum na laimhe clithe, agus an comhar ciùin chum na laimhe deise, mar so ´ ` ré, gnàth. (M'Laurin 1811: 6-7)
>
> *There are two kinds of long sounds, a long sharp sound, and a long smooth sound; they each have a mark, the sharp mark is turned to the left-hand side, and the calm mark to the right-hand side, like so ´ ` ré, gnàth*

However his use of the acute for *'fuaim ghéur fhada'*, the long sharp sound, with <i> is unconventional:

> Focail air an doigh chéudna [fòghair eadar da chomh-fhòghaire], far am bheil fuaim ghéur fhada aig an fhòghaire. tír, mír, cír, cís, bíd, dít, sír, sín, mín, rís. (M'Laurin 1811: 11)
>
> *Words in the same manner [a vowel between two consonants], where the vowel has a long sharp sound. Tír, mír (…)*

The use of the acute on <i> was not continued by other writers.

Position 3, then, began with the *Tiomnadh Nuadh* (1767) and continued throughout much of the nineteenth century. As the next section will shows, use of the acute on <o> was slow to become established.

8.1.4 Position 4: the grave with acute on <e> and <o>

It was not until 1828 that James Munro's *Gaelic Primer* introduced the idea of using the acute systematically on <o> using <ò> for /ɔ:/ ('Sounds like ô in for, lord', Munro 1828: 5) and ó for /o:/ ('Sounds like ō in total, bold, foe', Munro 1828: 6):

> Each of the five vowels admits of the grave accent `, which indicates a long sound. The acute ´ is written over e and o only, and indicates a particular long sound of these vowels. (Munro 1828: 2)

This arrangement of Position 4, which would then become the traditional position, is laid out most clearly in a table of the alphabet where the list of 'powers' includes

the Gaelic and the corresponding English sound as the following: é = a in *pate*, è = e in *there*, e = e in *her*, and ò = o in *or*, ó = *cold*, o = *hot* (Munro 1828: 30).

By the end of the nineteenth century this convention is repeatedly found in descriptions of the orthography such as in MacBain's *Etymological Dictionary* (1911: vii) and in Edward Dwelly's *Gaelic-English Dictionary* (1911: 376).[62]

8.1.5 Position 5: no accents

The earliest text in the corpus, Alexander MacFarlane's *Gairm an De Mhoir* (1750), uses no accents. It was published by Robert and Andrew Foulis, Printers to the University of Glasgow. Although when MacFarlane also published an edition of the Synod of Argyll's psalms as *Sailm Dhaibhidh* (1753), it used the grave accent in accordance with the practice of its publisher, John Orr.

Some writers have more explicitly preferred the removal of all accents. Alexander MacBain hints at his dislike of accents in a discussion of standardisation in the *Celtic Magazine*:

> Uniformity in the spelling of Gaelic is much to be desired; indeed, it is an absolute necessity, if any good result is expected to come from the teaching of Gaelic in schools, to agree upon a standard spelling. [...] The apostrophes and accent must be dealt with firmly, and with a view to their reduction, if their extinction is impossible, as perhaps it is. (MacBain 1887: 45)

In MacKinnon's essay on 'Accents, Apostrophes and Hyphens in Scottish Gaelic', his first point about the accent raises the question of its removal altogether:

> Should we not get rid of it altogether, as the English have done? This would, no doubt, be the simplest solution. It would put an end at once to all our difficulties and blunders in connection with the use of it. But few among us, I imagine, would vote for the total abolition of the Accent in writing Gaelic. If we had never had it, we would not miss it. But as things are it has been of advantage, especially to the young reader (MacKinnon 1910: 195)

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[62] Other texts which describe Position 4: MacLennan (1925: xv) as a ‘rule’ of usage. Teaching manuals; MacPharlain 1903, 1911 and 1913. MacFarlane calls the grave accent ‘iteag chlì’, *left plume*, and the acute, ‘iteag dheas’, *right plume* (MacPharlain 1913: 3).

The most explicit argument for removing accents is made by Hector Cameron in his edition of poetry from Tiree:

> Throughout the book I have deliberately eliminated all accent marks. These, I agree, are entirely necessary for School Text-books, and commendable for College Students' Class-books, but I do not think that proficient readers of Gaelic really require them, especially in a book of verse, where they have the assistance of rhyme and assonance. When we are active walkers, we have no need to carry crutches. (Cameron 1932: xxii)

Cameron agrees with MacKinnon in that accents are useful for the young reader. Yet Cameron expects the general reader to have a fluency that makes the additional phonological information provided by accents unnecessary. This presumption of fluency is one of the most significant differences between Cameron and more contemporary commentators on orthography who require orthography to aid in phonological acquisition.

There are texts, including Cameron's *Na Baird Thirisdeach* (1932), without any accents in the corpus although Cameron's is the only one where its absence is explained and argued for.[63] For most texts which contain no accents, printing restrictions are as likely to be the reason as the deliberate choice of the writer.

8.1.6 GOC and the Removal of the Acute

When the first Gaelic Orthographic Conventions were published in 1981, they returned to Position 2: grave only – not seen since John Orr's publications in the mid-eighteenth century. The subsequent revisions in 2005 and 2009 repeated this position. The clearest argument in print against the use of the acute is found in Donald MacAulay's lecture to the Gaelic Society of Inverness, published prior to the first GOC report. In it, MacAulay rejects the idea that distinguishing between the two long sounds is necessary, presumably on the basis that a fluent speaker uses the sounds regardless. Instead, he emphasises that greater simplicity and uniformity would be possible with only one accent marking length:

> it would seem a very good idea (especially in the light of the printing and publication problems we referred to above) to get rid of as many

[63] Corpus texts with no accents are: *Gairm an De Mhoir* (1750), *Dan Spioradail* (1885) and *Na Baird Thirisdeach* (1932)

> diacritic marks as possible. There seems no good reason to have two accent marks in Gaelic considering the very few word pairs they directly distinguish. It would be sufficient to retain the grave accent simply to indicate length. (MacAulay 1976-78: 95)

The phonographic correspondence does not worry MacAulay – earlier in the same paper he foregrounds the impossibility of the phonographic ideal and the inherent differences between speech and writing. Instead MacAulay's focus is on the practicalities of written communication. Thus, to support his argument that two accents are not required, he cites the perceived ease with which readers can approach texts without any accents:

> That even this is not strictly necessary has been clearly demonstrated in the recent past by the omission of all accents from newspaper contributions in the Scotsman and in the West Highland Free Press, for example, without any serious problems of comprehension arising. However, I would not (especially in view of the strong development of Gaelic as a second language) recommend the dropping of both accents, at least at this time. (MacAulay 1977: 95)

MacAulay's measure of success, according to this, is not how well the orthography meets an ideal, but is in terms of 'comprehension', in terms of writing as a system of graphic communication.

The complaints about the removal of the acute, however, have often been based on the reduction of the phonographic correspondence. They are not, however, simply aiming for an impossible phonographic ideal. Instead, there is a concern for the effect on readers' phonological understanding of Gaelic, as in the example below:

> The traditional spelling used both accents because there is no other way of predicting when you get either sound. Of course changing the spelling hasn't affected the pronunciation of these sounds! Well, for native speakers anyway. Learners these days get this wrong quite a lot because few of the new books published use both accents. (Bauer 2011: 376)

Opponents argue, albeit anecdotally, that there has since been a reduction in quality of Gaelic pronunciation with Black noting 'a trend towards a single sound for *ò, è* and even *à*,' due to the wider context where 'intergenerational transmission ceased and orthography became crucial to the acquisition of the language' (Black 2010: 254). For this reason, the acute is retained in the *Fuaimean*

na Gàidhlig: Introduction to the Sounds of Scottish Gaelic text used in teaching at the University of Glasgow by Ó Maolalaigh 'in order to help learners identify significant differences in pronunciation' (2010: 3) although they are advised not to use it in writing and it is not used in other teaching materials. Similarly, Colin Mark uses the acute to explain the graphic-phonic correspondence in his 2003 dictionary, but not throughout the rest of the dictionary. Current guidance on function of the grave can be summarised by the following quote from a language textbook:

> The grave is mainly used to show that a vowel is long, but it also distinguishes vowel quality in some instances. (Watson 2012: 40)

The 'some instances' refers to the quality of <a> which is further detailed in 8.2.5.

8.1.7 The Practice of Accents

Despite the general consensus established in dictionaries and grammars around the 'traditional' spelling, as represented by Position 4, there was also awareness that its practice was not consistent. In 1910, MacKinnon had cause to complain that contemporary practice 'depends mainly upon the caprice of the individual writer' (MacKinnon 1910: 197). He also offers the explanation that the use of two accents on <o> developed later as the vowels were not themselves consistent across dialects:

> Historically the close *o* has come to be marked by the Acute Accent only recently, and by no means uniformly. The reason probably is that in the case of *e* the two sounds are fairly consistent over the whole Gaelic-speaking area, while no such uniformity can be claimed for *o*. (MacKinnon 1910: 194)

In MacLennan's dictionary, we find the elaboration of Position 4 but with a caveat:

> The application of this rule, however, is modified by the dialectal idiosyncrasy of any given writer. At the same time it may be taken as in the main of general value. (MacLennan 1925: xv)

According to the ideology of the standard, this inconsistency is a fault which reflects 'caprice' and 'idiosyncrasy' and this is why writers prefer to simplify its usage to better preserve the consistency that the ideology of the standard requires.

The following corpus analysis looks at each of the five vowels in turn to see the practice of accents in the chronological sweep that the corpus provides.

8.2 Corpus Analysis of Accent Use

Irish and non-Gaelic results were removed before analysis. The analysis focusses on the most commonly used lemmas which are identified from the corpus data.

8.2.1 Accents with <e>

The corpus results for frequency of <è> and <é> can tell us in which lemmas the accents are most common. By focussing on the most common lemmas, where most data is found, general patterns of use can be deduced. Below are the five most common lemmas across the corpus with their frequency. The corpus returned 20,722 instances of <è> and 41,494 instances of <é>. This is the only vowel where there are more acute occurrences than grave. Of the <é> occurrences, 469 appear in *Ais-éiridh* (1751).

The top five most frequent lemmas with <è> account for 42.1% of all <è> occurrences. The top five most frequent lemmas with <é> account for 38.9% of all <é> occurrences.

Table 8-2 Five most frequent lemmas with <è> grave

<è> grave	freq.	% of total <è>	<é> acute form	freq.	% of total <é>
dèan	3,928	18.9%	déan	17	0.04%
fèin	2,386	11.5%	féin	7,190	17.3%
dè	1,251	6%	dé	2,053	4.9%
an dèidh	959	4.6%	an déidh	2,552	6.1%
è	870	4.2%	é	121	0.3%

Table 8-3 Five most frequent lemmas with <é> acute

<é> acute	freq.	% of total <é>	<è> grave form	freq.	% of total <è>
féin	7,190	17.3%	fèin	2,386	11.5%
an déidh	2,552	6.1%	an dèidh	959	4.6%
éirich	2,322	5.6%	èirich	525	2.5%
céile	2,068	5.0%	cèile	593	2.8%
dé	2,053	4.9%	dè	1,251	6%

Three lemmas, *féin,* 'self', *dé,* 'what' and *an déidh*, 'after', appear in the most frequent list in both forms and are also more frequent in the corpus with the acute form.[64] The five most frequent <é> lemmas represent high mid vowels in most dialects.

8.2.1.1 *Féin* and *Fèin*

The lemma *féin* is the most common one containing <é> for /eː/ and therefore its use across the corpus can indicate the application of <é>. Table 8.4 show the frequency of accented and unaccented *fein* before 1800.

Table 8-4 Frequency of *fein* before 1800

Text	féin	fèin	fein
Gairm an De Mhoir (1750)	0	0	430
Ais-éiridh (1751)	19	0	22
Tiomnadh Nuadh (1767)	0	0	1,171
Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasuighte (1779)	0	0	56
Saighidear Criosduidh (1797)	0	0	40

However, in the eighteenth century corpus texts, *fein* is generally not marked long at all. While *Gairm an De Mhoir* (1750) has no accents at all, the other four texts make use of <é>. Even though *Ais-éiridh* (1751) only uses the acute, its use is inconsistent and *féin* and *fein* both appear. While *Tiomnadh Nuadh* (1767) uses <é> and describes its use in the Rules for Reading, it does not mark *fein* as long. *Leabhar Ceasnuigh Aithleasuighte* (1779) follows this with unaccented *fein*. Although *Saighidear Criosduidh* (1797) also appears to follow this, the text in fact does not use any accents on <e> (although it does on other vowels).

The following table shows the occurrences in the nineteenth-century texts. The beginning of the nineteenth century continues to show unaccented *fein* as the most common form, with texts such as *Daoine air an Comhairleachadh an aghaidh bhi Deanamh Croin orra fhein* [People Advised against Harming Themselves] *(1832)* and *Beachd-Chomhairlean* [Hints for the Use of Highland Tenants and Cottagers] (1838) consistently using no accent on *fein*. *Searmona* (1804) is the only text where the grave *fèin* is in double figures before 1980.

[64] Occurrences of *an(-)dé,* 'yesterday', and *Dé*, 'God', were counted separately.

Towards the middle of the century *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* (1835-6) and *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach* (1841) are the first texts to use the acute *féin* in significant numbers. This may follow the increase in the acute *féin* in dictionaries including Armstrong (1825), Highland Society Dictionary (1828) and MacLeod and Dewar (1831). The main variation after this is not between the grave and acute but between the acute and the unaccented form, although MacEachen's 1842 and MacAlpine's 1832 dictionary mark *fèin* with the grave.

Table 8-5 Nineteenth-century frequencies of *fein*

Text	Féin	Fèin	Fein
Orain Ghaelach (1801)	0	3	35
Searmona (1804)	6	24	393
Comhchruinneacha (1813)	10	0	155
Co'chruinneachadh (1828)	4	7	285
Daoine air an Comhairleachadh (1832)	0	0	195
An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach (1835-6)	356	5	16
Beachd-Chomhairlean (1838)	0	0	121
Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach (1841)	180	3	145
Laoidhean Spioradail (1862)	42	1	22
Laoidhean agus Dàin (1868)	42	0	1
Am Filidh Gaidhealach (1873)	16	0	24
Orain ann sa Ghailig (1875)	0	0	7
Ordo Missæ (1877)	17	1	14
An t-Oranaiche (1879)	195	2	13
Gaelic Songs (1880)	11	1	0
Poems and Songs (1880)	9	0	10
Laithean Ceisde (1880)	51	4	2
Poems (1884)	19	1	29
Dan Spioradail (1885)	0	0	7
Croft Cultivation (1885)	0	0	6
Dàin agus Orain Ghàidhlig (1891)	60	0	11
Dàin Iain Ghobha 1 (1893)	23	3	109
An t-Urramach Iain Mac-Rath (1895)	0	0	98
Dàin Iain Ghobha 2 (1896)	75	0	25
Na Bàird Leathanach (1898)	9	0	82
Leabhar na Ceilidh (1898): Bàrdachd	0	0	175
Leabhar nan Gleann (1898)	14	0	1

The large number of texts where *fein* is unmarked by an accent may reflect MacKinnon's observation that the 'rule' is influenced by dialects. However, texts such as *Dàin Iain Ghobha* Vol. 2 (1896) and *Poems* (1884) are single author texts which use both *féin* and *fein*.

