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*“A strong Scots accent of the mind”: The pragmatic value of code-switching between English and Scots in private correspondence – A historical overview\**

L'articolo prende in considerazione esempi di usi specificamente scozzesi in campioni di corrispondenza privata che vanno dal diciottesimo al tardo diciannovesimo secolo; l'intento è di identificarne la valenza pragmatica e cercare di individuare i contesti comunicativi nei quali elementi lessicali e morfosintattici scozzesi potessero essere impiegati in testi altrimenti del tutto in inglese. Attraverso l'analisi di queste occorrenze sarà possibile mettere in luce le modalità che portarono lo scozzese ad essere percepito come 'lingua del cuore' (Daiches 1964), ad acquisire cioè maggiore prestigio occulto proprio mentre perdeva prestigio palese. Particolare attenzione verrà prestata al caso delle lettere di Robert Louis Stevenson, nelle quali sono numerosi gli esempi di consapevole 'code-switching' a fini pragmatici. Queste saranno messe in relazione ad altri esempi di coesistenza di codici diversi in generi quali la narrativa di viaggio e il testo argomentativo.

Various studies – especially Miller (1993) and Macaulay (1991; 1997) – have shown that distance between present-day Scottish Standard English (SSE) and Scots may vary, depending on essentially pragmatic conditions. For example, an overview of Scots forms in the Miller-Brown Corpus of SSE described in a previous study of ours (Dossena 1996) has allowed us to outline a complex kind of usage that appears to go beyond code-switching and code-mixing. In this the occurrence of Scots features with varying density not only expresses cultural connotations, but also allows stylistic variation: richer expression and enhanced vividness of discourse, in a context in which “alternation itself is the participants' own code” (Gafaranga 1999: 217). In Smith's view, “choosing Scots or English is [...] in one sense a statement of social solidarity” (1996: 167-168), and indeed this relates to Milroy's de-

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scription of language variation as being socially-originated (1992; 1993), an issue briefly discussed also by Paterson (1992).

Very often the speakers' perception of the topic, of the interlocutors, of the situation, and of their own role in that situation, influences their linguistic behaviour in ways that are seldom acknowledged consciously if not elicited clearly. A form of adjustment to the interlocutor's idiolect may of course be seen as a stylistic choice, and indeed one informant's comment is very interesting in this respect:

There's an example of me shifting the now I would very rarely say yeah ye ken but speakin to you I use it in normal eh I wouldnae say yeah I would always say aye if you see what I mean (R59, MBC31to4)<sup>1</sup>

In addition, in the case of Scots and English, instances of code-switching appear to reflect strategies related to linguistic perceptions of the two codes that have been developing over a relatively long time-span. Their investigation may therefore shed some light on the subjectively-perceived history of both varieties.

### 1. *Distinctiveness and convergence*

The history of the dynamics of convergence and divergence between English and Scots, the only modern varieties whose mutual origin can be traced back to Old English, is a fascinating one. Both trends have alternated over the centuries, when greater distinction was emphasised or, perhaps more frequently, speakers of the northern variety strove to imitate the accent and linguistic usage of the south. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries these two attitudes appear to have been most explicit; eighteenth-century grammarians, orthoepists and lexicographers marked the heyday of prescriptivism; then, at the turn of the century, 'the vernacular' gained an aura of poetic respectability, though it was still felt to be unsuitable in formal diction. Scots thus came to be associated with 'the language of the heart' (Daiches 1964), acquiring covert prestige as it was losing overt prestige. In this sense, an overview of Scots usage in

<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations refer to the turn and segment in the Miller-Brown Corpus in which the quotation occurs.

private correspondence of the nineteenth century may help us identify its relative pragmatic value in otherwise completely English texts. Outstanding instances of this kind of 'deliberate code-switching' occur in the letters of Robert Louis Stevenson; however, already in the previous century, David Hume (possibly the author of one of the earliest lists of proscribed Scotticisms – cf. Dossena 1997) occasionally resorted to Scots lexis and expressions for phatic communication.

As regards earlier stages in the history of Scots, a distinct focus on either code (whether intra- or intersentential) does not seem to have been recorded. Of course speakers had been aware of the specificity of Scots forms for a very long time; in the mid-fifteenth century *Suddroun* was first used as a disparaging label in Blind Harry's *Wallace* (McClure 1981/1995: 50). By contrast, it was only in 1678 that *Scotticism*, that notorious proscribing label was recorded for the first time<sup>2</sup> in the pamphlet *Ravillac Redivivus*: the author claims to have moved to England to learn the language, and asks his reader to "make remarks upon [his] Letters, and faithfully Admonish [him] of all the Scotticisms, or all the Words, and Phrases that are not current *English* therein". However, the samples of private correspondence in the Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots (cf. Meurman-Solin 1994 and 1999)<sup>3</sup> do not provide any instances of deliberate use of Scottish forms for conscious pragmatic purposes. Although distinctively Scottish forms and increasingly anglicised ones appear to co-occur with varying degrees of mutual influence depending on such factors as age, gender and education level of the encoder, topic, medium and social relationship between encoder and addressee, no explicit comment has been traced on the use of one code instead of the other<sup>4</sup>.

