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The Multiple Modality System in Southern Scotland: Levels of Acceptability of Double and Triple Modals in the 21st century Scottish Borders region

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Abstract

This paper mainly aims to describe and analyse the current syntactic and semantic system of Multiple Modality spoken and written in the Scottish Borders region. The task of the questionnaire survey is to get further details as regards this dialectal reality in which hundreds of combinations are possible. In total, 231 informants participated in this field dialectal enquiry from 2010 to 2013. The data analysed in this paper stem from the 2011 survey that mainly took place in Kelso and Jedburgh. 73 informants completed the structured-type questionnaire at this time. How many combinatorial possibilities are allowed in this part of Scotland? What are the possible positions of modal expressions in these combinations? What types of semantic interpretations can these combinations generate in the Borders? What is (un)grammatically possible in the varieties of Scottish English spoken in the region? In contrast to the American South, where a number of projects (both theoretical and field studies-based) have been undertaken since the 1970s, there are, at this point only very few answers to these questions regarding the Scottish Borders region. It is time to reactivate the knowledge in this research field in order to obtain a general syntactic overview of these modal sequences which were born in Northern Europe.

Key words: combinations, modals, Scots, syntax, Scottish English, vernacular dialects

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1 Introduction

Research on this dialectal phenomenon has been conducted since the 1970s. It is quite complex because it contains hundreds of possible modal combinations, i.e. Double Modals (DMs, i.e. two adjacent modals) and Triple Modals (TMs, i.e. three adjacent modals), used in various territories of the Western-part of the Anglophone world. Authors such as Nagle (1994, 202) think that they are of recent use, based on the earliest attestations of Multiple Modals (MMs) found in two Scottish texts written by Calderwood (1756) and Alexander Ross (1768):

(a) If we get a German doctor, not one of us *will can* speak to him. (1756)
E R

(b) The youth himself *may can* to rule the rost. (1768)
E R

Each combination has its series of semantic sequences. In the field of modality, there are two main types of senses: the epistemic sense, corresponding to various levels of probability, and the root sense, referring to the other semantic interpretations, such as ability, obligation, permission, suggestion, warning, and necessity.

Epistemic-Root is the most common semantic ordering (Battistella 1995, 31) for modal combinations. Nevertheless, their diversity generates other orderings such as:

R-R (*used to could*)
1 You *used to could* do that in the old house (Butters 1996, 274)

E-E (*may would*)
1 I wonder if you *may would* help me (Mishoe's corpus 1991, 15)

R-E (*ought to might*)
1 Yes, we *ought to might* go now (Coleman 1975, 96)

A modal combination is above all a mishmash of modal expressions classified via a scale of auxiliaries sketched by Quirk in the mid-1980s (Quirk 1985, 137):

a) Central modals: *can*, *could*, *may*, *might*, *must*, *will*, *would*, *shall*, *should*.
b) Marginal Modals: *used to*, *ought to*, *need*, *dare*.
c) Semi Auxiliaries or Semi Modals: *have to*, *would like to*, *be going to*, *be able to*, *be allowed to*, *be compelled to*, *be obliged to* ...
d) Modal Idioms in which comparative modals are found: *would rather*, *had (or would) better*, *would sooner*, *have got to*, *be to* ...

Combinatorial possibilities are quite numerous, which implies that some of them can be written and spoken in Standard Englishes. That is indeed the case with the following constructions:

Will	*have to*	Central Modal + Semi Modal
Might	*have to*	Central Modal + Semi Modal

Or

Be going to	*have to*	Semi Modal + Semi Modal
Used to	*be able to*	Marginal Modal + Semi Modal

Mufwene (1994) noticed this assembling of modal expressions in mainstream Englishes. However, for unknown reasons, the terms MMs or modal combinations, DMs and TMs, are simply rejected from Standard English grammar. Unlike Scandinavian varieties (Nagle 1995) in which modal combinations are found as well on a daily basis and which are fully recognized and used in standard grammars of this part of the Germanic language family, anglophone combinations are only recognized and mostly found in vernacular or also called non-standard varieties.