As the next table shows, in the twentieth century the unmarking of the vowel in *fein* significantly drops off with a handful of exceptions: *Am Fear-Ciùil* [The

Musicman] (1910), *An t-Ogha Mor* (1913), *Na Baird Thirisdeach* (1932) (which uses no accents at all) and *Litrichean Alasdair Mhoir* [Letters from Alasdair] (1932). The dictionaries of this time continued to codify the acute including MacBain (1911 [1896]), Dwelly (1911) and MacLennan (1925) and the use of the acute on *féin* became more common. The very low numbers for the grave *fèin* suggests that these are accidental typographical errors.

Table 8-6 Twentieth-century frequencies of *fein* pre-GOC

Text	Féin	Fèin	Fein
Laoidhean Bean Torra Dhamh (1906)	6	0	1
Lòchran an Anma (1906): Urnaighean	75	0	0
Oiteagan o'n Iar (1908)	183	1	0
Am Fear-Ciùil (1910)	99	1	153
Aig Tigh Na Beinne (1911)	257	3	1
Dùn-Aluinn (1912)	349	0	0
An t-Ogha Mor (1913)	13	0	163
Spiritual Songs of Dugald Buchanan (1913)	50	0	0
A' Bhraisd Lathurnach (1914)	57	0	1
Cailin Sgiathanach (1923): sgeulachd	219	7	5
Na Baird Thirisdeach (1932)	0	0	81
Litrichean Alasdair Mhoir (1932)	0	0	600
Highland Songs of the Forty-Five (1933)	38	0	1
Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod (1934)	21	0	2
Baird Chille Chomain (1936)	169	7	8
Clarsach nam Beann (1937)	106	0	0
Am Measg nam Bodach (1938)	196	0	0
Songs of John MacCodrum (1938)	40	0	0
Ban-altrumachd aig an Tigh (1939)	19	0	1
Griasaiche Bhearnaraidh (1940)	9	0	0
Sgialachdan Dhunnchaidh (1944)	242	4	1
Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist (1955)	38	0	0
Bùrn is Aran (1960)	73	1	0
An Dubh is An Gorm (1963)	212	0	1
Orain Iain Luim (1964)	31	0	0
Sporan Dhòmhnaill (1968)	105	2	0
Hebridean Folksongs 1 (1969)	20	0	0
Dòmhnall Ruadh Chorùna (1969)	39	4	0
Briseadh na Cloiche (1970)	110	2	6
Luach na Saorsa (1970)	79	0	0
An Clarsair Dall (1970)	21	0	0
Tir an Aigh (1971)	289	0	4
Lus-Chrun a Griomasaidh (1971)	174	1	1
Saoghal an Treobhaiche (1972)	353	0	0
Aitealan Dlù is Cian (1972)	122	0	0
A' Bhratach Dhealrach (1972)	224	0	10
Suathadh ri Iomadh Rubha (1973)	349	0	0
Nach Neònach Sin (1973)	109	0	0
An Aghaidh Choimheach (1973)	145	0	0
Criomagan Ioma-dhathte (1973)	101	0	0

Creach Mhor nam Fiadh (1973)	77	0	0
Fo Sgail a' Swastika (1974)	2	1	77
Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976)	60	0	1
An t-Aonaran (1976)	75	2	0
Bith-eòlas (1976)	70	0	0
Ugam agus Bhuam (1977)	211	0	0
Hebridean Folksongs 2 (1977)	32	0	0
Orain Dhonnchaidh Bhain (1978)	66	0	1
Eachann Bacach (1979)	23	0	3
Deireadh an Fhoghair (1979)	86	0	0
Oighreachd is Gabhaltas (1980)	109	0	0

In the next table, the impact of the first Gaelic Orthographic Conventions of 1981 is very clear.[65] There is a sudden shift the following year, beginning with Derick Thomson's *Creachadh na Clàrsaich* (1982).

Table 8-7 Twentieth-century frequencies of *fein* post-GOC

Text	**féin**	**fèin**	**fein**
Hebridean Folksongs 3 (1981)	41	0	0
Air Mo Chuairt (1982)	153	0	1
Creachadh na Clàrsaich (1982)	0	35	0
Suileabhan (1983)	0	96	0
Seann Taighean Tirisdeach (1986)	0	19	0
A' Ghaidhlig anns an Eilean Sgitheanach (1987)	0	0	3
Air Druim an Eich Sgiathaich (1987)	3	211	0
Sgriobhaidhean Choinnich MhicLeòid (1988)	0	416	0
Dealbh-chruth nan Eilean Siar (1988)	0	0	3
Spuirean na h-Iolaire (1989)	0	110	2
A' Sireadh an Sgadain (1990)	0	146	1
An Neamhnaid Luachmhor (1990)	0	130	0
Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990)	0	51	0
Am Fear Meadhanach (1992)	0	164	5
Coimhead air an Taigh-Dubh ann an Arnol (1994)	0	5	0
Hiort (1995): Rosg	0	124	0
Tuath is Tighearna (1995)	0	40	0
Duanaire Colach (1997)	7	22	4
Duanaire Colach (1997): intro	0	30	0
Moch is Anmoch (1998): Donald A. MacNeill	5	0	0
Bàrdachd Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (1999)	0	36	0
Saoghal Bana-mharaiche (2007)	10	154	8

In the post-GOC period, the adherence to the recommendation for the grave accents is clearly reflected in the corpus data. Of the 27 texts that use at least one form of *fein* between 1982 and 2007, only 6 use the acute accent and *Fo Sgàil a' Swastika* is the only text to rely on the accentless *fein*. The use of the acute in

[65] Here texts published in 1981 or after are grouped as 'post-GOC'. Including 1981 texts in the data tables allows any contrast in results between the year of GOC's first publication and subsequent years to be clearly apparent.

Moch is Anmoch (1998) is consistent with the texts' general non-conformity with GOC. The appearances in *Duanaire Colach* (1997) are due to that text's use of older quotes.

In the twenty-first century (Table 8.8), only in *Smaointean fo Éiseabhal* (2000), both in Alex O' Henley's introduction to that book and in the poems themselves, is *féin* used consistently. As with *Moch is Anmoch* (1998), *Smaointean fo Éiseabhal* has other non-conforming spellings; which is unsurprising given that it was edited by a critic of GOC, Ronald Black, who has consistently preferred the retention of both accents.

Table 8-8 Frequency of *fein* in texts after 2000

Text	féin	fèin	fein
Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal (2000): Am Bàrd	13	0	0
Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal (2000): Roimh-ràdh	0	6	0
Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal (2000)	8	0	0
Sgeulachdan Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (2001)	0	102	0
Dàin do Eimhir (2002)	0	8	0
Tocasaid 'Ain Tuirc (2004)	0	190	0
Na Klondykers (2005)	0	147	3

Using the example of *féin*, we can see standardisation being enacted through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. In this case, the Bible is not the influential text. Instead, it appears to be the codification in the early nineteenth-century dictionaries of the acute on *féin*. The twentieth-century results, despite a small number of exceptions, shows a strong convention of acute *é* that is quite consistent in the published texts. Its frequency was likely to mean that its spelling was reinforced in the minds of readers.

8.2.2 Accents with <o>

There are 83,483 occurrences with <ò> and 12,330 occurrences with <ó>. Of the <ó> occurrences, 510 appear in *Ais-éiridh* (1751). As was earlier noted, the grave was the only accent recommended, and the only one used, for <o> in the *Tiomnadh Nuadh* (1767). The suggestion to use both <ó> and <ò> is made in 1828. The expectation would be for the corpus texts to use <ò> until roughly the 1830s, without <ó> appearing regularly.

The five most common lemmas with the grave ò are shown in Table 8.9 along with the comparative frequencies of the equivalent acute form.

Table 8-9 Five most frequent lemmas with <ò> grave

<ò> grave	freq.	% of total	<ó> acute form	freq.	% of total
mòr	4,285	5%	mór	5,559	43.3%
òg	3,834	4.4%	óg	5	0.04%
còir	2,967	3.4%	cóir	11	0.08%
beò	2,179	2.5%	beó	8	0.06%
dòigh	2,120	2.5%	dóigh	2	0.01%

The five most frequent lemmas with grave <ò> account for only 17.8% of all the <ò> lemmas in the corpus. The next table shows the five most frequent acute <ó> lemmas and their equivalent grave forms.

Table 8-10 Five most frequent lemmas with <ó> acute

<ó> acute	freq.	% of total	<ò> grave	freq.	% of total
mór	5,559	43.3%	mòr	4,285	5%
vocables with ó	1,648	13.4%	vocables with <ò>	1,042	1.2%
có	1,262	10.3%	cò	808	0.9%
móran	1,107	9%	mòran	793	0.9%
Mórag	413	3.3%	Mòrag	104	0.1%

The top 5 acute lemmas account for 79.3% of all <ó> lemmas. The lemma *mór* accounts for 43.3% of all <ó> lemmas. Overall, the acute <ó> is used in fewer lemmas than <ò>.

An analysis of *mór* gives a general picture for the use of acute <ó>. The following table shows the instances of *mòr* and *mór* in the corpus from the earliest text to the end of the nineteenth century. After the expected norm of the acute in *Aiséiridh* (1751), it is the grave that forms the norm until the late nineteenth century.

Table 8-11 Frequency of *mòr* and *mór* from 1751 - 1900

Text	mòr	mór
Ais-éiridh (1751)	0	53
Tiomnadh Nuadh (1767)	447	0
Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasuighte (1779)	2	7
Saighidear Criosduidh (1797)	1	0
Orain Ghaelach (1801)	17	0
Searmona (1804)	194	0
Comhchruinneacha (1813)	18	0
Co'chruinneachadh (1828)	266	0
Daoine air an Comhairleachadh (1832)	5	0
An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach (1835-6)	113	314
Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach (1841)	249	0
Laoidhean Spioradail (1862)	60	0
Laoidhean agus Dàin (1868): dàin	58	0
Am Filidh Gaidhealach (1873)	22	0
Ordo Missæ (1877)	4	1
An t-Oranaiche (1879)	207	4
Gaelic Songs (1880)	10	0
Poems and Songs (1880)	31	13
Laithean Ceisde (1880)	28	1
Poems (1884)	11	1
Dàin agus Orain Ghàidhlig (1891)	58	18
Dàin Iain Ghobha 1 (1893)	58	1
An t-Urramach Iain Mac-Rath (1895)	0	4
Dàin Iain Ghobha 2 (1896): Dàin	39	8
Leabhar nan Gleann (1898)	22	83
Na Bàird Leathanach (1898)	8	6
Leabhar na Ceilidh (1898)	129	31

Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasuighte's (1779) use of the acute generally is irregular; the text contains seven grave <ò> in total and seven acute <ó> in total so its use of the acute on *mór* here is not surprising. Dictionaries of the early nineteenth century also use the grave *mòr* including Armstrong (1825), the Highland Society Dictionary (1828), MacLeod & Dewar (1831), MacAlpine (1832) and MacEachen (1842).

The use of the acute *mór* in *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* (1835-6) is exceptional. This corpus text covers 9 issues of the monthly periodical edited by Lachlan MacLean (1798-1848) from Coll who was a shop-keeper in Glasgow (Thomson 1994: 181). It featured contributions from many parts of Gaeldom and this is reflected in its inconsistencies in spelling and dialectal variants. As was noted in 8.2.1, it was the first text to predominantly use the acute on *féin*. Section 8.2.5 will show that it was the also first text to regularly mark the preposition *á/ás*, 'out of', with the acute. After *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* (1835-6), however, grave *mòr* is

still more frequent with acute *mór* only appearing in small numbers until *Leabhar nan Gleann* (1898).

It is in the early twentieth century that acute *mór* becomes predominant (see Table 8-12). This again aligns with dictionary recommendations: MacBain (1896, 1911) is the first to use the acute *mór*, whose usage Dwelly (1911) follows on this occasion.[66] Thereafter, dictionaries use the acute until GOC 1981. Two texts which appear to resist the acute *mór* are *Am Fear-Ciùil* (1910) by Dòmhnall MacEacharn [Donald Mackechnie] (1838-1908) from Jura, and *Aig Tigh Na Beinne* (1911) by Katherine Whyte Grant (1845 -1928), a learner of Gaelic from Oban (MacBean 1921: 52-3). Grant says specifically in her introduction that she is not interested in modernising her spelling:

> Tha mi air cumail ris an t-sean dòigh-sgrìobhaidh. Tha clann cho cleachdta ris, 'an leughadh a' Bhìobuill, agus leabhraichean eile, gu 'n do mheas mi nach biodh e glic atharrachadh a dheanamh, no dòighean úra a ghnàthachadh. (Grant 1911: 4)
>
> *I have kept to the old spelling. Children are so used to it, reading the Bible, and other books, that I judged that it would not be wise to make changes, or utilise new ways.*

The relative age of these two writers might also therefore indicate a conservatism in their spelling as they prefer the orthography they learnt when acquiring literacy in Gaelic. Iain MacCormaic's use of acute *mór* in *Oiteagan o'n Iar* (1908) and *Dùn-Aluinn* (1912) is notable for its consistency.[67] Two of the other early novels, *An t-Ogha Mor* (1913) and *Cailin Sgiathanach* (1923), also use the acute consistently. The authors of these are Iain MacCormaic [John MacCormick] from Mull, Aonghas MacDhonnachaidh from Skye, and Seumas MacLeòid [James MacLeod] from Harris. MacKinnon's suggestion that the lack of uniformity in the pronunciation of <ò>/<ó> compared to <è>/<é> is due to dialectal variation is of interest and would merit further detailed investigation.

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[66] 'mòr: see mór. Mòr is the spelling adopted by all Gaelic grammars and dictionaries except MacBain's and MacEachan's. MacBain's orthography has been adopted here.' (Dwelly 1911: s.v. mòr)

[67] Both were edited by Calum MacPhàrlain [Malcolm MacFarlane] from Lochaweside who used the acute mór in his *School Gaelic Dictionary* (1912).

Table 8-12 Frequency of mòr and mór from 1900 - 1980

Text	mòr	mór
Laoidhean Bean Torra Dhamh (1906)	7	0
Lòchran an Anma (1906): Urnaighean	26	2
Oiteagan o'n Iar (1908)	0	150
Am Fear-Ciùil (1910)	54	5
Aig Tigh Na Beinne (1911)	154	27
Dùn-Aluinn (1912)	2	222
An t-Ogha Mor (1913)	2	187
Spiritual Songs of Dugald Buchanan (1913)	43	0
A' Bhraisd Lathurnach (1914)	0	18
Cailin Sgiathanach (1923): sgeulachd	2	128
Litrichean Alasdair Mhoir (1932)	0	0
Highland Songs of the Forty-Five (1933)	3	51
Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod (1934)	0	24
Bàird Chill-Chomain (1936)	32	30
Clarsach nam Beann (1937)	30	20
Songs of John MacCodrum (1938)	0	63
Am Measg nam Bodach (1938)	9	166
Ban-altrumachd aig an Tigh (1939)	2	37
Griasaiche Bhearnaraidh (1940)	3	6
Sgialachdan Dhunnchaidh (1944)	5	164
Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist (1955)	0	46
Bùrn is Aran (1960)	2	55
An Dubh is An Gorm (1963)	0	85
Orain Iain Luim (1964)	0	52
Sporan Dhòmhnaill (1968)	1	102
Hebridean Folksongs 1 (1969)	0	34
Dòmhnall Ruadh Chorùna (1969)	3	18
An Clarsair Dall (1970)	0	15
Briseadh na Cloiche (1970)	0	111
Luach na Saorsa (1970)	3	220
Tir an Aigh (1971)	1	220
Lus-Chrun a Griomasaidh (1971)	0	158
Saoghal an Treobhaiche (1972)	0	132
A' Bhratach Dhealrach (1972)	1	89
Aitealan Dlù is Cian (1972)	0	195
Suathadh ri Iomadh Rubha (1973)	3	491
Criomagan Ioma-dhathte (1973)	6	42
An Aghaidh Choimheach (1973)	0	102
Nach Neònach Sin (1973)	0	63
Creach Mhor nam Fiadh (1973)	0	43
Fo Sgail a' Swastika (1974)	37	49
An t-Aonaran (1976)	0	75
Bith-eòlas (1976)	1	145
Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976)	1	78
Ugam agus Bhuam (1977)	0	118
Hebridean Folksongs 2 (1977)	0	60
Orain Dhonnchaidh Bhain (1978)	1	107
Deireadh an Fhoghair (1979)	1	190
Eachann Bacach (1979)	1	28
Oighreachd is Gabhaltas (1980)	1	119

After the first GOC report, the results, as with <è>, show a clear switch and subsequent adherence to the grave, beginning with Ruaraidh MacThòmais' *Creachadh na Clàrsaich* (1982).