## 2. *The eighteenth century - Scotticisms in Hume's correspondence*

The anglicising trend that had been developing since 1603, with the Union of the Crowns, was emphasised after 1707, the year of the Union

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Aitken (1979: 94-95), who antedates the first occurrence of *Scotticism* given in the OED (1717).

<sup>3</sup> It is possible, however, that in future different findings will be discussed, as the compilation of other Older Scots corpora of correspondence is in progress – cf. Meurman-Solin (2001: 250).

<sup>4</sup> Instances of macaronic writing in earlier stages of southern English are discussed by Benskin / Laing (1981), Wright (1992), Schendl (1996) and Schendl (2001).

of Parliaments, when Scotland found that it had lost all centres of attraction of ‘polite society’; even the remarkable achievements of the Scottish Enlightenment could not overcome a sense of marginality, of provincial inferiority as far as sociolinguistic perceptions were concerned. In McClure’s words (1994: 40), “it is something of a paradox that the outstanding literary and intellectual achievements of eighteenth-century Scotland should so clearly manifest an almost pathological confusion, which has never been resolved, in the matter of language, arising from a still deeper confusion regarding the national identity.” This is perhaps most apparent in the comments of the philosopher David Hume; as he wrote in 1757 in a letter to Gilbert Elliot:

Is it not strange that, at a time when we have lost our Princes, our Parliaments, our independent Government, even the presence of our chief Nobility, are unhappy, in our Accent and Pronunciation, speak a very corrupt Dialect of the Tongue which we make use of; is it not strange, I say, that, in these Circumstances, we shou’d really be the People most distinguish’d for Literature in Europe? (Greig 1932, 1: 255).

Rogers finds it emblematic of the sociolinguistic climate in eighteenth-century Scotland if David Hume, “the luminary of half of the civilised world, could seek the advice of undistinguished English scribblers” (1991: 68). However, the role of David Hume as a linguistic commentator appears to be particularly interesting. In the letter to David Mallet of 8<sup>th</sup> November 1762 (Greig 1932/1: 369) Hume identifies Scotticisms with “Negligences of Style” and “Vices of Expression”. At the same time, his preoccupation with proper language becomes the butt of his own humour when he comments on specifically Scottish lexemes; for instance, his letter to his nephew Joseph, of 12<sup>th</sup> May 1771, opens with an apology for his delay in answering referring to “the occupation which proceeds from flitting, or as [...] Englishmen call it, removing” (Hunter 1960: 130). According to Klibansky/Mossner (1954: 212), an undatable letter to Colonel Edmonstone also includes playful use of a Scotticism, as Hume writes about “timeous or rather timely Information”.

Of course these remarks could not be classified as actual instances of intrasentential code-switching (CS); instead, they are possibly signals of a more tolerant attitude towards geographically-marked forms in informal, private interactions. As a matter of fact, Hume was clearly aware of

his own accent and of the contrast between this and his aim at purity in writing; in his letter to John Wilkes of 16<sup>th</sup> October 1754 (Greig 1932/1: 205) he wrote:

Notwithstanding all the Pains, which I have taken in the study of the English Language, I am still jealous of my Pen. As to my Tongue, you have seen that I regard it as totally desperate and irreclaimable.

The latter half of the eighteenth century, however, also saw the beginning of the so-called 'vernacular revival', which laid down the basis for an increasing sentimentalisation of Scots. While English maintained and actually increased its overt prestige, Scots gained covert prestige through a series of external factors: the Ossian controversy, the success of Burns' poems, the wave of sentimental reinterpretation of the Jacobite defeat, and the antiquarian interest owing to which a growing attention to Scots lexis developed and one of the most important outcomes of which was Jamieson's *Dictionary* (1808/1840).

### 3. *The nineteenth century*

While Scots lexis became increasingly acceptable in poetry, its use in non-literary prose continued to be stigmatised. Though Donaldson (1986 and 1989) has shown that the situation was completely different in the local press, when texts were aimed at a wider audience the use of non-standard forms was very sparing and only limited to those contexts in which it might have a distinct pragmatic value.

In contrast to the limited use of Scots, we find Gaelic occasionally quoted in narrative non-fiction to represent the exact words of the protagonists. A very interesting case is provided by Alexander MacKenzie's account of the Highland Clearances, in which the occasional sentence in Gaelic, promptly translated by the editor<sup>5</sup>, is typically an interjection of

<sup>5</sup> In fact, Gaelic is comparatively absent from these accounts; while it is true that the aim was to get as wide an audience as possible, so English was an obvious choice, it is also a sign of the authority of the reporter, who chooses which language to use according to the degree of identification he or she wants to achieve; on the role of switching as a means to express social meanings and to build interactional hegemony see Álvarez-Cáccamo (1996).

woe and a cry for mercy, or a poem – both forms which have a powerful emotive impact on the interlocutor (cf. MacKenzie 1883/1997: 218):