Visser (1963-1973) and Traugott (1972) detected some ancestors of these current modal combinations which go back to the Old and Middle English periods:

Old English DMs (450-1100 AD):
Scule agan, *sceal(l) agan* for *should ought*
Mot, *moten* or *moston agan* for *must ought*

Middle English DMs (1100-1450 AD):
Shall moun or *sall mow* for *shall may*
Sall kunne for *shall can*
Must kunne for *must can*

The problem for Nagle (1989, 363) is the absence of auxiliarization of modals during these two periods, although he claims that *shall*, *should*, and must were already advanced in auxiliarization in Old English. These combinations were used in Anglian dialects and especially spoken in the domineering kingdom of the Middle Ages in Northern Great Britain, namely Northumbria. For this time, Nagles identifies them as combinations of verbs rather than of auxiliaries. What is more, most of these historical combinations, such as *must ought*, *shall may*, and *shall can* no longer exist as auxiliary combinations nowadays. Therefore, he does not define them as the direct precursors of today's MMs. Nonetheless, a complete disconnection of these two periods with late modern English cannot be proved yet.

Montgomery is in a kind of intermediary situation and asserts that today's MMs go back one century prior to the attestations in Calderwood's and Ross's texts:

> Both of these (attestations) occurred some two centuries after the demise of the Middle English combinations. Montgomery (1989) reviews the historical link between the populations of Scotland, Northern Ireland and the

> American South, the three principal double modal regions and suggests that the origin of the double modals lies well before the first attested citations since speakers of Scottish English began to settle Northern Ireland in 1610. (Montgomery, cited in Nagle 1994, 203)

In order to obtain better clarification on the origin of this dialectical system, more diachronic research is necessary. However, this is not the main goal of the paper.

2 Field Survey

After this brief historical summary, the next sections of this paper will deal with the data obtained through a questionnaire survey distributed in April and May 2011 in the main towns of the Scottish Borders region: Kelso and Jedburgh, both located in the county of Roxburghshire.

The research focuses on the current types and uses of MMs in the region. For the survey, 73 respondents (46 women aged between 40 and 60 years and 27 men aged between 30 and 70 years) completed a structured-type questionnaire based on a dialectal methodology proposed by Louis Jean Calvet and Pierre Dumont (1999). This approach allows the preparation of questions that are termed in the jargon of social sciences as closed and semi-closed questions:

> La plupart des chercheurs préfèrent élaborer un questionnaire structuré comprenant à la fois des questions fermées et semi fermées, plutôt qu'un questionnaire composé uniquement de questions ouvertes. (Calvet et Dumont 1999, 18)

> Most researchers prefer preparing a structured questionnaire comprising both closed and semi-closed questions, rather than a questionnaire only made up of open questions. (Calvet and Dumont 1999, 18) (English translation by the author Anthony R. Bour)

A closed question consists of the informant simply answering *yes* or *no* to a series of two written questions. This represents the first task of the questionnaire:

1	Have you ever heard the type of structure underlined below? He'<u>ll can</u> help us the morn.	Y	N
2	Would you use it yourselves in a similar context?	Y	N

If the respondents answer *no* to the second question, they have to replace it with a grammatical construction that can be similar but not necessarily equal to the combination that, according to him/her, would fit better with the clause.

In semi-closed questions, the respondents have to select one grammatical feature among four proposed options. This represents the second task of the questionnaire

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I didn't _____ tak them at aa.

A/ uisst tae could
B/ used to would
C/ use tae could
D/ used to could
E/ another similar construction

This paper will focus on the second task in which respondents can choose one modal combination out of four that best describes the sentence, or they can tick answer E and write their own grammatical construction that can be another modal combination or a completely different structure in a standard or vernacular syntactic environment. There are 8 sentences in total.

3 Results

This task comprises a series of 8 sentences in which respondents selected the appropriate DM or TM for each sentence based on their dialectal knowledge and personal grammatical preferences. They also made several morpho-syntactic and spelling modifications in the modal structures when none of the vernacular combinations could fit with the sentence. At the end of this task, a clear tendency is observed in the choice of the MMs and similar preferences can be traced by both genders.

		M	W
A/	might not can	5	18
B/	might not could	1	2
C/	used to couldn't	0	2
D/	might used to couldn't	1	0
E/	Other vernacular features	1	4
E/	Other standard features	16	19

Table 1: He _____ refuse.

As mentioned in the first table, the favourite combination is *might not can*, which is identified as a classical DM. 18 women and only 5 men ticked this structure for the

first sentence. This DM is very often recognized and spoken throughout the English-speaking communities in their vernacular dialects. Unlike *will can*, it does not belong to a specific geographical area. The rest of the combinations were barely chosen. There are two main reasons that can explain this situation:

1) Two combinations contain a non-classical modal element, i.e. *used to*, which can be difficult for some respondents to decipher when it is accompanied by one or two modal expressions. The grammatical nature of *used to* is quite diversified even in standard English grammar. Most of the time, it can be identified as a Semi Modal (Macafee 1980, 19), a Quasi Modal (Labov 1968, 263 and Bauer 2002, 52-53), a Marginal Modal according to Quirk (1985, 236) or a true Modal Auxiliary like *can*, *must*, *might* by Collins (2004, 1). This confusion in the identity of *used to* casts some serious doubts for the respondents and for that reason they rather avoid it in DMs or TMs.