Table 8-13 Frequency of *mòr* and *mór* post-GOC

Text	mòr	mór
Hebridean Folksongs Vol. 3 (1981)	0	46
Air Mo Chuairt (1982)	0	165
Creachadh na Clàrsaich (1982)	49	0
Suileabhan (1983)	188	2
Seann Taighean Tirisdeach (1986)	40	0
Air Druim an Eich Sgiathaich (1987)	123	0
Sgrìobhaidhean Choinnich MhicLeòid (1988)	233	0
Dealbh-chruth nan Eilean Siar (1988)	1	0
Spuirean na h-Iolaire (1989)	101	0
A' Sireadh an Sgadain (1990)	97	0
An Neamhnaid Luachmhor (1990)	83	0
Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990)	54	0
Iasgach (1991)	1	0
Croitearachd (1991)	1	0
Am Fear Meadhanach (1992)	121	0
Taigh-Dubh ann an Arnol (1994)	4	0
Hiort (1995)	283	0
Tuath is Tighearna (1995)	49	0
Duanaire Colach (1997)	112	13
Moch is Anmoch (1998)	0	5
Bàrdachd Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (1999)	54	0
Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal (2000)	2	24
Sgeulachdan Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (2001)	114	0
Dàin do Eimhir (2002)	19	0
Tocasaid 'Ain Tuirc (2004)	96	0
Na Klondykers (2005)	183	0
Saoghal Bana-mharaiche (2007)	158	15

The same GOC-resistant texts, *Moch is Anmoch* (1998) and *Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal* (2000) are again the exceptions in their maintenance of the acute.

8.2.3 Accents with <i>

The 1767 Testament's usage and *Rules for Reading* apply only the grave accent to <i>. Unlike <e> and <o>, there is no phonemic distinction between different long sounds of [i] in Gaelic, the long vowel having only the quality of [i:], meaning that only one accent is required to distinguish [i] from [i:]. As noted earlier, the only text found which advocates the use of an acute with <i> in modern Scottish Gaelic is MacLaurin's *First Book for Children* (1811).

The corpus returns 56,020 occurrences of <ì> and 545 results of <í>. The switch from acute to grave is very clear from the corpus texts and indicates the New Testament, *Tiomnadh Nuadh* (1767) as the key influencer. The predominance of <ì> is clear from the overall numbers of accented <i> in the corpus.

Table 8-14 Five most frequent lemmas with grave <ì>: whole corpus results

<ì> grave	Freq.	Gloss
nì	2,492	thing
sìos	2,360	down
tìr	2,320	land
rìgh	2,305	king
fhìn	1,757	self

Table 8-15 Five most frequent lemmas with acute <í>: whole corpus results

<í> acute	Freq.	Gloss
mín	19	soft, smooth
fíor	18	true
rí(ogh)	18	king
tír	16	land
(s)í	13	she/her

As most of the corpus occurrences of <í> can easily be accounted for, this will be covered first in the following section before the results for <ì> are more closely examined.

8.2.3.1 <í> with the Acute

The corpus returns 545 instances of <í>. Of these 72.6%, or 396 occurrences, appear in MacMhaighstir Alasdair's *Ais-éiridh* (1751) which uses only the acute accent. If these are taken out of the total, there are only 149 occurrences. This changes which lemmas are the most common, shown in the following table.

Table 8-16 Five most frequent lemmas with <í> lemmas: without *Ais-éiridh* (1751)

<í> acute	Freq.	Gloss
(s)í	10	she/her
ní	6	thing
deídh	6	after
rí(ogh)	5	king
tír	5	land

Another 56 are archaic spellings which appear in extracts from texts from the period pre-1751. All but one of these appear in *Duanaire Colach* (1997) and *Eachann Bacach* (2007) and *Highland Songs of the Forty-Five* (1933) where there

are extensive quotes and citations from older poetry. In the former two, <í> is to be expected as the norm for their period. In all eight occurrences in *Highland Songs of the Forty-Five* (1933) they are citations of the original spelling from *Aiséiridh* (1751).

There is one instance in a biblical quotation in *Aig Tigh na Beinne* (1911).[68] This is an arcane usage or an error as *Tiomnadh Nuadh* does not use the acute <í> at all. The rest of the poem repeats *sìth* with the grave <ì>.[69]

This leaves 93 instances where <í> is used in modern Scottish Gaelic orthography. The following table shows these along with the number of <ì> lemmas in the same texts. By the start of the 1800s its use appears to be accidental. There is no indication of any exceptional lemma and no evidence that any particular word resisted the adoption of the grave accent. Rather it appears that occurrences of <í> post-1767 reflect the inconsistency and errors typical of Gaelic printing. Examples marked with † are words which do not contain a long vowel where the acute is even more likely to be a printing error.

Table 8-17 Comparative frequency of <ì> and <í>

Text	**<ì> Grave freq.**	**<í> Acute freq.**	**<í> lemmas**
Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasuighte (1779)	9	9	(s)í x 9 fíneamhuin, íomhaigh
Orain Ghaelach (1801)	237	1	mín
Comhchruinneacha (1813)	324	2	Albuínn† íre
Co'chruinneachadh (1828)	772	2	eilthíreach bríghe
Daoine air an Comhairleachadh (1832)	12	1	tír
An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach (1835-6)	2192	11	cínnte dí-chuimhne éirídh† Eírionn fíon fíreantachd ínnseadh míle ní síol
Beachd-Chomhairlean (1838)	1	1	tastaín†
Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach (1841)	2485	1	cíobair
Laoidhean Spioradail (1862)	322	8	bhí chí clí mílltear mín ní rí(ogh) síth

[68] "Gleidhidh tu esan ann an síth iomlan aig am bheil 'inntinn suidhichte ort, a chionn gu'n do chuir e a dhòchas annad."—Isa. xxvi. 3.(Grant 1911: 274)

[69] *Aig Tigh na Beinne* (1911) has other erroneous printings of the acute e.g. uses <ú> once on *úra*, and <á> on *tháinig*, *náirich*, *áite*, and *agháidh*.

Am Filidh Gaidhealach (1873)	289	1	mín-mhal'	
Orain ann sa Ghailig (1875)	1	3	beoíl† ceíle† slabhraídh†	
An t-Oranaiche (1879)	1761	1	díreadh	
Poems (1884)	266	7	críth -eígin íme	síorruidheachd stiuír† tí
Dàin Iain Ghobha 1 (1893)	339	3	aodhaír† sabaídibh† tríd	
Leabhar nan Gleann (1898)	158	7	beaírn† deíghidh† gníomh ínnte	nabuídh starsnaích† steallaíbh†
Lòchran an Anma (1906)	512	2	aír gníomh	
Am Fear-Ciùil (1910)	725	9	caílin caillích éightíoch fhuaír† frídh	mí paídhir ríum runnaích
Clarsach nam Beann (1973)	369	1	goírid†	
Am Measg nam Bodach (1938)	81	3	tír-mor míle	
Griasaiche Bhearnaraidh (1940): Bàrdachd	75	4	cís ní	sgríob díreach
Griasaiche Bhearnaraidh (1940): Roimh-ràdh	2	1	díreach	
Lus-Chrun a Griomasaidh (1971)	406	1	mi fhín	
A' Bhratach Dhealrach (1972)	449	1	ní	
Fo Sgail a' Swastika (1974)	232	2	deídh†	
Nach Neònach Sin (1973)	423	2	a reír† an deídh†	
Criomagan Ioma-dhathte (1973)	526	6	deídh† feín† leínne	
An t-Aonaran (1976)	309	1	litrícheant†	
Hebridean Folksongs 3 (1981)	628	1	fhín	

From these results, the grave <ì> is consistently the norm for all these lemmas.

8.2.3.2 **<ì> with the Grave**

There are 56,020 occurrences of <ì> in the corpus. The five most common lemmas containing <ì> in the corpus are as follows with the number of occurrences with the acute given for comparison.

Table 8-18 Five most frequent <ì> lemmas

<ì> grave	Freq.	<í> acute form	Freq.
nì	2,492	ní	8
sìos	2,360	síos	7
tìr	2,320	tír	16
rìgh	2,305	rígh	18
fhìn	1,757	fhín	2

As was established by looking at the acute <í> data, each lemma is by far more established with the grave than with the acute.

8.2.4 Accents with <u>

In a survey of previous descriptions of orthographic 'rules for reading' or pronunciation guides, beginning with the examples of *'ùr* fresh, *ùmhal* humble' in the first New Testament (1767: [3]), there is no mention of an accent on <u> other than the grave (ù) to indicate length. The only exceptions are those that advocate the removal of all accents, e.g. the Rev. Hector Cameron in 1932. As with <i>, the corpus texts show the switch from acute to grave in the late eighteenth century and indicate that the 1767 New Testament was the main influence of this.

8.2.4.1 Corpus Results for <ù> and <ú>

The corpus returns 56,520 occurrences of <ù> and 486 results of <ú>.

Table 8-19 Five most frequent <u> lemmas

<ù> grave	Freq.
sùil	4,134
cùl	2,680
ùr	2,266
dùthaich	2,080
cùis	1,601

<ú> acute	Freq.
rún	7
úr	7
dlú	5
rúdan	5[70]
dúthaich	4

As with <í>, 74%, or 360, of the acute occurrences are from *Ais-éiridh* (1751). There are also 46 occurrences which are quotes or reproductions of older Classical texts where the acute is expected: 17 from citations from *Ais-éiridh* (1751) in *Highland Songs of the Forty-Five* (1933); 17 times in 'Rainn' in *Eachann Bacach* (1979) and 10 occurrences in *Duanaire Colach* (1997).

[70] All rúd* lemmas occur in *Sgialachdan Dhunnchaidh* (1944) as 'rúdan ruadh'.

All of the remaining 80 instances can be accounted for as being most likely printing errors given that none of the instances found of <ú> are used consistently by lemma. The following table shows the occurrences per text. The frequencies of grave <ù> lemmas in the same text are shown for comparison. After *Ais-éiridh* (1751) the next corpus text to use <ú> is *Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasuighte* (1779), which uses <ú> more frequently that <ù>. After this, acute <ú> quickly becomes rare.

Table 8-20 Comparative frequency of <ù> and <ú>

Text	<ù> freq.	<ú> freq.	<ú> lemmas	
Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasuighte (1779)	3	9	búth díúlt rún	dhúibh fúigheadh úngadh
Orain Ghaelach (1801)	383	1	tlús	
Comhchruinneacha (1813)	454	2	múr úrrainn	
Co'chruinneachadh (1828)	1,204	3	cúis stiúir úmhal	
An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach (1835-6)	1,989	6	cúis cliú dlú	grúaim Múnich siúil
Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach (1841)	3,039	1	súth-chraobh	
Laoidhean Spioradail (1862)	777	1	cúram	
An t-Oranaiche (1879)	2,519	2	dlúth múr	
Laithean Ceisde (1880)	104	1	stiúir	
Poems (1884)	208	1	tlús	
Dain agus Orain Ghàidhlig (1891)	1,103	3	crún dlú	dúthaich
Dàin Iain Ghobha 1 (1893)	446	3	búrd dúisg	úrnaigh
Leabhar na Ceilidh (1898)	632	5	fúcadh triúir (x2)	leúm tús
Am Fear-Ciùil (1910)	790	7	búrrall núair súil stiúir	Naishapúr (x2) cúirt
Aig Tigh Na Beinne (1911)	1,018	1	úr	
An t-Ogha Mor (1913)	873	1	beús	
Sgialachdan Dhunnchaidh (1944)	270	15	crún cú cúis dúil glún	lúb lúireach rúdan smúid triúir
Saoghal an Treobhaiche (1972)	559	2	cúnntair dúnadh	
Fo Sgail a' Swastika (1974)	284	2	cúl leúd	
Criomagan Ioma-Dhathte (1973)	538	14	cúram co-dhiúbh dlú dúthaich feúmar	púnnd siúcar súil úr

Sgialachdan Dhonnchaidh (1944) and *Criomagan Ioma-Dathte* [Many-coloured Fragments] (1973) have the largest number of <ú> occurrences out of the corpus

texts, but given the much greater use of the grave in each of the relevant lemmas, they can be assumed to be printing errors. These two texts were printed by Alasdair Matheson & Co. in Glasgow and Techmac, Edinburgh, respectively. Neither were regular publishers of Gaelic and perhaps this unfamiliarity led to greater errors. Similarly, *Fo Sgail a' Swastika*'s (1974) two instances of *cúl* and *leúd* and the two instances in *Saoghal an Treobhaiche* (1972), are apparent printing errors. There are no instances after the 1970s in the corpus — quotes from Classical or Older Gaelic excepted — which I would suggest is due to better word processing and printing quality.

8.2.5 Accents with <a>

The early orthographic descriptions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century give long /a/ only one quality, /aː/, and one accent, <à>, to signify it. However, the use of an acute accent on <a> has also been recommended for the preposition *á*/*ás*, 'out, out of', in order to distinguish it from other meanings of <a>, such as the possessive pronoun *a*, 'his, her', the other preposition *a*, 'to, into', the relative pronoun *a*, 'that, which, who', the definite article and the vocative particle. The pronunciation of <a> when it means (*out, out of*) is also often a clear, sometime referred to as 'open', [a] rather than a reduced unstressed vowel, although it is not long.

Despite it being argued that Gaelic has an accent as a vowel length marker and despite GOC's further simplification to only have the grave accent, in this case vowel *quality* still matters due to the polysemic nature of *a* in Modern Scottish Gaelic.

The earliest reference I have so far located to this use of the acute on <a> is in the orthographic notes to the 1826 quarto edition of the *Tiomnadh Nuadh* (New Testament) although the recommendation is not accompanied by any explanation.[71] The preposition is listed without an accent in the dictionaries of Armstrong (1825), MacEachen (1902), MacBain (1911) and MacDonald and Renton (1979); MacLennan (1925) has both accentless and acute forms of *a*/*as*. It is in Dwelly's dictionary (1911) that it appears as a headword with the acute accent, *á*

[71] 'A for “as” *out of*, marked with an acute accent, as “á teine” *out of fire*' (SSPCK 1826: iii)

for '*out of*,' despite not featuring in his introductory orthographic description. Other writers who mention it include Alexander MacLean Sinclair who decides that its function as a distinguishing mark, rather than a length mark, means it is not really an 'accent'.

