

Is Written Scots a Foreign Language tae Maist Hamelt Scots Speakers?

SOME fowk that's juist been gien a copy o the Scots Tung Wittins for the first time, haes come richt oot wi it. "That's nae guid tae me, it's ower hard tae read!" Mony o the 1.5m tae 2.5m hamelt Scots speakers identified bi diffrent surveys in raicent years carries the norrie in thair heids that Scots is somethin a bit mair fantoosh nor the wey that they speak; sae fantoosh in fack, that maist o thaim canna unnerstaun it when they see it written doon. Is it ony wunner then that maist o thaim acceps the wey they speak as juist some kinna local workin cless slang juist like they war telt at the schuil.

Upsteerin Scots screivers, blythe tae write in Scots but maistlins haudin back frae the speakin o't, warsle wi orra spellins an aft losses sicht o the mony words that's shared atween Scots an English. This mistaen fecht tae fund a Scots word tae yaise insteid o whit's perceived tae be an English ane whiles ends up wi a language that, tho recognised bi Scots scholars as a form o Scots, is aft a language that haes never ever been spoken in Scotland an isnae recognised bi the hamelt Scots speaker, uneddicatit in the readin o Scots an never hivin heard the writers speakin it. They're no gaun tae mak a maucht tae lairn hou tae read a language that, on paper, leuks naethin like the wey they speak ilka day. They haed nae sic bother wi readin Oor Wullie or The Broons, e'en in the first hauf o the last century whan the Scots yaised then wis a lang sicht braider nor the wattered doon language that's yaised the day.

Naebody the day is gaun tae propone gaun back tae thon kinna spellins an language but there a muckle want for written Scots tae be makit a guid bit mair reader freendly if there tae be ony kinna mellin an mutual recognition atween the speakers an screivers o the leid. Maist fowk is weel aquent wi this kinch an it's ane that shuid be addressed bi aw Scots upsteerers for it's weel kent a sindert hoose canna staund an the Scots language o the 21t century will never be hail or the twa haufs mells thegither. Forbye thon, time isnae on the side o the Scots language.

Tae be fair tae Scots writers, they dinna hae ony Scots dictionar that can compear wi e'en the maist hummle o English anes, for aw the guid an necessar work that's been duin bi the SNDA an ithers. For a stert, aw English dictionars is written in English frae batter tae batter. Scots dictionars is written in English tae. English dictionars is comprehensive an includes aw words imported intae the leid frae the classical Greek, Latin an ither foreign languages while Scots anes juist includes thae words that haes a different form o the classic word in Scots tae that yaised in English, sic as the Scots "depute" insteid o the English "deputy". Tho the'll aye be a need for an English/Scots vaision, nae Scots dictionar is gaun tae be complete or it's written aw in Scots an includes aw the words the leid shares wi English, juist like the English dictionar includes aw the words it shares wi Scots an ither foreign leids. This wad mak it easier for writers tae evyte wrangly owersetin shared words intae an orra kinna pseudo Scots.

Coorse, a comprehensive Scots dictionar the likes o thon isna gaun tae fund its wey intae the shops the morn but, in the mean-time, wi the hamecomin o the Scots Pairlament, the ratifeein o the European Chairter for Regional or Minority Languages, the foondin o the Cross Pairty Group on Scots an a growein swall o intrest in the Scots language, there gaun tae come a time, we howp, when fowk is gaun tae hiv tae sit doon

an come up wi some kinna standart leet o Scots that's suitable for yuiss on public signage in the pairlament, the schuils, on the street an for yuiss on leaflets an documents. In ither words, a Scots Dictionar o Public Signage that's no gaun tae hae ony lauchable pseudo Scots words for enemies o the leid tae lowp on an yaise as ammunition.