2) The second reason is the presence of a clitic negator attached to *could* in the last two combinations, which, contrary to the American South, is apparently still rare in vernacular Scottish English grammar.

However, *might not could* is a typical DM in Southern Scotland, which makes the fact that it was not chosen by more respondents quite a mystery.

Regarding the other non-standard constructions, three of them were chosen by female respondents:

(1) He *maybe unable t* refuse.
(2) He *cannae* refuse.
(3) He *couldna* refuse.

One man decided to separate the Central Scots negator nae after might, which is rare in vernacular grammatical rules of Scots:

(4) He *might nae* refuse.

According to Brown (1991) and Miller (1993), this negator should never be detached from its primary or modal auxiliary. However, the respondents' perception of grammar, especially in the oral medium, keeps changing, and written grammar rules, even in the vernacular environment, always change more slowly than oral vernacular grammar rules do.

The number of standard constructions is quite large. The rest of the tables will show a similar situation in which vernacular structures of replacement, including MMs, are minor. Listed below are the standard constructions by order of preference:

Standard structures of replacement mostly proposed by men:

(5) He *might not* refuse.
(6) He *couldn't* refuse.
(7) He *wouldn't* refuse.
(8) He *may not* refuse.

Standard structures of replacement mostly proposed by women:

(9) He *might not be able* to refuse.
(10 He *might* refuse.
(11) He *could* not refuse.

Other modal expressions, essentially in the negative, were proposed by respondents only once:

(12) He (*will*, *might not*, *won't*, *should*, *may*, *mightn't*, *wouldn't*, *may not be able to*, *cannot*) refuse.

The following table is particularly interesting to analyse as there seems to be a greater tendency towards the choice of American MMs by some respondents.

		M	W
A/	might not couldn't	2	1
B/	might couldn't	0	1
C/	may not could	1	9
D/	might will can't	0	1
E/	Other vernacular features	2	5
E/	Other standard features	20	26

Table 2: I better put it (a hearing aid) on or I _____ understand you.

Over the past 30 years, Scottish-English dialects have undergone constant change, especially in the field of modality. In this second table, there is a net preference for *may not could*, which is not a typical modal sequence in the traditional grammar spoken and written in Southern Scotland. Combinations in which may is in first position belong to the American South. Miller (1993) does not take these contemporary changes of modals in Scotland into account: "Modal verbs occupy an important place in the grammar of any variety of English, and this is one area in which Scottish English is massively different from Standard English. The major differences are these: Broad Scots lacks SHALL, MAY and OUGHT." (116)

This difference keeps decreasing in the 21st century since more and more Northern English, Ulster, and Southern American modal sequences appear in the Scots and Scottish-English dialects. In this sentence, the first modal of the combination is epis-

temic, expressing equi-probability (Lapaire and Rotgé 2004, 205) whereas the second modal is root and expresses ability.

Five women wrote their own non-standard constructions, one of which proposed a similar sequence to *may not could*:

(13) Maybe I better put it on or I *might not could* understand you. (once)
(14) Maybe I better put it on or I *might no* understand you. (twice)
(15) Maybe I better put it on or I *wouldnay* understand you. (once)
(16) Maybe I better put it on or I *would nae* understand you. (once)

In these examples, two typical Scottish negators are present: *nay* and *nae*. Both are identified as enclitic negatives. *Nae* should be attached to *would* since it remains a wide scope negator unlike *no* which is a narrow scope negator. With *nae*, the sentence is completely negative whereas with *no* the sentence is partially negated. That is what the respondents wanted to create without paying attention to the spelling of the negator. This situation can also be explained by the lack of grammatical knowledge in Scots because in the field survey conducted in this part of the Roxburghshire county, some respondents asserted that they were not taught enough vernacular knowledge in their childhood.

As regards male respondents, one wrote a more American DM, while the other insisted on an assembling of a Central Modal and a Semi Modal:

(17) Maybe I better put it on or I *might better* understand you.
(18) Maybe I better put it on or I *wouldnae be able tae* understand you.