> An accent shows that the vowel over which it is placed is long. The mark over a in á, out of, is not an accent; it is merely a sign that serves to distinguish á, out of, from other words formed by the letter a. (MacLean Sinclair 1901: 4)

GOC 1981 recommended the grave only and made no exceptions for the acute, marking 'à, out of' in its word list. Derick Thomson's *New English-Gaelic Dictionary* was also published in 1981. It was the first published dictionary to follow the GOC recommendations. Despite specifying in the introduction that the 'new system' of GOC means that the dictionary uses 'only the grave accent as a mark of length', the acute was maintained for both <á> and <à> (Thomson 1981: v):

> Both *à/às* and *á/ás* survive in this work, for 'out, out of, ex-, dis-' etc. (Thomson 1981: v)

This use of *á/ás* continued in *Gairm*, the Gaelic quarterly, under the editorship of Thomson until the end of its run in 2003. The *Faclair na Pàrlamaid* committee disagreed with this convention but agreed that an accent was useful 'to denote the particular quality' and used the grave:

> We took the view that the term for “out of” should be written with the grave accent: “à / às”, to denote the particular quality of the vowel sound. (McNeir 2001: 14)

The GOC conventions in 2005 and 2009 also referred to the preposition explicitly, noting its 'open' quality. As with *Faclair na Pàrlamaid*, the grave is used to mark this quality.

> However, the accent should be written on *à/às* (out of) and on *às* whenever the vowel is open (*às bith, às dèidh, às mo chadal*) to distinguish it from *as* when the vowel is not open (*as fheàrr, as t-earrach, as t-samhradh etc*). (SQA 2005: 5 & 2009: 6)

Others continue, despite GOC, to maintain the acute for <á/ás> including the online dictionary *Am Faclair Beag* which also maintains the 'traditional' (Position 4) distinctions between acute and grave on <e> and <o>. As will be seen in the

corpus results, the use of the acute on *á/ás*, 'out, out of', is a long-standing convention.

8.2.5.1 Corpus Results for <à> and <á>

The corpus returned 134,925 instances of <à> and 4,193 instances of <á>. In the following table of frequencies, *á/ás* is counted when it appears as a simple preposition; compound prepositions are counted as distinct items.

Table 8-21 Five most frequent lemmas with accented <a>

<à> grave	Freq.
dà	4,913
àite	4,755
fàg	4,538
thàinig	3,946
àrd	3,678

<á> acute	Freq.
á(s)	2,649
ám[72]	388
ás déidh	74
ás-ùr	53
ás aonais	25

It is clear that <à> is more common than <á> generally. The majority of <á> instances, 60% of them, are of the most common lemma, *á/ás*. The occurrences in *Ais-éiridh* (1751) account for 22%, or 582, of these occurrences. A further 91 occurrences are archaic spellings reproduced from the Classical Gaelic period in *Highland Songs of the Forty-Five* (1933), *Eachann Bacach* (1979), *Duanaire Colach* (1997), *Saoghal Bana-mharaiche* (2007), *Bàrdachd Shilis na Ceapaich* (1972), *Leabhar nan Gleann* (1898) and *Hebridean Folksongs* 1 (1969). The following table shows all the <á> lemmas which appear with more than 10 occurrences in the corpus. The second most common lemma, *ám,* appears in only five texts before the twentieth century and is most used in the twentieth century.

Table 8-22 Frequency of <á> lemmas with >10 occurrences

Lemma	No. of occurrences
á(s)	2,649
ám	388
ás déidh	74
ás-ùr	53
ás aonais	25
ádhradh	23
ás leth	15
bás	21
áite	16
áithne	13

[72] All with the meaning 'time'.

8.2.5.2 The Acute on <á/ás>

When the *Ais-éiridh* (1751) and Older Gaelic forms are set aside there remain 3,520 occurrences of which 77% are the preposition *á/ás*. While other instances of <á> gradually disappear in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, *á/ás* for 'out of' remains common across the decades.

Table 8-23 Frequency of *a/as* in nineteenth-century texts

Text	à/às	á/ás
Orain Ghaelach (1801)	0	0
Searmona (1804)	0	0
Comhchruinneacha (1813)	0	0
Co'chruinneachadh (1828)	0	0
Daoine air an Comhairleachadh (1832)	28	1
An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach (1835-6)	2	47
Beachd-Chomhairlean (1838)	0	0
Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach (1841)	3	74
Laoidhean Spioradail (1862)	1	1
Laoidhean agus Dàin (1868)	0	15
Am Filidh Gaidhealach (1873)	1	7
Orain ann sa Ghailig (1875)	2	1
Ordo Missæ (1877)	0	6
An t-Oranaiche (1879)	3	126
Gaelic Songs (1880)	0	2
Poems and Songs (1880)	0	5
Laithean Ceisde (1880)	7	0
Poems (1884)	0	0
Dan Spioradail (1885)	0	0
Croft Cultivation (1885)	0	0
Marbh-rainn (1887)	0	0
Dàin agus Orain Ghàidhlig (1891)	0	0
Dàin Iain Ghobha 1 (1893)	7	63
An t-Urramach Iain Mac-Rath (1895)	0	2
Dàin Iain Ghobha 2 (1896)	3	43
Na Bàird Leathanach (1898)	0	0
Leabhar na Ceilidh (1898)	0	87
Leabhar nan Gleann (1898)	14	41

From the table, it is clear that in the oldest text, *Searmona* (1804), the grave *à/às* is the convention; however, quickly after that, and around the time of the 1826 New Testament where <á> is recommended, the acute becomes the more typical convention. Ronald Black suggests that it may have been MacKenzie's *Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach* (1841) which launched, among other innovations, the use of the acute on *á/ás*, 'out of' (Black 2010: 248). It is, however, clear that *An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach* (1835-36) takes precedence, using the grave <às> on 2 occasions and the acute <ás> on 47 occasions. For the second half of the

nineteenth century the acute *á/ás* is the norm, meaning that the codification in Dwelly (1911) is following the convention.

In the twentieth century before GOC seen in the following table, the results do not challenge the convention of acute *á/ás*. There is only one clear exception where grave *à/às* is used exclusively in *Lòchran an Anma* (1906). This is difficult to account for as *Lòchran an Anma* does use <á> in three other instances: once on *ám*, 'time' and twice on *máthair*, 'mother'.

Table 8-24 Frequency of *a/as* between 1900 and 1980

Text	à/às	á/ás
Laoidhean Bean Torra Dhamh (1906)	0	1
Lòchran an Anma (1906): Urnaighean	18	0
Oiteagan o'n Iar (1908)	0	21
Am Fear-Ciùil (1910)	4	33
Aig Tigh Na Beinne (1911)	0	192
Dùn-Aluinn (1912)	0	42
An t-Ogha Mor (1913)	0	2
Spiritual Songs of Dugald Buchanan (1913)	0	5
A' Bhraisd Lathurnach (1914)	0	1
Cailin Sgiathanach (1923): sgeulachd	0	51
Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod (1934)	0	11
Baird Chille Chomain (1936)	0	19
Clarsach nam Beann (1937)	0	5
Am Measg nam Bodach (1938)	0	95
Ban-altrumachd aig an Tigh (1939)	0	2
Griasaiche Bhearnaraidh (1940)	0	4
Bùrn is Aran (1960)	1	28
An Dubh is An Gorm (1963)	0	111
Sporan Dhòmhnaill (1968)	0	74
Dòmhnall Ruadh Chorùna (1969)	1	3
Briseadh na Cloiche (1970)	1	79
Luach na Saorsa (1970)	0	72
Tir an Aigh (1971)	0	2
Lus-Chrun a Griomasaidh (1971)	1	78
Aitealan Dlù is Cian (1972)	0	140
A' Bhratach Dhealrach (1972)	2	61
Suathadh ri Iomadh Rubha (1973)	0	314
Nach Neònach Sin (1973)	0	93
An Aghaidh Choimheach (1973)	0	147
Criomagan Ioma-dhathte (1973)	1	17
Creach Mhor nam Fiadh (1973)	0	19
Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976)	0	37
An t-Aonaran (1976)	1	104
Bith-eòlas (1976)	0	132
Deireadh an Fhoghair (1979)	0	63
Oighreachd is Gabhaltas (1980)	0	94

Whereas, with the other vowels, the adherence to the GOC recommendation was clear from MacThòmais' *Creachadh na Clàrsaich* (1982), MacThòmais in this case preserves the acute on *á/ás* as he did in his 1981 dictionary and in his editorship of *Gairm* (see Thomson 1981: v).

Table 8-25 Frequency of *a/as* post-GOC

Text	à/às	á/ás
Hebridean Folksongs 3 (1981)	0	0
Air Mo Chuairt (1982)	0	0
Creachadh na Clàrsaich (1982)	1	114
Suileabhan (1983)	236	0
Seann Taighean Tirisdeach (1986)	7	0
A' Ghaidhlig anns an Eilean Sgitheanach (1987)	0	0
Air Druim an Eich Sgiathaich (1987)	0	0
Sgriobhaidhean Choinnich MhicLeòid (1988)	192	0
Dealbh-chruth nan Eilean Siar (1988)	0	0
Spuirean na h-Iolaire (1989)	100	0
A' Sireadh an Sgadain (1990)	61	0
An Neamhnaid Luachmhor (1990)	127	0
Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990)	52	0
Am Fear Meadhanach (1992)	153	0
Coimhead air an Taigh-Dubh ann an Arnol (1994)	6	0
Hiort (1995): Rosg	265	0
Tuath is Tighearna (1995)	14	0
Duanaire Colach (1997)	21	0
Moch is Anmoch (1998): Donald A. MacNeill	0	2
Bàrdachd Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (1999)	35	0
Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal (2000)	1	16
Sgeulachdan Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (2001)	84	0
Tocasaid 'Ain Tuirc (2004)	171	0
Na Klondykers (2005)	168	0
Saoghal Bana-mharaiche (2007)	222	0

The switch after the initial GOC report which applied the grave across the board is visible in the corpus results. The acute on *á/ás* still appears in post-GOC publications albeit only in *Creachadh na Clàrsaich* (1982) by Derick Thomson who, as previously noted, advocated keeping the acute in this case; and in *Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal* (2000) edited by Ronald Black who has advocated maintaining the acute in this case and on <é> and <ó>.

8.3 Summary and Conclusion

This analysis has shown how the codification and standardised description of accents in Scottish Gaelic orthography developed from the mid-eighteenth century. Firstly, John Orr's editorial notes attached to his 1754 reprint of Kirk's

Irish Bible introduced the grave as a vowel length marker on all vowels. The use of the acute on <é> for /eː/ is codified in the 1767 New *Testament's Rules for Reading* by the Rev. James Stuart (1767: [2]). The use of the acute on <ó> is recommended in 1828 by James Munro in his *Gaelic Primer*. The use of the acute on <á/ás> 'out of', is introduced in the 1826 Quarto Bible of the SSPCK, the only codified use of an accent for vowel quality, not length. The settled description of this codification continued from the late nineteenth century to the 1981 GOC report which removed the acute accent and used the grave on all instances.

It has been shown in the corpus analysis that usage has not strictly adhered to the codified, prescriptive accounts. However, it can be seen that the convention of the use of the grave for long <ì> and <ù> was established directly after first Orr's, then the *Tiomnadh Nuadh*'s example, with only occasional printing errors resulting in the acute on these letters after *Ais-éiridh* (1751) (or *Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasuighte* (1779) in the case of <ú>).

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the codified descriptions of the use of the accent come with little explanation or commentary to permit ideological analysis. However, the main use of the accent as a phonological marker is indicative of the movement towards graphic-phonic correspondence. This clearly takes its cue from the vernacularisation principle that informed much of the orthographical development in the same period. It is not surprising then, that the main engine of vernacularisation, evangelicalism by the Presbyterian Church, provides the texts which offer this codification. The graphic-phonic correspondence also lies behind the shift in emphasis from the initial description of the accent being useful 'when there is any danger of mistake' to its being recommended for consistent use. As the editions of the Testaments revised the translation, the orthography was further refined, with finally both acute and grave accents allowing for more vowel representation to signal different qualities. Through the twentieth century, however, the ability to represent phonologically distinct sounds became less important than the drive towards standardisation and its requirements for simplicity, uniformity and consistency in usage. This culminates in the recommendation of GOC (1981) for the use of only one accent. With the simplicity of only one accent, errors made by printers and writers are reduced.

9 Conclusions

9.1 Main Arguments

> Le paradoxe orthographie [...] est tant vaine & incertaine, que le procès en est encore pendant, les uns suyvans la raison, les autres l'usage, les autres l'abus, autres leur opinion & volonté. Et toutefois non constans & de mesme teneur, mais dissemblables entre eux, voire à eux mesmes. (Barthélemy Aneau, Quintil Horacian (1551) quoted in Cerquiglini 2004: 31)
>
> *The orthographic paradox [...] is so vain and uncertain, that the process is still unresolved, some following reason, others usage, others misuse, others their own opinion and will. And all the while inconsistent but of the same content, dissimilar to each other, and even dissimilar to themselves.*

Cerquiglini says that Aneau, writing in 1551, points out 'la contradiction où se trouve la science de l'orthographe', *the contradiction where the science of orthography is found* (2004: 32). That orthography is not a straightforward application of rules reflects Coulmas' observation that real writing is compromise, historic and pragmatic (see section 2.1.4).

The aims of this study were to begin the work of charting standardisation in Scottish Gaelic orthography within its sociolinguistic context. The thesis took the view that the study of an orthography did not mean an assessment of what the 'best' spelling should be, but rather followed Coulmas' recommendation to study writing as it is, not as it should be (Coulmas 2003: 16). Previously, analysis of Gaelic orthography has generally been made when writers and scholars wished to propose or recommend reform. Specifically, the study investigated two complementary questions: Which language ideologies lie behind the choices to argue for reform or continuity in the spelling of Scottish Gaelic? What can a digital corpus tell us about how Gaelic has been spelled historically? The thesis thus examined the history of modern Scottish Gaelic orthography using sociolinguistic ideological analysis and a carefully designed corpus of texts.

9.2 Main Findings

9.2.1 Which language ideologies lie behind the choices to argue for reform or continuity in the spelling of Scottish Gaelic?

It has been argued in this thesis that Gaelic is not unusual in having an orthography that is the result of a battle of ideas. Any standard is created and maintained within various ideological pressures that shape it by pulling in different directions at once. As with most other writing systems, Scottish Gaelic orthography is a mixed system of phonic-graphic correspondence along with aspects of conservatism and the need for uniformity that standardisation requires.

Scottish Gaelic writers and scholars have valued the phonographic ideal and used it to defend the language from outside attack. They have also understood the limitations of the phonographic ideal and have sought to balance graphic-phonic correspondence with the needs of: avoiding homographs; preserving grammatical relationships; conservatism; and acceptable dialectal variation. Etymology, in the sense of the oldest form of words, is not as valued as conservatism, in the sense of maintaining the status quo familiar to readers.

It has been argued that a standardised writing system has particular importance for Scottish Gaelic as a minority language as it legitimises its existence. Criticisms of Gaelic spelling have used apparent inconsistencies to accuse it of lacking a standard, which in European literate culture is a way of delegitimising the language. Orthographic reforms in the mid-eighteenth century were also a way of establishing autonomy from Irish Gaelic and legitimising Scottish Gaelic as its own language. It has also been argued that the idea of the standard in Scottish Gaelic is not as a socially elite 'correct' variety but rather that there is a popular notion of a standard as a supradialectal common written form which facilitates communication between equally valid dialects. The thesis proposes that writers and scholars have seen dialectal spelling as acceptable variation within what has been termed MacKinnon's paradigm: the contexts of poetry, song and dialect material.