- (1) A woman, well known in the parish [...] was asked, on her return, what news? “Oh,” said she, “Sgeul bronach, sgeul bronach! Sad news, sad news! I have seen the timber of our well-attended kirk, covering the Inn at Altnaharrow; I have seen the kirk-yard, where our friends are mouldering, filled with tarry sheep, and Mr Sage’s study room, a kennel for Robert Gunn’s dogs; and I have seen a crow’s nest in James Gordon’s chimney head!” (MacKenzie 1883/1997: 36)
- (2) “*Oh, Dhia, Dhia, teine, teine* – Oh God, God, fire, fire”. (MacKenzie 1883/1997: 125)
- (3) *Bha latha eile ann!* There was another day! When possessions were held by the sword, those who wielded them were highly valued, and well cared for. (MacKenzie 1883/1997: 231)
- (4) The furniture was thrown outside, the web was cut out of the loom, and the terrified woman rushed to the door with an infant in her arms, exclaiming in a passionate and wailing voice – “*Tha mo chlann air a bhi’ air a muirt*” (My children are to be murdered). (MacKenzie 1883/1997: 235)
- (5) The children, indeed, run away weeping and crying “*Tha iad a’ tighinn, tha iad a’ tighinn*” (They are coming, they are coming), on the approach of any suspected person. (MacKenzie 1883/1997: 491)

While Gaelic, though presumed to be opaque, functions as an authenticating device, Scots evokes the reporters’ voices and possibly those of the readers themselves, and in the very few instances in which it is used its function is to provide a more emotional support to the narrator’s statement, as in the following:

An abridgement of my lucubrations is now in the hands of the public [...] I stand by them as facts (*stubborn chieles*). (MacKenzie 1883/1997: 120).

In this case the facts, being indisputable, are personified in Scots as ‘stubborn folks’; the phrase, however, may also evoke the adamant determination of the reporter to stand by his claims, thus ironically implying an imagined response on the part of the reader.

In diametrically different cases, Scots forms could also be included in the narration in order to entertain the audience; for instance, this is the case of travelogues in which the words of the local inhabitants are reported (allegedly, verbatim). Typical are the accounts published by Catherine Sinclair (1859), where the kind of Scots that is represented is recognisable as the dialect made popular by Scott's novels, and no attempt appears to have been made to achieve transcriptional accuracy, so that the language of both Highlanders and Lowlanders is reported in the same way, with the exception of Doric, as shown in the following paragraphs:

Two country folk in Bamff-shire working together while a grand equipage passed by, one said, 'Fa's tat, Janet?' 'Och, do ye no' ken him? Tat's Lord Fife!' 'Lord Fife!' she exclaimed, 'fa's he?' 'Do ye no mind him? Braco tat was!' 'Braco!' she cried, 'tat's him tat has his cel-lars fu' o' goud, and pits it by in spade fu's.'

When Foote first travelled in Scotland, he asked a Highland theatrical prompter about the habits of his country, and at last said, 'I conclude, then, that with about £300 a-year, one may live here like a gentleman?' His informant thoughtfully replied, 'I canna tell ye, for I never ken'd a man here wha spent the half o' that sum, an' I dinna ken what may come into ony body's head wha wad attempt to squander the hale o't.' (Sinclair 1859: 338).

Both in the case of travelogues and of argumentative journalism, however, English and Scots only appear to co-occur as contiguous forms; the switch from one to the other is always intersentential and the 'reporter' regularly uses English, leaving Scots or Gaelic to carefully framed quoted speech.

### 3.1. *Dialect in correspondence - only fiction?*

It may be useful to look for instances of intertextual, intersentential and intrasentential CS<sup>6</sup> in private correspondence, where the relationship between encoder and addressee is less formal, the message may

<sup>6</sup> Alternative labels can be 'insertional CS' for intrasentential CS and 'alternational CS' for intersentential CS - cf. Auer (1998).

therefore need less clarification, and a more ‘intimate’ code may be used<sup>7</sup>.

Görlach (1999: 149-150) points out that letters “reflect the social and functional relations between sender and addressee to a very high degree – only spoken texts can equal this range.” While admitting that “Private letters can contain valuable evidence on informal usage”, the same author denies that they may have any significant value from the dialectologist’s point of view, as “They rarely include dialect [...] Writing is so much connected with the school and standard language that composing a letter in dialect is a breach of sociolinguistic convention”, and therefore “Most letters written in dialect are literary fabrications”. However, “Many non-standard features are found in letters by emigrants, who were forced to communicate in written form although not fully qualified for this” (Görlach 1999: 150). We believe that other types of letters may also reveal interesting pragmatic patterns.

In the near future the analysis that follows will be supplemented by an investigation of samples of private correspondence available in the National Archives of Scotland and in the National Library of Scotland, so that the idiolects of male and female encoders, of varying ages and social backgrounds, may be taken into consideration. For the purpose of this study, texts will be compared from published sources belonging to the earlier and the later halves of the nineteenth century and comprising both authentic materials (a corpus of fifty letters written by Robert Louis Stevenson between 1879 and 1890)<sup>8</sup> and fictional texts (John Galt’s epistolary novel *The Ayrshire Legatees*, of 1820).

