

A Phonetic Characterisation of Scottish Gaelic

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Abstract

This project proposes an articulatory phonetic investigation of Scottish Gaelic, to shed more light on phenomena that have primarily been described through impressionistic accounts and acoustic analyses. Electromagnetic articulography will be used to investigate the articulatory basis of: (i) vowel intrusion in sonorant–consonant clusters, (ii) the realisation of ‘slender’/‘broad’ consonant contrasts; and (iii) the phonetic implementation of segments involved in morphophonological alternations as arising from initial consonant mutation (‘lenition’). By providing direct articulatory evidence from native speakers, the project aims to inform the phonetic characterisation of these and related phonological phenomena. These studies will provide much needed data for documentation of Scottish Gaelic, an endangered minority language, and will inform broader theoretical issues including gestural coordination and the nature and implementation of consonant contrasts.