9.2.2 What can a digital corpus tell us about how Gaelic has been spelled historically?

This thesis has demonstrated how a corpus linguistic methodology can be used for the study of Gaelic orthography. In particular, it has shown how corpus data can reveal conventions, established exceptions to those conventions and changing trends — all of which challenge existing perceptions of Gaelic spelling 'rules'. The now-available electronic corpus of the Digital Archive of Scottish Gaelic and Corpas na Gàidhlig can be exploited as a source of empirical data and evidence for Scottish Gaelic, as well as for its planned use as a resource for the Historical Dictionary.[73]

In the data showing <eu>/<ia> variation, the corpus supports the central and peripheral dialectal distinction as <ia> occurrences only appear in central (or unknown) dialect texts and are largely limited to MacKinnon's paradigm of dialectal material or poetry.

With the s + consonant clusters, the corpus data showed the patterns of use and the conventions as they became established. It also revealed how exceptions can persist, notably with *stiùir, prosbaig*, *deisciobul* and <sc> in loan words from English. As an example of the identification of exceptions, this study has identified lexical items which have proved resistant to the GOC recommendations: exceptions to the <sg> for /sk/ pattern were found in *deisciobail* and following the prefix *eas-* (*eascaraid, eascòrd*) and the codification of <sp> over <sb> was also resisted in *prosbaig*.

The switch from the convention of the acute in *Ais-éiridh* (1751) to the convention of the grave by the end of the eighteenth century can be seen in the corpus and the impact of the 1981 GOC recommendation to remove the acute is seen almost immediately in the corpus texts. The corpus revealed the extent to which the acute accent on <á> has been used. All three of the case studies in this thesis give evidence of a tendency for spelling to become less varied over time: <eu> in place of <eu>/<ia>, only one grapheme for each s + consonant cluster, one accent in place of two. Overall, the patterns showed a standardising process that

[73] See www.dasg.ac.uk

demonstrates an increasing attachment to consistency, clarity and uniformity. With all of the case studies the corpus shows general uptake of the recommendations of the GOC 1981 report.

A corpus analysis can furnish evidence on which forms have previously been used, what patterns are already at work in the conventions, and what exceptions are understood, to allow the community to make informed decisions.

9.3 Further Research

In covering a period of almost three hundred years, the thesis has necessarily centred on the broad patterns of orthographic standardisation. There are, therefore, many areas where further research would be illuminating. There is much more detail in the individual language commentators, translators and grammarians to be documented, following up on the work of Hogg (2011) on Rev. Dr Alexander Irvine and Roberts (2006) on Ewen MacEachen, particularly to elucidate the approaches and ideologies influential in the critical period between 1750 – 1850. This study has considered commentaries and expressed ideals that have been located in in a wide range of published material; however, the National Library of Scotland and other archives are likely to contain a greater wealth of information and would merit more fine-grained analysis in future research.

This research selected three particular features of Gaelic orthography for analysis; the variation between <eu> and <ia> for (broken) long /e/; the variation between s + stop consonant clusters and the use of the accent. However, there are many other orthographic features which would be able to cast light on the picture of Gaelic orthography over the centuries. These include the application of the 'broad to broad, slender to slender' spelling rule and the representation of dialectal features. MacKinnon's suggestion that the lack of uniformity in the pronunciation of <ò>/<ó> compared to <è>/<é> is due to dialectal variation in the pronunciation of long /o/ is also of interest and would merit further detailed investigation. An expansion of the work carried out here on accented characters, to take in the use of accents on secondary syllables, particularly in the adaption of loan words to Gaelic orthography would also be valuable.

Further sociolinguistic study of the members of the speech community today could reveal whether current preferences are the same as in the late nineteenth century when dialectal indexing was acceptable in dialogue (in literature or drama) but not in formal writing. The dominant ideology in the literature is that variation in spelling is bad for the language, however, dialectal variation is considered an acceptable and legitimate form of variation in spelling in certain contexts. The corpus data suggests that as the language has become more endangered since the 1970s, the less that spelling variation is tolerated and used. This needs further exploration of the sociolinguistic experiences of learning and practising literacy and the location and analysis of data surrounding literacy rates. Not least, the theory that even *some* variability in spelling reduces literacy acquisition should be questioned. There is also a question of what is a spelling variation and what is a different lexeme, e.g. are *an dèidh*, *às dèidh*, *às deòghaidh* ('after') considered by speakers as spelling or lexical variation?

Some participants in the *Dlùth is Inneach* study explicitly requested that further progress be made with standardisation of Gaelic spelling. This was particularly needed for consistency of new terminology and the spelling of loan words:

> there's a need to go a bit further with GOC. [...] how we're going to spell loan words to have one piece of advice because, you see loan words sometimes spelt in three or four different ways. (Bell et al. 2014: B141)

The same observation that '[m]ost respondents felt that the current degree of confusion and variation on orthography and grammar was unhelpful at best' was found by Ó Maolalaigh *et al*. (2009: 30). A corpus analysis can furnish evidence on which forms have previously been used, what patterns are already at work in the conventions, and what exceptions are understood, to allow the community to make informed decisions.

The evidence gathered in this thesis indicates that standardisation in Scottish Gaelic writing has been a process of gradual, incremental changes. These changes have taken place within a language ideology that is largely conservative and inclusive of dialectal variation. Spelling reforms that have broken with the conservative tendencies have been successful where they have answered particular needs such as the eighteenth century vernacularisation of the written

language. The case studies show that significant orthographic changes in spelling, such as the removal of the acute and <sd> clusters, can overcome conservative spelling practices if they accord with the language ideology of the time – in this case the need for simplification in the sense of fewer spelling variants. The available, and growing, Scottish Gaelic digital corpus means that data can support many aspects of linguistic work in historical linguistics, lexicography, and the creation of language tools to support the language choices of the community.

Appendix 1: Corpus Metadata[74]

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
179	Gairm an De Mhoir (1750)	Richard Baxter, trans. by Alexander MacFarlane	n/a	unknown	1750	Prose	Religious	68015	5894	8.67%
171	Ais-éiridh (1751)	Alasdair MacMhaighstir Alasdair [Alexander MacDonald]	c.1698-1770	Moidart	1751	Verse	Traditional	24280	7463	30.74%
173	Tiomnadh Nuadh (1767)	Dugald Buchanan, Rev. James Stuart et al.	n/a	various	1767	Prose	Religious	240774	11217	4.66%
166	Leabhar Ceasnuighe Aithleasuighte (1779)	John Ewart; trans. by Duncan Lothian	Lothian: c.1730	Glen Lyon	1779	Prose	Religious	15655	2659	16.98%
169	Saighidear Criosduidh (1797)	Thomas Broughton; trans. anon.	unk.	unknown	1797	Prose	Religious	9976	2050	20.55%
146	Orain Ghaelach (1801)	Iain Mac Ghrigair [John MacGregor]	unk.	Glen Lyon	1801	Verse	Traditional	28459	5374	18.88%
145	Searmona (1804)	Eobhann Mac Diarmaid [Hugh/Ewan MacDiarmid]	?-1801	Weem, Perthshire	1804	Prose	Religious	80479	5640	7.01%
141	Comhchruinneacha (1813)	various; Paruig Mac-an-Tuairneir [Peter Turner] ed.	n/a	various; Cowal	1813	Verse	Traditional	69372	10206	14.71%

[74] Ordered by year of publication

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
135	Co'chruinneachadh (1828)	An t-Urr. Tormod MacLeòid 'Caraid nan Gàidheal', [Rev. Norman MacLeod]	1783-1862	Morvern (Argyllshire)	1828	Prose/ Verse	various	87648	10433	11.90%
128	An Teachdaire Ùr Gàidhealach (1835-6)	Lachlan MacLean ed.	1798-1848	various; Coll	1835-6	Prose/ Verse	various	129326	15483	11.97%
131	Daoine air an Comhairleachadh (1832)	Iain (Eoin) Domhnullach [Rev. Dr John MacDonald]	1779-1849	Caithness	1832	Prose	Religious	18083	2276	12.59%
196	Beachd-Chomhairlean (1838)	Sir Francis Mackenzie, trans. by Roderick MacDonald	n/a	unknown	1838	Prose	Expository	62499	6488	10.38%
125	Sar-Obair nam Bard Gaelach (1841)	Iain MacCoinnich [John Mackenzie] ed.	1806-1848	various	1841	Verse	Traditional	164626	22631	13.75%
105	Laoidhean agus Dàin (1868): dàin	Donnachadh Mac-Gilleadhain [Rev. Duncan MacLean]	1795-1871	Killin	1868	Verse	Traditional	24372	4664	19.14%
105	Laoidhean agus Dàin (1868): Roimh-ràdh	Donnachadh Mac-Gilleadhain [Rev. Duncan MacLean]	1795-1871	Killin	1868	Prose/ Verse	Expository	1659	648	39.06%
109	Laoidhean Spioradail (1862)	Daniel Grant	unk.	Strathspey	1868	Verse	Religious	21856	3774	17.27%
100	Am Filidh Gaidhealach (1873)	various; Hugh MacKenzie ed.	n/a	various	1873	Verse	Literary	21613	5486	25.38%
98	Orain ann sa Ghailig (1875)	Donnchadh Mac Coinnich [Duncan MacKenzie]	unk.	Wester Ross (Kinlochewe)	1875	Prose/ Verse		7435	2212	29.75%
97	Ordo Missæ (1877)	Catholic Church	n/a	unknown	1877	Prose	Religous	8170	1572	19.24%

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
95	An t-Oranaiche (1879)	Gilleasbuig Mac na Ceàrdadh [Archibald Sinclair] ed.	unk.	various	1879	Verse	Traditional	104321	11721	11.24%
94	Poems and Songs (1880)	Mary MacKellar	1834-1890	Lochaber	1880	Verse	Traditional	15445	3859	24.99%
99	The Gaelic Songs of the Late Dr. MacLachlan (1880)	Iain MacLachlainn [Dr. John MacLachlan]	1804-1874	Morvern (Rahoy)	1880	Verse	Traditional	9859	2867	29.08%
90	Poems (1884)	Iain Caimbeul [John Campbell]	1823-1897	Oban & Ledaig	1884	Verse	Traditional	16525	3470	21.00%
82	Dan Spioradail (1885)	Domhnull Cattanach	unk.	Kingussie	1885	Verse	Religious	2787	889	31.90%
89	Croft Cultivation (1885)	Dr John MacKenzie; trans. by John Whyte	unk.	Easdale	1885	Prose	Expository	3243	923	28.46%
86	Marbh-rainn air Daoine Urramach Diadhaidh (1887)	Uilleam Guinne (’sa Bhean)	unk.	Sutherland	1887	Verse	Religious	3182	992	31.18%
83	Dàin agus Orain Ghàidhlig (1891)	Mairi Nic-a-Phearsain, Mairi Mhor nan Oran, Màiri Nighean Iain Bhàin [Mary MacPherson]	1821-1898	Skye	1891	Verse	Traditional	46061	6653	14.44%
93	Laithean Ceisde (1880)	unknown; trans. by Rev. Duncan MacBeath?	unk.	Lewis	1891	Prose	Religious	16352	2604	15.92%
80	Dàin Iain Ghobha 1 (1893)	Iain Gobha, [John Morison]	c.1796-1852	Harris	1893	Verse	Religious	47624	7753	16.28%
79	An t-Urramach Iain Mac-Rath (1895): Biography	Neacal MacNeacail [Nicol Nicolson]	unk.	Lewis	1895	Prose	Expository	18211	2788	15.31%

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
79	An t-Urramach Iain Mac-Rath (1895): Marbhrann	Neacal MacNeacail [Nicol Nicolson]	unk.	Lewis	1895	Verse	Traditional	1616	631	39.05%
79	An t-Urramach Iain Mac-Rath (1895): Roimh-ràdh	Neacal MacNeacail [Nicol Nicolson]	unk.	Lewis	1895	Prose	Expository	446	190	42.60%
80	Dàin Iain Ghobha 2 (1896): Dàin	Iain Gobha, [John Morison]	c.1796-1852	Harris	1896	Verse	Religious	40000	7119	17.80%
80	Dàin Iain Ghobha 2 (1896): Eibhric	Eibhric Morison [Euphemia Morison]	?-1855	Harris	1896	Verse	Traditional	2583	1004	38.87%
80	Dàin Iain Ghobha 2 (1896): Cliù Iain Ghobha	Niall Moireastan [Neil Morrison] the Pabbay Bard	1816-1882	Harris	1896	Verse	Traditional	1085	525	48.39%
80	Dàin Iain Ghobha 2 (1896): Buanaichean Bhoais	Màiri Mhoireasdan [Mary Morison]	?-1836	Harris	1896	Verse	Traditional	447	242	54.14%
76	Na Bàird Leathanach (1898)	various; Rev. Alexander MacLean Sinclair ed.	1840-1924	various; Nova Scotia	1898	Verse	Traditional	42494	11167	26.28%
77	Leabhar na Ceilidh (1898): Bàrdachd	various; Henry Whyte ed.	1852-1913	Easdale	1898	Verse	Traditional	7081	2252	31.80%
77	Leabhar na Ceilidh (1898): Rosg	various; Henry Whyte ed.	1852-1913	Easdale	1898	Prose	Traditional	57896	18582	32.10%
78	Leabhar nan Gleann (1898)	various; George Henderson ed.	1866-1912	various	1898	Verse	Traditional	71499	14966	20.93%
72	Lòchran an Anma (1906): Urnaighean	Catholic Church	n/a	unknown	1906	Prose	Religious	21179	3196	15.09%
72	Lòchran an Anma (1906): Laoidhean	Catholic Church	n/a	unknown	1906	Verse	Religious	972	467	48.05%

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
140	Laoidhean Bean Torra Dhamh (1906)	Bean Torra Dhamh [Mrs Clark, Mary MacPherson]	c.1720-c.1815	Laggan, Badenoch	1906	Verse	Religious	4419	1522	34.44%
70	Oiteagan o'n Iar (1908)	Iain MacCormaic [John MacCormick]	c.1870-1947	Mull	1908	Prose	Imaginative	32152	7631	23.73%
199	Am Fear-Ciùil (1910)	Dòmhnall MacEacharn [Donald MacKechnie]	1836-1908	Jura	1910	Prose/ Verse	Imaginative	48577	6707	13.81%
69	Aig Tigh Na Beinne (1911): Rosg	Catrìona NicIlleBhàin Ghrannd [Katharine Whyte Grant]	1845-1928	Learner/ Argyll	1911	Prose	Expository	3881	1187	30.58%
64	Dùn-Aluinn (1912)	Iain MacCormaic [John MacCormick]	c.1870-1947	Mull	1912	Prose	Imaginative	49966	5634	11.28%
68	An t-Ogha Mor (1913)	Aonghas MacDhonnachaidh [Angus Robertson]	1871-1948	Skye	1913	Prose	Imaginative	57432	7933	13.81%
172	Spiritual Songs of Dugald Buchanan (1913)	Dughall Bochanan [Dugald Buchanan]	1716-1768	Strathyre, Perthshire	1913	Verse	Religious	10683	2655	24.85%
66	A' Bhraisd Lathurnach (1914)	Eachann MacDhughaill [Hector MacDougal]	1880-1954	Coll	1914	Prose	Imaginative	8610	1677	19.48%
62	Cailin Sgiathanach (1923): sgeulachd	Seumas MacLeòid [James MacLeod]	1880-1947	Harris	1923	Prose	Imaginative	90349	8542	9.45%
62	Cailin Sgiathanach (1923): roimh-ràdh	Seumas MacLeòid [James MacLeod]	1880-1947	Harris	1923	Prose	Expository	608	323	53.13%
57	Litrichean Alasdair Mhoir (1932)	Iain N. MacLeòid [John N. MacLeod]	1880-1954	Skye /Lewis	1932	Prose	Expository	96238	7398	7.69%
57	Litrichean Alasdair Mhoir (1932): Sanas	Dòmhnall S. MacLeòid	1879-1955	Lewis	1932	Prose	Expository	568	277	48.77%