Similarly to what has been observed in travelogues, in John Galt’s novel Scots appears to occur more frequently when the passage is espe-

<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, even in formal contexts, the use of a different code may help clarify an otherwise obscure concept. For instance, in Catherine Sinclair’s travelogue we find the following anecdote: “I was recently amused to hear that the late Lord Dalhousie, not being able at once to understand the difference between St. Peter’s and the Vatican, a friend made it plain by saying, ‘Why, my lord, only recollect that St. Peter’s is the kirk, and the Vatican the manse’.” (1859: 307).

<sup>8</sup> This is the time-span in which the highest concentration of Scots forms appears in relation to the use of the Thomson/Johnson (T/J) pseudonyms on the part of Stevenson and Charles Baxter - cf. § 3.2. The corpus was therefore collected starting from the T/J letters and integrating it with a number of randomly-selected letters from the same period, generally written immediately before or after a T/J one. Each letter is numbered according to the Booth / Mehew (1994-95) edition.



cially entertaining<sup>9</sup>. Each member of the Pringle family displays his or her own specific style, but humorous usage of Scots spelling and turn of phrase is most obvious in the letters attributed to Mrs Pringle, the minister's wife. She is, in fact, the most direct link between the family in London (with their prospects for social enhancement thanks to the legacy of the minister's cousin) and the local community, where the letters are read out by the immediate addressees to assembled friends and neighbours, and comments on the London events are often expressed in the vernacular. An instance of this is Mrs Pringle's letter to Miss Mally Glencairn (Letter XI), which is thus introduced:

Miss Isabella Tod then begged that Miss Mally, their hostess, would favour the company with Mrs Pringle's communication. To this request that considerate maiden ornament of the Kirkgate deemed it necessary, by way of preface to the letter, to say, 'Ye a' ken that Mrs Pringle's a managing woman, and ye maunna expect any metaphysical philosophy from her.' [...] [Then] she began as follows:

My dear Miss Mally – We have been at the counting-house, and gotten a sort of a satisfaction; what the upshot may be, I canna take it upon myself to prognosticate; but when the waur comes to the worst, I think that baith Rachel and Andrew will have a nest egg [...] if the nation doesna break, as the argle-barglers in the House of Parliament have been threatening. (p. 38)

The son's and the daughter's letters, instead, appear to conform to the new standard of politeness which is being acquired in London. For instance, Andrew Pringle writes:

I must give you some account of what has taken place, to illustrate our provincialism, and to give you some idea of the way of doing business in London. (p. 19)

Concerning accent, he compares Scots and English in terms very similar to those employed by eighteenth-century prescriptivists:

They both speak the same language; perhaps in classical purity of

<sup>9</sup> This does not seem to apply to Sir Walter Scott's novels; however, it should be pointed out that his Scots-speaking characters are typically elderly, or uneducated or set in a romanticised past - cf. Tulloch (1980).

phraseology the fashionable Scotchman is even superior to the Englishman; but there is a flatness of tone in his accent [...] which gives a local and provincial effect to his conversation, however, in other respects, learned and intelligent. (pp. 34-35).

In the letters of both children Scots is only used when the parents are quoted, as in Letter VIII, by Rachel Pringle: “My mother shakes her head, and says, ‘Andrew, dinna be carri’t.’” (p. 26).

As for Dr. Pringle, his language is also anglicised, as would be typical of an educated person of his rank, although his references to church life naturally include Scots lexical items, as in Letter III:

Among the books, I fell in with a *History of the Rebellion*, anent the hand that an English gentleman of the name of Waverley had in it. [...] it was wonderful interesting [...] but it’s no so friendly to Protestant principles as I could have wished. However, if I get my legacy well settled, I will buy the book, and lend it to you on my return, please God, to the manse. (pp. 6-7).

Galt thus conveys the dynamics of change and continuity concerning in-group solidarity between the Pringle family and their community by means of their linguistic choices. While the parents are still securely attached to their background, the younger generation is represented as typically upwardly-mobile, with relatively weak ties (in spite of stereotyped protestations to the contrary on the part of the daughter), and therefore all the more readily anglicised in language and manners.

### 3.2. *The Thomson / Johnson saga*

Although closeness to actual epistolary usage in works of fiction such as Galt’s novels could be questioned, Gross (2000: 1291) maintains the reliability of fictional data by pointing out that “Through the self-conscious act of writing, the author is able to create the illusion of spontaneous conversation, while the reader creates meaning from the characters’ utterances as if they were produced in real time”<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Poussa (1999) also presents fictional texts as a valuable source of data in dialectological investigations.

In addition to this, comparison with a non-fictional corpus may show the extent to which mid-nineteenth-century Scots had actually become a jocular medium. For the purpose of this study, the Thomson/Johnson letters exchanged between Robert Louis Stevenson and Charles Baxter (Booth/Mehew 1995) have been identified as linguistically interesting, as they present traits of playfulness and seriousness an analysis of which may be a first contribution to the study of Scots in correspondence of the late modern period.