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
58	Na Baird Thirisdeach (1932)	various; Eachann Camshron [Rev. Hector Cameron] ed.	1880-1932	Tiree	1932	Verse	Traditional	45661	7786	17.05%
182	Highland Songs of the Forty-Five (1933)	various; John Lorne Campbell ed.	n/a	various	1933	Verse	Traditional	24373	5610	23.02%
187	Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod (1934)	Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh [Mary MacLeod]; J. Carmichael Watson ed.	17th c.	Harris	1934	Verse	Traditional	7931	2335	29.44%
56	Bàird Chill-Chomain (1936): Donnchadh MacNimhein	Donnchadh MacNimhein [Duncan MacNiven]	1883-1955	Islay	1936	Verse	Traditional	28818	4183	14.52%
56	Bàird Chill-Chomain (1936): Teàrlach MacNimhein	Teàrlach MacNimhein [Charles MacNiven]	1874-1944	Islay	1936	Verse	Traditional	3892	1363	35.02%
56	Bàird Chill-Chomain (1936): Roimh-ràdh	Niall MacGilleSheathanaich [Neil Shaw]	1881-1961	Jura	1936	Prose	Expository	755	368	48.74%
56	Bàird Chill-Chomain (1936): Eoghan MacNìmhein	Niall MacPhail	unk.	unk.	1936	Verse	Traditional	391	215	54.99%
88	Clarsach nam Beann (1937): Bàrdachd	Eoghan MacColla [Evan MacColl]	1808-1898	Kenmore, Argyll	1937	Verse	Traditional	24511	4559	18.60%
88	Clarsach nam Beann (1937): Am Bàrd MacColla	Alasdair Friseal [Lt. Col. Alexander Fraser]	unk.	unknown	1937	Prose	Expository	5280	1389	26.31%

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
88	Clarsach nam Beann (1937): A bheatha agus Obair	Eoghan MacColla & Eachann MacDhughaill [Evan MacColl & Hector MacDougal]	n/a	various	1937	Prose	Expository	2436	764	31.36%
88	Clarsach nam Beann (1937): Facal bhon Fhear Dheasachaidh	Eachann MacDhughaill [Hector MacDougal]	1880-1954	Coll	1937	Prose	Expository	1002	346	34.53%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): An Scarpa	An t-Urr. Calum MacGilleathain	1896-1961	Scarp	1938	Prose	Traditional	3190	883	27.68%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Colla	Eachann MacDhughaill [Hector MacDougal]	1880-1954	Coll	1938	Prose	Traditional	2686	780	29.04%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Muile	Niall Mac 'Ille Mhoire [Neil Morrison]	unk.	unk.	1938	Prose	Traditional	2742	817	29.80%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Beinn na Bhaoghla	An t-Urr. Seumas MacDhòmhnaill [Rev. James MacDonald]	unk.	unk.	1938	Prose	Traditional	2273	680	29.92%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Uibhist a Tuath	An t-Urr. Niall MacDhòmhnaill [Rev. Neil MacDonald]	unk.	unk.	1938	Prose	Traditional	2338	728	31.14%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Uibhist a Deas	Domhnall MacDhòmhnaill [Donald MacDonald]	1912-1989	South Uist	1938	Prose	Traditional	2570	802	31.21%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Diura	Niall MacGille Sheathanaich [Neil Shaw]	1881-1961	Jura	1938	Prose	Traditional	2356	744	31.58%

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Cannaidh, Eige, Ruma	An t-Urr. Somhairle MacIsaac [Rev. Sorley MacIsaac]	unk.	unk.	1938	Prose	Traditional	2317	736	31.77%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Eisdeal & Luinn	Liusaidh NicCoinnich	1896-	unk.	1938	Prose	Traditional	2417	770	31.86%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): An t-Eilean Sgitheanach	An t-Ollamh Niall Ros [Rev. Neil Ross]	1871-1943	Skye	1938	Prose	Traditional	2123	717	33.77%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Tiriodh	An t-Urr. Eachann Camshron [Rev. Hector Cameron]	1880-1932	Tiree	1938	Prose	Traditional	2304	789	34.24%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Eilean I	An t-Urr. Colla Domhnullach	unk.	Iona	1938	Prose	Traditional	2671	922	34.52%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Ile	Donnchadh MacIain [Duncan Johnston]	1881-1947	Islay	1938	Prose	Traditional	2286	790	34.56%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Ratharsair	Iain MacIllEathain [John MacLean]	1909-1970	Raasay	1938	Prose	Traditional	1846	654	35.43%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Leòdhas	Seumas MacThomais	unk.	unk.	1938	Prose	Traditional	2312	821	35.51%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Barraidh	Iain Mac'IlleMhaoh	unk.	unk.	1938	Prose	Traditional	1974	742	37.59%
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): An Ceard Mòr	An t-Urr. Coinneach MacLeòid [Rev. Kenneth MacLeod]	1871-1955	Eigg	1938	Prose	Traditional	1450	554	38.21%

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
54	Am Measg nam Bodach (1938): Na Hearadh	Seumas MacCoinnich	unk.	unk.	1938	Prose	Traditional	1959	749	38.23%
165	Songs of John MacCodrum (1938)	John MacCodrum	1693-1779	North Uist	1938	Verse		19640	4334	22.07%
53	Ban-altrumachd aig an Tigh (1939)	Comhairle Clann an Fhraoich	n/a	various	1939	Prose	Expository	15032	2678	17.82%
52	Griasaiche Bhearnaraidh (1940): Bàrdachd	Ailean MacLeòid, 'Griasaiche Bhearnaraidh', Ailean mac Iain 'ic Mhurchaidh, [Allan MacLeod]	1858-1939	Harris (Berneray)	1940	Verse	Traditional	3492	1063	30.44%
52	Griasaiche Bhearnaraidh (1940): Roimh-ràdh	Niall Mac-an-Tuairneir [Neil Turner]	unk.	Harris	1940	Prose	Expository	912	376	41.23%
52	Griasaiche Bhearnaraidh (1940): Oran do Ailean MacLeòid	Eachann MacFhionghain	1886-1954	Harris (Berneray)	1940	Verse	Traditional	408	228	55.88%
52	Griasaiche Bhearnaraidh (1940): Facal-toisich	Tòmas M. MacCalmain [Dr. Thomas M. Murchison]	1907-1984	Skye	1940?	Prose	Expository	212	121	57.08%
51	Sgialachdan Dhunnchaidh (1944)	Kirkland Cameron Craig	?-1965	South Uist	1944	Prose	Traditional	38126	3108	8.15%
49	Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist (1955): Songs	Margaret Fay Shaw	1903-2004	Learner	1955	Verse	Traditional	16284	5620	34.51%

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
49	Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist (1955): Proverbs	Margaret Fay Shaw	1903-2004	Learner	1955	Prose	Traditional	1315	543	41.29%
49	Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist (1955): Prayers	Margaret Fay Shaw	1903-2004	Learner	1955	Prose	Religious	338	203	60.06%
49	Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist (1955): Recipes	Margaret Fay Shaw	1903-2004	Learner	1955	Prose	Expository	112	71	63.39%
49	Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist (1955): Riddles	Margaret Fay Shaw	1903-2004	Learner	1955	Prose	Traditional	131	86	65.65%
204	Bùrn is Aran (1960): Sgeulachdan	Iain Mac a' Ghobhainn [Iain Crichton Smith]	1928-1998	Lewis	1960	Prose	Imaginative	15630	1997	12.78%
204	Bùrn is Aran (1960): Bàrdachd	Iain Mac a' Ghobhainn [Iain Crichton Smith]	1928-1998	Lewis	1960	Verse	Imaginative	2520	925	36.71%
205	An Dubh is An Gorm (1963)	Iain Mac a' Ghobhainn [Iain Crichton Smith]	1928-1998	Lewis	1963	Prose	Imaginative	36791	3043	8.27%
186	Orain Iain Luim (1964)	Iain Lom [John MacDonald]; Annie M. MacKenzie ed.	c.1625-1707	Keppoch	1964	Verse	Traditional	18755	4467	23.82%
47	Sporan Dhòmhnaill (1968)	Dòmhnall Mac an t-Saoir [Donald MacIntyre]	1889-1964	South Uist	1968	Verse	Traditional	64601	9328	14.44%

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45	Dòmhnall Ruadh Chorùna (1969): Orain	Dòmhnall Dòmhnallach, Dòmhnall Ruadh Choruna [Donald MacDonald]	1887-1967	North Uist	1969	Verse		15909	4690	29.48%
45	Dòmhnall Ruadh Chorùna (1969): Dòmhnall Ruadh	Seònaidh A. Mac a' Phearsain [John Alick Macpherson]	1937-	North Uist	1969	Prose	Expository	834	365	43.76%
45	Dòmhnall Ruadh Chorùna (1969): Roimh-ràdh	Fred MacAmhlaigh [Fred MacAulay]	1925-2003	North Uist	1969	Prose	Expository	241	151	62.66%
74	Hebridean Folksongs 1 (1969)	Dòmhnall MacCarmaic [Donald MacCormick]	unk.	South Uist	1969	Verse	Traditional	13107	2754	21.01%
43	Lus-Chrun a Griomasaidh (1971)	Màiri M. NicGillEathain [Mary M. MacLean]	1921- ?	North Uist	1970	Prose	Imaginative	41027	4560	11.11%
44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): An Cluaisean	Fionnlagh MacLeòid [Finlay MacLeod]	unk.	Lewis	1970	Prose	Imaginative	2743	711	25.92%
44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): Creic Agus Ceannach	Gòrdan Donald [Gordon Donald]	1929-	Learner (Tiree)	1970	Prose	Imaginative	3044	851	27.96%
44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): An t-Ogha	Eilidh Watt	1908-1996	Skye	1970	Prose	Imaginative	1651	466	28.23%
44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): Ozymandias	Anna Chaimbeul [Anna Campbell]	1944-	Oban	1970	Prose	Imaginative	2685	761	28.34%

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44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): Sin mar a tha	Pòl MacAonghais [Paul MacInnes]	1928-	North Uist	1970	Prose	Imaginative	2667	784	29.40%
44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): Leum Na Sinnsearan	Dòmhnall Iain MacAoidh [Donald John MacKay]	1930-	Harris (Berneray)	1970	Prose	Imaginative	3053	899	29.45%
44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): Mary Kate	Coinneach Fionnlasdan [Kenneth Finlayson]	1910-	Applecross	1970	Prose	Imaginative	1953	589	30.16%
44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): An Canna Cocoa	Dòmhnall Iain MacDhùghaill [Donald John MacDougal]	1921-	Barraigh	1970	Prose	Imaginative	2066	641	31.03%
44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): A' Fear A Thainig Air Tir	Tormod Caimbeul [Norman Campbell]	1942-2015	Lewis	1970	Prose	Imaginative	1883	591	31.39%
44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): Faoileann	aonghas macneacail	1942-	Skye	1970	Prose	Imaginative	2327	753	32.36%
44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): Briseadh na Cloiche	Iain Moireach [John Murray]	1938-	Lewis	1970	Prose	Imaginative	1552	608	39.18%
44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): Na h-Ughdair	Coinneach D. MacDhomhnaill [Kenneth D. MacDonald]	1937-	Applecross	1970	Prose	Expository	689	278	40.35%

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44	Briseadh na Cloiche (1970): Roimh-ràdh	Coinneach D. MacDhomhnaill [Kenneth D. MacDonald]	1937-	Applecross	1970	Prose	Expository	857	349	40.72%
185	An Clarsair Dall (1970)	An Clarsair Dall [Roderick Morison]	c.1656-c.1713	Lewis	1970	Verse	Traditional	6684	1980	29.62%
201	Luach na Saorsa (1970): Guthan Beaga o Latha gu Latha	Murchadh Moireach [Murdo Murray]	1890-1964	Lewis	1970	Prose	Expository	15717	3033	19.30%
201	Luach na Saorsa (1970): Geographaidh na h-Albainn	Murchadh Moireach [Murdo Murray]	1890-1964	Lewis	1970	Prose	Expository	8507	1722	20.24%
201	Luach na Saorsa (1970): Turus don Spainnt	Murchadh Moireach [Murdo Murray]	1890-1964	Lewis	1970	Prose	Expository	7125	1709	23.99%
201	Luach na Saorsa (1970): Màiri Nighean Iain Bhàin	Murchadh Moireach [Murdo Murray]	1890-1964	Lewis	1970	Prose	Expository	6591	1750	26.55%
201	Luach na Saorsa (1970): Iain Rothach	Murchadh Moireach [Murdo Murray]	1890-1964	Lewis	1970	Prose	Expository	3014	984	32.65%
201	Luach na Saorsa (1970): Na h-Orain	Murchadh Moireach [Murdo Murray]	1890-1964	Lewis	1970	Verse	Traditional	3920	1354	34.54%
201	Luach na Saorsa (1970): Roimh-Radh	Alasdair I. MacAsgaill [Alex John Macaskill]	1922- ?	Lewis	1970	Prose	Expository	1403	527	37.56%
42	Tir an Aigh (1971): Stories	Dòmhnall Grannd [Donald Grant]	1903-1970	Skye	1971	Prose	Imaginative	23941	7487	31.27%

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42	Tir an Aigh (1971): Gaidheal gu Chul	Tòmas M. MacCalmain [Thomas M. Murchison]	1907-1984	Skye	1971	Prose	Expository	606	264	43.56%
42	Tir an Aigh (1971): Poetry	Dòmhnall Grannd [Donald Grant]	1903-1970	Skye	1971	Verse	Traditional	5229	2386	45.63%
42	Tir an Aigh (1971): Roimh-ràdh	Iain A. MacDhòmhnaill [Jake A. MacDonald]	1920-1980	Skye	1971	Prose	Expository	179	113	63.13%
42	Tir an Aigh (1971): Plays	Dòmhnall Grannd [Donald Grant]	1903-1970	Skye	1971	Prose	Imaginative	28578	5187	18.15%
40	A' Bhratach Dhealrach (1972)	Eilidh Watt	1908-1996	Skye	1972	Prose	Imaginative	36917	4301	11.65%
41	Aitealan Dlù is Cian (1972)	An t-Urr. Coinneach Ros [Rev. Kenneth Ross]	1914-1990	Skye	1972	Prose	Expository	33082	5569	16.83%
46	Saoghal an Treobhaiche (1972)	Aonghas Mac 'Ill' Fhialain [Angus MacLelllan]	1869-1966	South Uist	1972	Prose	Expository	91088	5095	5.59%
183	Silis na Ceapaich (1972)	Sìleas MacDonald; Colm Ó Baoill ed.	c.1660-c.1729	Bohuntin	1972	Verse	Traditional	9964	2447	24.56%
35	Suathadh ri Iomadh Rubha (1973)	Aonghas Caimbeul, 'Am Puilean [Angus Campbell]	1903-1982	Lewis	1973	Prose	Expository	96267	10167	10.56%
36	Nach Neònach Sin (1973)	Cailein T. MacCoinnich [Rev. Colin N. MacKenzie]	1917-1994	Harris	1973	Prose	Expository	20986	3193	15.21%
37	Creach Mhor nam Fiadh (1973)	Tormod Domhnallach	unk.	Lewis (Tong)	1973	Prose	Imaginative	14268	2555	17.91%
38	Criomagan Ioma-dhathte (1973)	Iain Aonghas MacLeòid	1919-	Harris	1973	Prose	Expository	38650	5002	12.94%

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39	An Aghaidh Choimheach (1973)	Iain Moireach [John Murray]	1938-	Lewis	1973	Prose	Imaginative	32832	4671	14.23%
34	Fo Sgail a' Swastika (1974)	Dòmhnull Iain MacDhòmhnaill [Donald John MacDonald]	1919-1986	South Uist	1974	Prose	Expository	23370	3798	16.25%
32	Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976): A' Ghàidhlig agus na h-Ard-Sgoiltean	Murchadh MacLeòid [Murdo MacLeod]	1946- ?	Lewis	1976	Prose	Expository	3587	728	20.30%
32	Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976): Na h-Oilthighean is na Colaisdean	Dòmhnall MacAmhlaigh [Donald MacAulay]	1930-	Lewis	1976	Prose	Expository	3401	774	22.76%
32	Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976): A'Ghàidhlig am Beatha fhollaiseach an t-Sluaigh	Dòmhnall Iain MacLeòid [Donald John MacLeod]	1943-	Harris	1976	Prose	Expository	4100	971	23.68%
32	Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976): Na Bun-Sgoiltean	Fionnlagh MacLeòid [Finlay MacLeod]	1937-	Lewis	1976	Prose	Expository	2916	763	26.17%
32	Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976): Leabhraichean, Litreachas, Foillseachadh	Ruaraidh MacThòmais [Derick S. Thomson]	1921-2012	Lewis	1976	Prose	Expository	2355	628	26.67%

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32	Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976): Craobh-sgaoileadh is Pàipearan	Màrtainn Dòmhnallach [Martin MacDonald]	? - 2016	Skye	1976	Prose	Expository	538	252	46.84%
32	Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976): Dràma	Dòmhnall MacGillEathain [Donnie MacLean]	? - 2003	Lewis	1976	Prose	Expository	570	271	47.54%
32	Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976): Gàidhlig an Albainn	Ruaraidh MacThòmais [Derick S. Thomson]	1921-2012	Lewis	1976	Prose	Expository	481	236	49.06%
32	Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976): Facal san Dealachadh	Ruaraidh MacThòmais [Derick S. Thomson]	1921-2012	Lewis	1976	Prose	Expository	89	56	62.92%
32	Gàidhlig ann an Albainn (1976): Roimh-Radh	Ruaraidh MacThòmais [Derick S. Thomson]	1921-2012	Lewis	1976	Prose	Expository	118	80	67.80%
33	Bith-eòlas (1976)	Ruaraidh MacThòmais [Derick S. Thomson]	1921-2012	Lewis	1976	Prose	Expository	43002	4448	10.34%
198	An t-Aonaran (1976)	Iain Mac a' Ghobhainn [Iain Crichton Smith]	1928-1998	Lewis	1976	Prose	Imaginative	22495	2319	10.31%
31	Ugam agus Bhuam (1977): Sgeulachdan	Pàdruig Moireasdan	1889-1978	North Uist	1977	Prose	Traditional	37687	3222	8.55%
31	Ugam agus Bhuam (1977): Facal on Fhear Dheasachaidh	Dòmhnall Eairdsidh Dòmhnallach [Donald Archie MacDonald]	1929-1999	North Uist	1977	Prose	Expository	6373	1253	19.66%

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31	Ugam agus Bhuam (1977): Orain	Pàdruig Moireasdan	1889-1978	North Uist	1977	Verse	Traditional	4281	1278	29.85%
31	Ugam agus Bhuam (1977): Roimh-Radh	Pàdruig Moireasdan	1889-1978	North Uist	1977	Prose	Expository	233	143	61.37%
31	Ugam agus Bhuam (1977): Oran mu Chogadh Aifriga	Máiri Dhòmhnaill Òig	unk.	unknown	1977	Verse	Traditional	166	122	73.49%
74	Hebridean Folksongs 2 (1977)	various	n/a	South Uist/ Barra/ Benbecula	1977	Verse	Traditional	19648	3286	16.72%
168	Orain Dhonnchaidh Bhain (1978)	Donnchadh Ban Mac an t-Saoir [Duncan Ban MacIntyre]	1724-1812	Glenorchy	1978	Bàrdachd		37160	6439	17.33%
30	Deireadh an Fhoghair (1979)	Tormod Caimbeul 'Tormod a' Bhocsair' [Norman Campbell]	1942-2015	Lewis	1979	Prose	Imaginative	33601	4180	12.44%
191	Eachann Bacach (1979)	various, Colm Ó Baoill ed.	n/a	various	1979	Verse	Traditional	13383	5642	42.16%
26	Oighreachd is Gabhaltas (1980): Aramach am Bearnaraigh 1874	Dòmhnall MacAmhlaigh [Donald MacAulay]	1930-	Lewis	1980	Prose	Expository	5640	1101	19.52%
26	Oighreachd is Gabhaltas (1980): Blar a' Chumhaing	Iain A. MacDhòmhnaill [Jake A. MacDonald]	1920-1980	Skye	1980	Prose	Expository	5391	1074	19.92%
26	Oighreachd is Gabhaltas (1980): Aimhreit an Fhearainn an Tiriodh 1886	Dòmhnall Meek [Donald E. Meek]	1949-	Tiree	1980	Prose	Expository	4834	1007	20.83%

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26	Oighreachd is Gabhaltas (1980): Mar a Ghabh na Daoine Bhatarsaigh	Lisa Storey	1935-	Barra (Vatersay)	1980	Prose	Expository	3541	765	21.60%
26	Oighreachd is Gabhaltas (1980): Reud na Pairce	Iain M. MacLeòid [John M. MacLeod]	1924-	Lewis	1980	Prose	Expository	5306	1261	23.77%
26	Oighreachd is Gabhaltas (1980): Toirt a-mach Bhaile Raghnaill	Uilleam MacDhòmhnaill [William MacDonald]	1949-	North Uist	1980	Prose	Expository	2636	716	27.16%
26	Oighreachd is Gabhaltas (1980): Aimhreit Aignis 1888	Iain MacArtair [John MacArthur]	1892-1980	Lewis	1980	Prose	Expository	2529	810	32.03%
26	Oighreachd is Gabhaltas (1980): Roimh-ràdh	Dòmhnall MacAmhlaigh [Donald MacAulay]	1930-	Lewis	1980	Prose	Expository	603	278	46.10%
74	Hebridean Folksongs 3 (1981)	various	n/a	South Uist/Barra/Benbecula	1981	Verse	Traditional	17641	3071	17.41%
28	Air Mo Chuairt (1982)	Ealasaid Chaimbeul	1913-	Barra	1982	Prose	Expository	44415	4804	10.82%
28	Air Mo Chuairt (1982): còmhdach	unknown	n/a	n/a	1982	Prose	Expository	107	65	60.75%
29	Creachadh na Clàrsaich (1982)	Ruaraidh MacThòmais [Derick S. Thomson]	1921-2012	Lewis	1982	Poetry	Imaginative	30464	6194	20.33%
27	Suileabhan (1983)	Calum MacFhearghuis [Calum Ferguson]	1929-	Lewis	1983	Prose	Expository	47297	5362	11.34%

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27	Suileabhan (1983): Naidheachd	Eòghainn Mhurchaidh Eòghainn	unk.	Lewis	1983	Prose	Traditional	1007	379	37.64%
27	Suileabhan (1983): Annas Naidheachd	Calum MacFhearghuis [Calum Ferguson]	1929-	Lewis	1983	Prose	Expository	973	379	38.95%
27	Suileabhan (1983): Roimh-ràdh	Calum MacFhearghuis [Calum Ferguson]	1929-	Lewis	1983	Prose	Expository	1399	603	43.10%
22	Eòin an Àite (1986)	Frang U. Rennie [Frank U. Rennie]	unk.	unknown	1986	Prose	Expository	1979	354	17.89%
23	Seann Taighean Tirisdeach (1986): main text	Ailean Boyd	unk.	Tiree	1986	Prose	Expository	6900	1548	22.43%
23	Seann Taighean Tirisdeach (1986): Na Daoine	Ailean Boyd	unk.	Tiree	1986	Prose	Expository	381	126	33.07%
23	Seann Taighean Tirisdeach (1986): Ro-ràdh	Ailig MacArtair	unk.	Tiree	1986	Prose	Expository	395	194	49.11%
19	Air Druim an Eich Sgiathaich (1987)	Pòl Mac a' Bhreatunnaich	1923- ?	Barra	1987	Prose	Expository	32292	3552	11.00%
20	A' Ghàidhlig anns an Eilean Sgitheanach (1987)	Comunn na Gàidhlig	n/a	unknown	1987	Prose	Expository	2789	620	22.23%

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17	Loch Druidibeg (1988)	NicLeòid, C.; NicLeòid, F.; NicDhomhnaill, A. [Comhairle Gleidhteachais Naduir/ Nature Conservancy Council]	n/a	various	1988	Prose	Expository	1354	487	35.97%
18	Dealbh-chruth nan Eilean Siar (1988)	Comhairle nan Eilean [Western Isles Council]	n/a	unknown	1988	Prose	Expository	8429	1432	16.99%
48	Sgrìobhaidhean Choinnich MhicLeòid (1988)	An t-Urr. Coinneach MacLeòid [Rev. Kenneth MacLeod]	1871-1955	Eigg	1988	Prose	Expository	65109	18885	29.01%
16	Spuirean na h-Iolaire (1989)	Iain Macleòid [John MacLeod]	1933- ?	Skye	1989	Prose	Imaginative	34800	3234	9.29%
14	A' Sireadh an Sgadain (1990): sgeulachd	Calum MacMhaoilein [MacMillan]	unk.	Lewis	1990	Prose	Imaginative	32019	2701	8.44%
14	A' Sireadh an Sgadain (1990): Roimh-ràdh	Calum MacMhaoilein [MacMillan]	unk.	Lewis	1990	Prose	Expository	479	217	45.30%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Crichton Smith	Iain Mac a' Ghobhainn [Iain Crichton Smith]	1928-1998	Lewis	1990	Verse	Imaginative	4173	1327	31.80%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Whyte	Crìsdean Whyte [Christopher Whyte]	1952-	Learner (Skye)	1990	Verse	Imaginative	4452	1604	36.03%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): MacThòmais	Ruaraidh MacThòmais [Derick S. Thomson]	1921-2012	Lewis	1990	Verse	Imaginative	3627	1321	36.42%

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15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Bàrdachd Ghalicia	Niall A. R. MacAoidh	unk.	unk.	1990	Verse	Imaginative	392	174	44.39%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Neruda	Fearghas MacFhionnlaigh	1948-	Learner	1990	Verse	Imaginative	1513	687	45.41%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Facal-Tòisich	Ruaraidh MacThòmais [Derick S. Thomson]	1921-2012	Lewis	1990	Prose	Expository	454	228	50.22%
15	Bàrdachd na Ròinn-Eòrpa (1990): Per Jakez Helias	Anna Frater [Anne Frater]	1967-	Lewis	1990	Verse	Imaginative	451	234	51.88%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Neill	Uilleam Neill [William Neill]	1922-	Learner	1990	Verse	Imaginative	1933	1032	53.39%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Brecht	[Brecht] Iain MacDhòmhnaill & Mairead Ryan [Iain MacDonald & Margaret Ryan]	unk.	various	1990	Verse	Imaginative	398	214	53.77%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa: Bàrdachd Fhraingis	Alasdair Mac'IlleMhaoil	unk.	unknown	1990	Verse	Imaginative	543	297	54.70%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): King	Dennis King	unk.	learner (california)	1990	Verse	Imaginative	422	234	55.45%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Horace	Iain MacIllEathain [John MacLean]	1909-1970	Raasay	1990	Verse	Imaginative	485	272	56.08%

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15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): A' bhanais	Fionnlagh Iain MacDhòmhnaill	1926-	Harris	1990	Verse	Imaginative	265	149	56.23%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Andreus	Maoilios Caimbeul [Myles M. Campbell]	1944-	Skye	1990	Verse	Imaginative	281	162	57.65%
15	Bàrdachd na Ròinn-Eòrpa (1990): Urnuigh Uilleim Chràbhaich	Cailein T. MacCoinnich [Rev. Colin N. MacKenzie]	1917-1994	Harris	1990	Verse	Imaginative	679	395	58.17%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Campbell Hay	Deòrsa Caimbeul Hay [George Campbell Hay]	1915-1984	Learner	1990	Verse	Imaginative	1632	954	58.46%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Shakespeare	Uisdean Laing [Hugh Laing]	1889-1974	South Uist	1990	Verse	Imaginative	492	289	58.74%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Do Eòghann MacLachlainn	Iain Stoddart	unk.	unk.	1990	Verse	Imaginative	239	141	59.00%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Shakespeare	Iain MacIllEathain [John MacLean]	1909-1970	Raasay	1990	Verse	Imaginative	319	200	62.70%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Meadhon an Iomaill	Richard Cox	1954-	Learner	1990	Verse	Imaginative	140	88	62.86%

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15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Mi Cuimhneachadh	Raghnall Moireasdan	unk.	unk.	1990	Verse	Imaginative	277	177	63.90%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): A' fuireach 's a' falbh	Iain MacLeòid	unk.	unk.	1990	Verse	Imaginative	133	87	65.41%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Nuair Shiùbhlas Mi	Tormod MacLeòid 'Am Bàrd Bochd' [Norman MacLeod]	1904-1968	Lewis	1990	Verse	Imaginative	138	91	65.94%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Òran Brosnachaidh	Tormod Burns [Norman Burns]	unk.	Learner	1990	Verse	Imaginative	101	68	67.33%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Meadhon na Beatha	Victor Price	1930-	Learner (Lewis)	1990	Verse	Imaginative	102	69	67.65%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Dìomhanas	Coinneach Ros [Rev. Kenneth Ross]	1914-1990	Skye	1990	Verse	Imaginative	137	97	70.80%
15	Bàrdachd na Roinn-Eòrpa (1990): Garbhan MacAoidh	Garbhan MacAoidh [Girvan McKay]	1929-	Learner	1990	Verse	Imaginative	647	375	57.96%
50	An Neamhnaid Luachmhor (1990): Laoidhean	Eachann MacFhionghain	1886-1954	Harris (Berneray)	1990	Verse	Traditional	44799	4283	9.56%