Stevenson's familiarity with the Scots language is well-attested both in his fictional works (*Kidnapped*, *Catriona*, *The Master of Ballantrae*, *Weir of Hermiston*, *Thrawn Janet*) and in the poems in *Underwoods*; although in what is possibly the most famous of these, 'The Maker to Posterity', Scots is presented as a dying language, in fact the author's skilful use of this code proves that Scots is still a powerful literary medium (cf. Mc Clure 2000: 33-37). Literary Scots had actually been praised in the essay on Robert Burns which appeared in the Cornhill Magazine in 1879 and was then included in *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*, of 1882:

Burns, like most great artists, proceeded from a school and continued a tradition; only the school and tradition were Scotch, and not English. While the English language was becoming daily more pedantic and inflexible, and English letters more colourless and slack, there was another dialect in the sister country, and a different school of poetry tracing its descent, through King James I., from Chaucer. The dialect alone accounts for much; for it was then written colloquially, which kept it fresh and supple; and, although not shaped for heroic flights, it was a direct and vivid medium for all that had to do with social life.

And it is indeed as 'a vivid medium for all that has to do with social life' that Scots appears to be used in Stevenson's private correspondence<sup>11</sup>. However, cases of CS are not restricted to English and Scots; French, Latin and occasionally German occur in instances of intrasentential or intersentential CS:

(6) I must have mis-expressed myself like ein beast of the field. (Letter 777)

(7) This makes me morbid. *Sufficit; explicit*. (Letter 779)

<sup>11</sup> Booth / Mehew (1994: 14) report Sidney Colvin's remarks on the close connection between Stevenson's style in letter-writing and his speech, in both cases a "flood of mingled poetry and slang".

- (8) I had intended to spend my life [...] as the leader of a great horde of irregular cavalry [...] *Et point du tout*. I am a poor scribe, and have scarce broken a commandment to mention (Letter 1237)

From the pragmatic point of view, cases of English-French and English-Scots CS appear to be fairly similar – both tend to imitate spoken forms and both tend to draw attention to the encoder’s predication, thereby stressing it:

- (9) Some beastly nuisances of business that I had not the strength to attend to. *Le pauvre Thomson, il a été bien bas, savez-vous; il ne valait pas un fétu, lui.* (Letter 1025)
- (10) A gentleman, to my thinkin’ o’t, ’s a guid, plain, straucht, fine, canty, honest body, aye ready for a dram an’ to be jölly wi’ a freen; [...] I’ve kennt mony a leery – aye an ne’er saw’m sober forbye – ’at wad hae scunnered at the thocht. (Letter 777)

Scots, however, occurs much more frequently when a stronger involvement of both encoder and addressee is signalled. As a result, it not only marks a register shift, by means of which the semantic and pragmatic value of the clause is highlighted, but stresses also identity and affect (Dolitsky / Bensimon-Choukroun 2000: 1255) to a greater extent than French.

Table 1 summarises the number of occurrences of inter- and intratextual CS per addressee per language in the corpus of letters investigated:

Table 1 - *Occurrences of inter- and intratextual CS per addressee per language*

Addressee(s)	Scots	French	Latin	German	0 CS	Total
Charles Baxter	26	3	2	1	2	34
Family	1	0	1	0	2	4
William Henley	1	2	0	0	2	5
Sidney Colvin	0	3	0	0	1	4
Various Correspondents	0	4	1	0	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>53</b> <sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> In Letters 700, 777 and 2248 Latin, French and German are used in addition to Scots and English – see Appendix.

As we can see, the highest number of occurrences of inter- and intra-textual CS was recorded in the letters to Charles Baxter, the majority of these occurrences concerning Scots. Other correspondents beyond the family circle being non-Scots, this seems quite understandable. However, it does not account for the lack of Scots forms in letters to parents and relatives (except in quotations), unless a concept of identity and solidarity is considered which places Baxter and Stevenson in a circle of social ties capable of being defined and strengthened by means of linguistic choices.

As a matter of fact, the social network within which letters in Scots or with Scots elements are exchanged<sup>13</sup> appears to be very close-knit indeed. Charles Baxter had been Stevenson's closest friend since their youth in Edinburgh and subsequently became his lawyer and business agent, so we can assume the sense of mutual understanding to have been very strong.

In these letters the Thomson/Johnson pseudonyms are often used (Booth/Mehew 1994: 43). Pseudonyms and nicknames are not infrequent in Stevenson's letters: The Gay Japanee, The Count of Arabia, John Libbell and George North, for instance, are among these. This usage possibly continued a family tradition: we are told his father had a series of nicknames for him as a child. Thomson and Johnson, however, actually became fictional *personae* for Stevenson and Baxter and references to them are even to be found in *Kidnapped* and *The Master of Ballantrae*<sup>14</sup>.

The adoption of either name on the part of the interlocutors was not fixed: in Letter 1280, for example, we have:

- (11) Here, Thomson, is a checkie.  
I am yours Johnson.  
Here Johnstone is a checkie  
I am yours Thomson. (Letter 1280)

<sup>13</sup> On CS in relation to social network theory cf. Milroy / Muysken (1995). As regards a diachronic perspective on these issues, cf. Fitzmaurice (2000).