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
50	An Neamhnaid Luachmhor (1990): Facal-toisich	An t-Urr. Aonghas MacPhàrlain [Rev. Angus MacFarlane]	unk.	unknown	1990	Prose	Expository	691	319	46.16%
50	An Neamhnaid Luachmhor (1990): Ionndrain	Murchadh MacSuain	unk.	Harris (Berneray)	1990	Verse	Traditional	635	327	51.50%
50	An Neamhnaid Luachmhor (1990): Laoidh do dh'Eachann	An t-Urr. Uilleam MacGhillFhinnein [Rev. William MacLennan]	unk.	unknown	1990	Verse	Traditional	465	254	54.62%
50	An Neamhnaid Luachmhor (1990): Marbhrann do dh'Eachann	Ruairidh MacFhionghain	unk.	Harris (Berneray)	1990	Verse	Traditional	400	219	54.75%
50	An Neamhnaid Luachmhor (1990): Marbhrann	Dòmhnall Màrtainn	unk.	unknown	1990	Verse	Traditional	386	214	55.44%
50	An Neamhnaid Luachmhor (1990): còmhdach	unknown	unk.	unknown	1990	Prose	Expository	213	125	58.69%
50	An Neamhnaid Luachmhor (1990): Marbhrann air Eachann MacFhionghain	Ruairidh MacFhionghain	unk.	Harris (Berneray)	1990	Verse	Traditional	356	210	58.99%
12	Croitearachd (1991)	Museum nan Eilean	n/a	unknown	1991	Prose	Expository	249	138	55.42%
13	Iasgach (1991)	Museum nan Eilean	n/a	unknown	1991	Prose	Expository	394	208	52.79%
11	Am Fear Meadhanach (1992)	Alasdair Caimbeul, 'Alasdair a' Bhocsair' [Alasdair Campbell]	1941-	Lewis (Ness)	1992	Prose	Imaginative	43702	5223	11.95%

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
10	Coimhead air an Taigh-Dubh ann an Arnol (1994)	Ruaraidh MacIlleathain [Roddy MacLean]	1954 -	Learner (Skye)	1994	Prose	Expository	2559	795	31.07%
8	Hiort (1995): Rosg	Calum MacFhearghuis [Calum Ferguson]	1929-	Lewis	1995	Prose	Expository	57235	6422	11.22%
8	Hiort (1995): Bàrdachd	various; Calum MacFhearghuis [Calum Ferguson] ed.	1929-	Lewis	1995	Verse	Traditional	7091	3420	48.23%
84	Tuath is Tighearna (1995)	various; Donald Meek ed.	n/a	various	1995	Verse	Traditional	16315	3729	22.86%
174	Duanaire Colach (1997): intro	Colm Ó Baoill	1938-	learner	1997	Prose	Expository	18663	3262	17.48%
174	Duanaire Colach (1997): notes	Colm Ó Baoill	1938-	learner	1997	Prose	Expository	17577	3090	17.58%
174	Duanaire Colach (1997): bàrdachd	various; Colm Ó Baoill ed.	n/a	Coll	1997	Verse	Literary	14790	6447	43.59%
7	Moch is Anmoch (1998): Donald A. MacNeill	Donald A. MacNeil	unk.	Colonsay	1998	Verse	Traditional	1900	756	39.79%
7	Moch is Anmoch (1998): Murchadh Ruadh	Folalaidh NicNèill [Flora Margaret 'Folalie' McNeill]	unk.	Colonsay	1998	Verse	Traditional	320	186	58.13%
7	Moch is Anmoch (1998): An t-Slat-iasgaich	Alexander Darroch	unk.	Colonsay	1998	Verse	Traditional	232	138	59.48%
7	Moch is Anmoch (1998): An t-Achmhasan	unknown	unk.	Colonsay	1998	Verse	Traditional	163	116	71.17%

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
4	Bàrdachd Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (1999): Bàrdachd	Dòmhnall Alasdair Dòmhnallach [Donald Alasdair MacDonald]	1919-2003	Lewis	1999	Verse	Traditional	14047	3054	21.74%
4	Bàrdachd Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (1999): ro-ràdh	Dòmhnall Alasdair Dòmhnallach [Donald Alasdair MacDonald]	1919-2003	Lewis	1999	Prose	Expository	2162	690	31.91%
4	Bàrdachd Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (1999): Facal-toisich	Joan Dhòmhnallach [Joan MacDonald]	unk.	Lewis	1999	Prose	Expository	677	316	46.68%
3	Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal (2000)	Dòmhnall Aonghais Bhàin [Donald MacDonald]	1926-2000	South Uist	2000	Verse	Traditional	15451	3404	22.03%
3	Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal (2000): Am Bàrd	Ailig O Hianlaidh [Alex O'Henley]	1965-	South Uist	2000	Prose	Expository	1496	533	35.63%
3	Smuaintean fo Éiseabhal (2000): Roimh-ràdh	Aonghas Pàdraig Caimbeul [Angus Peter Campbell]	1954-	South Uist	2000	Prose	Expository	1378	597	43.32%
2	Sgeulachdan Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (2001)	Dòmhnall Alasdair Dòmhnallach [Donald Alasdair MacDonald]	1919-2003	Lewis	2001	Prose	Traditional	34035	3700	10.87%
2	Sgeulachdan Dhòmhnaill Alasdair (2001): còmhdach	unknown	unk.	unknown	2001	Prose	Expository	159	99	62.26%
1	Dàin do Eimhir (2002)	Somhairle MacGill-Eain [Sorley MacLean]	1911-1996	Raasay	2002	Verse	Imaginative	6811	2098	30.80%

DASG no.	Text	Author	Author dates	Dialect	Year of Publication	Type	Genre	Tokens	Types	TTR
203	Tocasaid ’Ain Tuirc (2004)	Donnchadh MacGilliosa	1941-	Lewis	2004	Prose	Imaginative	33024	5028	15.23%
202	Na Klondykers (2005)	Iain Fionnlagh MacLeòid [Iain F. MacLeod]	1973-	Lewis	2005	Prose	Imaginative	68355	4694	6.87%
197	Saoghal Bana-mharaiche (2007)	Seosamh Watson ed.	n/a	Easter Ross	2007	Prose	Traditional	72767	7015	9.64%

Appendix 2: DASG metadata example

Digital Archive of Scottish Gaelic

Metadata for texts common to Corpas na Gàidhlig and Faclair na Gàidhlig have been provided by the Faclair na Gàidhlig project. We are very happy to acknowledge here Dr Catriona Mackie's sterling work in producing this data; the University of Edinburgh for giving us permission to use and publish the data; and the Leverhulme Trust whose financial support enabled the production of the metadata in the first place. The metadata is provided here in draft form as a useful resource for users of Corpas na Gàidhlig. The data is currently being edited and will be updated in due course.

Metadata for text *199*

No. words in text	108250
Title	Am Fear-Ciuil. Dain, Orain, Oraidean, is Sgeulachdan.
Author	MacEacharn, Domhnull
Editor	Mac Fhionghain, Domhnall
Date Of Edition	1910
Date Of Language	1900-1949
Publisher	John Grant
Place Published	Edinburgh
Volume	N/A
Location	National and academic libraries
Geographical Origins	Jura
Register	Literature, Prose and Verse
Reference Style	
Alternative Author Name	MacKechnie, Donald
Manuscript Or Edition	Ed.
Size And Condition	20cm x 14cm
Short Title	Am Fear-Ciuil
Reference Details	EUL, Scottish Studies Library: G4(G)MacK
Number Of Pages	xvi, 336
Gaelic Text By	N/A

Illustrator	N/A
Social Context	Donald MacKechnie was born in Glengarisdale, on the shore of Corryvreckan in the north of Jura on 25th December 1838. There was no school nearby, but Donald was taught to read and write at a school near where his maternal grandfather lived. He had an active life as a boy, spending much time outdoors, shooting and fishing. MacKechnie moved to Glasgow while a young man. He attended evening classes to improve his education, and began to read widely, particularly English literature. He eventually made his home in Edinburgh, marrying Elizabeth Jane Sutherland there on 5th June 1868. They had seven children. Living in Edinburgh, MacKechnie was part of the Gaelic literati which, at that time, included Alexander Carmichael, Donald MacKinnon, and Sheriff Nicolson. MacKechnie mentions such gatherings in his song 'A' Chéilidh' (pp. 93-97). MacKenchnie was troubled by illness throughout his adult life. He died in Edinburgh in May, 1908. MacKechnie wrote both poetry and prose, and he contributed a number of works to An Gàidheal, and other journals, under the name 'Am Bard Luideagach'. MacKechnie won a number of prizes at the National Mòd, including first prize for his poem 'Am Fear-Ciùil' at the Oban Mòd (in 1892?). He also translated a number of poems and songs into Gaelic, including verse from Omar Khayyám's Rubaiyat. However, MacKenzie is best known for his prose writings, and particularly for those essays in which he discusses man's relationship with animals. In his obituary in The Celtic Review, Donald MacKinnon noted that while MacKechnie's poetry was perhaps not quite as good as that of some of his contemporaries, 'I do not know that any Gaelic writer, of modern times at any rate, excels him in prose. ... Here the highly trained intellect of a very capable man gives his own views of men and things, with a probing and questioning almost Socratic in its patience and persistence, and with a terseness and crispness of phrase more akin to French than to Gaelic prose' (MacKinnon, p. 94).
Contents	This volume begins with a Clar-Innsidh (pp. ix-xi), followed by an address Do'n Leuighadair by the author (pp. xii-xiv), followed by An Roimh-radh (pp. xv-xvi) in verse form. There is a photograph of the author opposite the Gaelic title page. This (second) edition contains 13 poems; 18 songs; 6 translations; and 19 prose items. Verse The poems and songs in this volume cover a variety of subjects, and are all fairly light-hearted in nature. None are particularly noteworthy, and few of them are popular today. Subjects covered include nature, e.g. 'Guth a' chuain' (pp. 9-11) and 'Seachran Seilg' (pp. 26-28), both of which also contain elements of religion; love, e.g. 'An Ribhinn Òg D'an D'thug Mi Gràdh' (p. 74) and 'Bean a' Chòtain Ruaidh' (pp. 81-82); war, e.g. the four poems that make up 'An Cogadh an Africa-mu-dheas' (pp. 61-66); and sense of place, e.g. in 'Chunnaic mi na Gruagaichean' (pp. 67-68), 'Cuairt 'san Fhrìdh' (pp. 75-76), and 'Am Bothan Beag' (pp. 79-80), which also touch on the changes that have taken place in the Highlands during the author's lifetime. His knowledge of world history and geography is apparent in 'Impireachd Bhreatuinn' (pp. 54-58) which comprises a conversation between Am Bard and A' Ghrian. The translations include an English translation of MacKechnie's 'Am Fear-Ciùil'; and translations into Gaelic of Thomas Campbell's 'The Soldier's Dream', Robert Burns's 'My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose', and verses from Omar Khayyám's Rubaiyat. Prose MacKechnie is particularly well-known for his humorous stories about his relationship with various animals. In these stories, MacKechnie ruminates on what it means to be human, and ponders whether the animals he writes

	about are any different from us in the way they behave. Many of these stories feature his cat (Tómas) and his dog (Yarrow), each of whom have a story dedicated to them ('An Cat', pp. 126-34, and 'An Cù', pp. 135-41). The best known of these works is probably 'Am Fiadh' (pp. 292-319), which first appeared in print in the second edition of 1910. MacKechnie's stories are generally written in the first person, as the author relates the tale of something that happened to him. His wife occasionally makes an appearance in the stories, usually in an antagonistic role, e.g. in 'Ath-leasachadh' (pp. 155-63) and at the beginning of 'An Seangan' (p. 149-54). MacKechnie also frequently makes use of the contrast between the ordinary people (such as himself) and the upper classes, e.g. in 'Am Fiadh' (where the new laird's wife is terrified of the deer which MacKechnie, as a boy, was charged with looking after) and in 'An Seangan' (where a shambolic scene on Salisbury Craggs, in which the author is assailed by a colony of ants, is witnessed by an upper-class young lady, much to her astonishment). MacKechnie also wrote some factual prose, including a talk on 'Carmina Gadelica' (pp. 164-86), which was read before the Jura Association in Glasgow, and an essay on 'Omar Khayyám' (pp. 200-16), which included translations of some of his verses. In 'Còmhradh', we are given the content of a dialogue between Eoghann Og agus Eachann Ruadh, on the subject of the Eachann's command of the English language. Two of the essays are written in the form of letters: 'Tannaisg ann Laithean a dh'Fhalbh' (pp. 252-60) and 'Litir thun an "Deo-Greine"' (pp. 320-27). 'Tannaisg ann Laithean a dh'Fhalbh' (pp. 252-60) and 'Gaisgeach na Sgeithe Deirge' (pp. 261-82) look at legends and folktales.

Sources

Language	The strengths of this volume lie in MacKechnie's prose writings. The author has a wonderful turn of phrase and uses rich idiomatic Gaelic. This can be seen, for example, at the beginning of his essay on 'An Cat': Theirinn ri caraid no bana-charaid 's am bith a thig trasd air an duilleig so gun mhor-shuim a ghabhail dhi, nach 'eil dad innte 's fhiach a leughadh. Cha 'n 'eil mi, mar gu 'm b' eadh, ach 'g am thoileachadh fhein, 's an uair a tha duine 'g a thoileachadh fein faodaidh e bhi cinnteach nach 'eil e toileachadh muinntir eile' (p. 126). MacKechnie goes on to give us an example of this in relation to his cat. There is much terminology of interest in MacKechnie's prose writings, particularly with regard to the author's turn of phrase. Examples include 'gu robh an tigh r'a theinidh' (p. 132), 'biomaid a' bogadh nan gad' (p. 233), 'leumadh mo chride-sa as a chochull' (p. 238), 'a' toirt sràid do 'n chuilein mhadaidh agam' (p. 188), 'Mo ghille geal!' (p. 189), 'ann am chnap-starra' (p. 189), 'maol-cheannach' (p. 189), "san odhar-dhorcha' (p. 255), and 'eadar fheala-dhà 's da-rìreadh' (p. 283). 'Tannaisg ann Laithean a dh'Fhalbh' (pp. 252-60) and 'Gaisgeach na Sgeithe Deirge' (pp. 261-82) contain some terminology related to legends and folktales, e.g. 'Mac an Earraidh Uaine, no Chochaill Uaine' (p. 280), 'Gruagach nan Cumha' (p. 280), 'Ridir a' Chuirn agus Ridir a' Chlaidhimh' (p 280), 'Buidseach Endor, 's air Tàillear na Manachainn' (p. 253), 'Lachlann Mor 's Dubh-sìth' (p. 253), and 'Aoradh Aithrichean, no Aoradh Thannasg' (p. 258). MacKechnie's verse contains little terminology of note.
Orthography	The author's dialect might be evident in the use of terms such as 'gabhail iolla riù' (An Cat, p. 117), 'air t' aghairt' (An Cat, p. 120), 'thun' (An Cat, p. 120), 'ruais' (p. 221), 'ciogailteach' (Còmhradh, p. 175), and 'trasd air' (An Còmhradh, p. 175). The orthography is

	that of 1910, and has been modernised from the 1904 edition (see Editions below). Domhnall Mac Fhionghain notes, at the beginning of the volume, 'Dh' ullaich an t-Ughdar caomh an dara clo-bhualadh de'n "Fhear-Chiuil" goirid mu 'n d'thainig a' chrioch air. Tha an leabhar air a chur a mach mar dh'fhag e e, ach a mhain gu bheil, a nis 's a rithist, geagan atharrachaidh 's an litreachadh, agus roinn de mhearachdan a' chlò air an ceartachadh'.
Other Sources	
Further Reading	MacKinnon, Donald 'The Late Mr. Donald MacKechnie', The Celtic Review 5, 1908-09, pp. 92-96.

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All author names, places and publishers are given as printed. Transliterations into English are given in square brackets where appropriate. All *M'*, *Mc* and *Mac* surnames are treated as Mac for the alphabetical listings. Spaces or hyphens such as Mac a' Ghobhainn or Mac-Mhuirich are also disregarded.

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