<sup>14</sup> In *Kidnapped* (ch. 27) Mr Rankeillor avoids reference to the Jacobite Alan Breck by saying "We will call your friend, if you please, Mr Thomson." The Chevalier de Johnstone is mentioned in 'The Genesis of *The Master of Ballantrae* and Mr Johnstone Thomson features in the Preface of the same book: Stevenson had actually asked Baxter to supply the text of the legal document with which the Durrisddeer papers could have been deposited with a lawyer (Letter 1992); then one Sir William Johnson appears in ch. 11.

The fictional names appear to be interchangeable in several other instances; this identity play then becomes inextricably associated with verbal play and the range of Scots usage extends or diminishes according to pragmatically-oriented factors.

Table 2 summarises the way in which instances of inter- and intratextual CS have been classified:

Table 2. *Typology of inter- and intratextual CS*

Language	intertextual CS	intratextual CS <sup>15</sup>						Tot.
		intersentential CS			intrasentential CS			
		<i>text-oriented</i>	<i>encoder-oriented</i>	<i>addressee-oriented</i>	<i>text-oriented</i>	<i>encoder-oriented</i>	<i>addressee-oriented</i>	
Scots	11	3	5	8	1	3	3	<b>34</b>
French	0	1	5	3	0	2	2	<b>13</b>
Latin	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	<b>4</b>
German	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	<b>1</b>
<b>Tot.</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>52</b>

In a few cases (11 out of 52, 21% of all CS occurrences) the letters are entirely in Scots, hence they are instances of intertextual CS. This appears to be more frequent when the subject matter includes such face-threatening acts (FTAs) as requesting money, referring to the encoder's poor health, or expressing disappointment at a friend's behaviour<sup>16</sup>:

<sup>15</sup> In several letters different types of intratextual CS concerning the same languages are found to co-occur; for instance, in Letter 2248, addressed to Charles Baxter, at one point called "Mr Jonstone", we find the addressee-oriented phrase: "Two words to your nainsel on business"; and the text-oriented comment quoting a popular Jacobite tune: "We'll keep our hearts up [...] we'll take an' blaw on the flageolet [...] and it'll be – Hey, Johnie Cope, are ye walkin' yet? / And is your fit a steerin' yet?"

<sup>16</sup> On the role of CS in FTAs cf. Gross (2000: 1287).

- (12) My dear Thomson, It's a maist remarkable fac'. but nae shuner had I written yon braggin, blawin letter aboot ma business habits, when bang! that very day my hoast begude in the aifternune! [...] Dear Thomson, have I ony money. If I have, *send it's* for the loard's sake. Johnson (Letter 1329).
- (13) Dear Charles, Herewith the cheque. I am muckle obleeged to you for a' 't's come and gane. [...] I am dear Cherls, Yours entirely Thomson  
My first name is Dauvit. [...] I never was what they ca'd an honest man, and I was aye keen fur the sillier. But man, can ye no get Jaikson to ca' cannier? I dinnae mind muckle, but yon puir Tauchnitz (if that be his name) comes between me and my vivers. [...] D. Thomson (Letter 1273)

Though superficially both encoder and addressee appear to be fictional *personae*, the topics under discussion are certainly real enough – the switch to a code that signals linguistic and cultural solidarity is therefore needed to distance an otherwise seriously painful reality.

Table 2 also shows that intratextual – i.e., both intra- and intersentential – CS appears to be much more frequent, with 41 instances out of 52 (79% of the total). These occurrences may then be classified as text-oriented, addressee-oriented and encoder-oriented.

Text-oriented cases are those in which Scots songs and proverbs or Burns' poems are quoted or alluded to as metatextual references:

- (14) This is only a line to say why I telegraphed to stop the bill. [...] Man, yon was awfu' about the plate. [...] But ye ken the auld sayin', 'the nearer the kirk'. (Letter 777)
- (15) My dear Mother, [...] I am *quite* an ogre; does my father flatter himself that he is one, by any chance? O wud some power the giftie gi'e us!<sup>17</sup> (Letter 783)

<sup>17</sup> In (14) the recipient is left to complete the proverb, the full form of which is "The nearer the kirk, the farther from grace"; similarly, in (15) the recipient is expected to know the second part of these famous lines from Burns' 'To a Louse': "O wad some power the giftie gie us / To see oursels as others see us!"

- (16) Dear lad, [...] Truly I am on the mend. I am still very careful. I have the new Bunctionary; a joy, a thing of beauty, and – bulk. I shall be raked i' the mools before it's finished: that's the only pity; but meanwhile I sing. (Letter 1232)

Addressee-oriented cases, instead, are those in which the encoder wishes the addressee to act. In Letter 754, for instance, a request is expressed twice – the first time in colloquial Scots, then briefly and formally with the addition of what justifies it in English:

- (17) My dear Charles, Of course I have something to ask, else I would not write; that is plain to the meanest capacity. However, to my news first. [...] How's the missis, and the paw-paw? An' eh! Johnson, here's a bit jobbie for ye, man. Do ye ken America? an' Indanny? an' Hendricks Co? an' a place they ca' Clayton? God a'michty, they are unco steigh words for an honest Scotsman. Weel, ther's a Mrs Betty Patterson dwalls there; an' ma mannie, if ye would be sae guid's send her twa pund sterlin', [...] I wad be real blyth an' tak' it real kind o' ye [...] £ 2.0.0. to Mrs Betty Patterson, Clayton, Hendricks Co. Indiana, U.S.A. This is to defray expenses about that d-d certificate of birth. (Letter 754)

In this case the use of a 'we-code' (Gumperz 1982) makes meaning more opaque (comprehension has to be ensured by the subsequent rephrasing in standard terms), but it also makes the perlocutionary effect stronger, since the bond of solidarity between encoder and addressee<sup>18</sup> is underlined by the linguistic choices and by a reference to the private joke of Johnson as an elder caught with his hand in the collection plate already alluded to in Letter 777 – cf. (14).

In other letters the request may be accompanied by parodies of biblical texts or mock-hymns and poems:

- (18) Verily, verily I say unto thee, it is not those that say unto me, Encl., Encl., but those who acknowledge cheques, who enter into the kingdom of the cygnet.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Bolinger (1968/1975: 257-258): "A speaker may change styles – 'switch codes' – to put himself closer to his hearer. [...] Not all instances of code switching are aimed at clearing the channel. Some may actually obstruct it, though they serve other purposes - solidarity, social distance, prestige, concealment, and so on." As a matter of fact, in our corpus of letters 'participant-oriented' (i.e., both encoder- and addressee-oriented) CS occurs much more frequently than text-oriented CS – cf. Table 2. On the roles of Writers and Readers as "strategic selves" cf. Myers (1999: 46).



2. And the scribe was sore abashed for he was a damnable correspondent, and he had not acknowledged a draught of twenty-five shekels of silver,
3. And he lifted up his voice and wept. (Letter 1170)

- (19) Dear Cherls, Here's a bit checky, chuckie. [...] Ye'll hae to acknowledge my checky, do ye ken that? [...] Eh, Thomson,  
When I was young and drouthy  
I kent a public hoose  
Whaur a' was cosh an' couthy;  
It's there that I was crouse!  
It's there that me an' Thamson  
In days I weep to mind,  
Drank Wullywauchts like Samson  
An' sang like Jenny Lind. [...]  
Air: Jerusalem the Golden (Letter 1094)

- (20) Dear Sir, Enclosed, please find a recipse for that twenty pound ye sent me. [...] it'll no last very long but the Lord'll can Provide.  
O dinnae mind the drams ye drink  
Nor whatten things betide.  
There's naething maitters noo or syne:  
The Lord'll can provide! [...]  
Thomson  
Toddy Hill  
by Sculduddery  
Glen Tosh (Letter 1106)

As the last quotation shows, inter- and intrasentential CS may extend to paratextual features such as the encoder's mock-address, in which Scots words appear in an otherwise standard structure to give it a hilariously preposterous meaning full of allusions to merry (*tosh*) drinking (*toddy*) and fornication (*sculduddery*)<sup>19</sup>.

Encoder-oriented cases of intersentential CS are those in which the encoder comments on his own situation or uses a Scots phrase as an emotive interjection:

<sup>19</sup> In Letter 1156 the mock-address is "Thomson Esq., Toddy Vale, Talisker, Glen-Tremens, Argyll". This, in turn, is heralded by "Dear Cherlie over the whisky and water", a jocular allusion to the Jacobite toast "To the King over the water", i.e. to the exiled Stuart monarch.

- (21) Dear Charles, Thanks for your kind letter. It is true, man, God's trüth, what ye say about the body, Stevison. The deil himsel, it's my belief, could nae get the soul harled oot o' the creature's wame, or he had seen the hinder end o' they proofs. (Letter 1038)
- (22) Dear Charles, Encl. please find a cheque for £ 40 [...] Apply business talents and serve hot.  
I have been faur frae weel this whylie, but I keep pushin forrit. (Letter 1262)
- (23) Campagne De-fli: O me!  
[...] Campagne De-mosquito: It's eneuch to gar me greet, O!  
(Letter 1003)

In these instances the use of a different code is an obviously marked choice, and the varying extent to which Scots forms are employed signals the possibility of having a gradient even as far as markedness is concerned (cf. Myers-Scotton 2000: 1267; Gross 2000: 1284). In some cases, for instance, a brief intrasentential switch to Scots is enough to signal that the addressee is called upon directly, as in the following quotation:

- (24) My dear Charles, I have written at some length though without much fact, I fear – my usual fault – to Lloyd. Two words to your nainsel on business. (Letter 2248)

When the switch is more extensive, instead, the encoder appears to assume a different identity which allows him to perform such FTAs as reproaching or using vulgar/offensive expressions:

- (25) My dear Charles, What is this I hear from Henley, that you're hesitating? [...] I insist upon your coming. My wife insists upon it. Thomson, if you stay at hame, damnd, I'll be done wi' ye. You a prezentar! Damd! A common, low wauf eediot. (Letter 1194)

The jocular tone is signalled by the role-playing pseudonym, the reference to involvement in church life (a running joke), and above all by the switch to a code with the familiar, informal associations that Scots had acquired by the second half of the nineteenth century. The face-threat is thus pre-empted by means of a code which draws attention to

itself and, as it does so, deprives the predication of its potential risks. Of course the success of this also depends on the addressee's co-operation and acceptance of the game, which should be acknowledged and actually responded to, if its pragmatic agenda is to be fulfilled. As a matter of fact, Baxter did answer 'in kind' – a Thomson Johnson letter of his dated 31<sup>st</sup> December 1884 is entirely in Scots (cf. Ferguson / Waingrow 1956: 155-156):

Dear Thomson,

I feel I maun tak up ma pen to say Hoo's a wi' ye this last day o' the year [...] Could ye no spare a trifle till an auld freend Thōmson. Ye'll mind yin or twa o' thae auld stories a ken about ye. Ye're still inside hangin distance, ye ken, but it's no likely that Peter Thōmson wad betray a freen excep under the pressure o' an awaukened conscience.

A five pun note wad see me on for a whilie.

Yours,  
Jōhnson

In the end, what is superficially a serious face-threat becomes instead an effective way to strengthen the tie between the two rational actors, thanks to a shared we-code which underlines how closely knit the social network is between the encoder and the addressees with whom the switch to Scots may occur.

#### 4. *Concluding remarks*

While instances of inter- and intrasentential CS appear to fall more clearly into the category of situational CS, as they respond to pragmatic needs associated with the expression of the encoder's stance in relation to the addressee at a certain point in the text, cases of intertextual CS seem to relate to more general 'conversational' requirements.

If each letter is treated like a conversational turn, we see that all the different cases of CS correspond to the encoder's selection of the most effective code for the perlocutionary aims of each predication. This relates to what is presupposed concerning the addressee's reception of the same, whether on the inter- or intratextual level. The greater or lesser density of Scots elements in any given text does not depend on any immediate need

to adjust to the addressee's idiolect. Instead, the encoder is always in control of the two codes and forges the text using one or the other according to the pragmatic value it is to have: Latin and French may supply *les mots justes*<sup>20</sup>, but Scots is now used as the 'language of the heart' – the language in which one can complain of poor health, ask for a favour (if not money), reproach and call names; but also the language of private jokes, evocative of the good old days of youth, of oneself portrayed in a different light every time, in a game of continually changing identities – all this as if it were a kind of 'secret language' which can only be shared by members of an exclusive social network beyond the family.

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<sup>20</sup> As a matter of fact, non-Scots CS appears to be similar in the Thomson/Johnson letters and in the random group.

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*Appendix - Summary of data in the corpus of Stevenson's letters*

	<b>No. in Booth/ Mehew edn.</b>	<b>Addressee</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Language involved (in addition to English)</b>
1.	639	Colvin	1879	French
2.	640	Baxter	1879	French
3.	700	Baxter	1880	Scots - Latin
4.	754	Baxter	1880	Scots
5.	777	Baxter	1881	Scots - German
6.	778	Baxter	1881	Latin
7.	783	Mother	1881	Scots
8.	1003	Baxter	1882	Scots
9.	1025	Baxter	1882	French
10.	1038	Baxter	1883	Scots
11.	1039	Colvin	1883	French
12.	1044	Baxter	1883	Scots
13.	1093	Parents	1883	–
14.	1094	Baxter	1883	Scots
15.	1106	Baxter	1883	Scots
16.	1107	Gosse	1883	French
17.	1108	Henley	1883	–
18.	1156	Baxter	1883	Scots
19.	1157	Colvin	1883	French
20.	1170	Baxter	1883	–
21.	1171	Henley	1883	–
22.	1190	Baxter	1883	–
23.	1191	Baxter	1883	Scots
24.	1192	Kirk	1883	French
25.	1193	Low	1883	French
26.	1194	Baxter	1883	Scots
27.	1232	Henley	1884	Scots
28.	1233	Baxter	1884	Scots
29.	1234	Baxter	1884	Scots



*Appendix continued*

	<b>No. in Booth/ Mehew edn.</b>	<b>Addressee</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Language involved (in addition to English)</b>
30.	1235	Baxter	1884	Scots
31.	1237	Monkhouse	1884	French
32.	1261	Benecke	1884	–
33.	1262	Baxter	1884	Scots
34.	1273	Baxter	1884	Scots
35.	1274	Colvin	1884	–
36.	1280	Baxter	1884	Scots
37.	1281	Parents	1884	Latin
38.	1329	Baxter	1884	Scots
39.	1369	Baxter	1885	Scots
40.	1370	Henley	1885	French
41.	1411	Baxter	1885	Scots
42.	1421	Baxter	1885	Scots
43.	1662	Baxter	1886	Scots
44.	1663	Cousin Bob	1886	–
45.	1964	Baxter	1887	Scots
46.	1992	Baxter	1888	Scots
47.	2016	Henley	1888	French
48.	2017	Baxter	1888	Scots
49.	2247	Lang	1890	Latin
50.	2248	Baxter	1890	Scots - French