Many standard structures were again proposed by both genders. As regards male informants, the most proposed standard modals are as follows:

(19) Maybe I better put it on or I *might not* understand you. (proposed six times)
(20) Maybe I better put it on or I *may not* understand you. (three times)
(21) Maybe I better put it on or I *won't* understand you. (twice)

Furthermore, the contraction of *might not* was also found in two questionnaires:

(22) Maybe I better put it on or I *mightn't* understand you. (twice)

Each of the following modal expression in the negative *couldn't*, *could not*, *will not*, *wouldn't*, *might not be able to*, and *might* were mentioned only once in this second clause.

Regarding female respondents, 26 mainstream structures were written and again *might not* and *may not* are at the top of the classification of structures of replacement:

(23) Maybe I better put it on or I *might not* understand you. (seven times)
(24) Maybe I better put it on or I *may not* understand you. (six times)
(25) Maybe I better put it on or I *won't be able to* understand you. (five times)
(26) Maybe I better put it on or I *might not be able to* understand you. (three times)
(27) Maybe I better put it on or I *wouldn't* understand you. (twice)

Couldn't and *could not* are rarely mentioned. It is the same case for *mayn't* which was proposed by one 65-year-old woman. For the latter it is quite understandable because, contrary to *mightn't*, most Anglophone speakers consider *may* in the negative as ungrammatical in any variety of English. The third clause presents some major differences due to the presence of TMs in the list.

		M	W
A/	should might better	2	0
B/	will might can	0	4
C/	'll should could	1	4
D/	'll might can	1	11
E/	Other vernacular fea-tures	4	3
E/	Other standard features	16	22

Table 3: He _____ do it for you.

In this third sentence, many more women than men preferred to select TMs, especially *'ll might can*. *Should might better* is the odd one out in this table because, unlike the other three TMs that all belong in southern Scotland, it is American. Although very few men proposed a TM or another vernacular structure, two of them selected the American TM, something that the female respondents did not do at all. Four women selected the uncontracted will should can combination and four others chose the contracted *'ll should could*.

Four non-standard features were also proposed, two of which have the Semi Modal (Quirk 1985, 137) *be able to* that is not conjugated:

(28) He *be able to* do it for you. (proposed twice)

"Invariant be" or "be-levelling" processes are put into place in this case. The other structures are two traditional Scottish English DMs:

(29) He might can do it for you.
(30) He'll can do it for you.

Many standard structures were also found in this part of the questionnaire. Male respondents mostly chose the Single Modals *might* and *should* as constructions of replacement:

(31) He *might* do it for you. (five times)
(32) He *should* do it for you. (twice)

The other structures were selected only once:

(33) He (*may be able to*, *might be able to*, *would*, *didn't*, *could*, *may*, *will maybe*, *will*, *should be able to*) do it for you.

Three of the female respondents proposed different alternative DMs, namely:

(34) He*'ll might* do it for you.
(35) He *may well* do it for you.
(36) He *should can* do it for you.

It is interesting to notice here that *might* is in the second position in the DM, while is not typically found in a Scottish combination. Both *will* and *might* are epistemic, which was barely thinkable in the early research on DMs in the 1970s. Only a very limited number of combinations were studied at the time (Butters 1973) and only the semantic ordering Epistemic + Root (E+R) was proposed to understand modal sequences. As further research has shown, especially in the 1990s (Brown 1991, Montgomery and Nagle 1994, De-La-Cruz 1995 and Battistella 1995), the ordering of each modal can vary greatly from place to place in the English-speaking world. For the first two clauses, the semantic ordering (Battistella 1995, 31) E+E is created in both sequences *"ll might* and *may well*. *Well* is orthographically and semantically similar to *will* but, contrary to *will*, it is never put in the first position. For both clauses, the paraphrases proposed by the author are the following:

(37) Maybe he will do it for you.

For the third sentence, this time with the E+R semantic ordering, the paraphrase also contains an adverb followed by a Semi Modal:

(38) It is likely that he is able to do it for you.

As regards standard structures, there is a slight preference for could followed by should:

(39) He *could* do it for you. (five times)
(40) He *should* do it for you. (four times)
(41) He *should be able* to do it for you. (three times)
(42) He *will probably* do it for you. (twice)
(43) He *might* do it for you. (twice)
(44) He *may be able to* do it for you. (twice)

The remaining structures were mentioned just once:

(45) He (*may*, *will*, *would*, *might be able to*) do it for you.

Since more newcomers dwell in southern Scotland for work or retirement, especially Northern English people, it was interesting to test typical Northumbrian DMs for this study. As expected in the next table, some Scottish respondents positively indicated that they have been using a few of these combinations on a regular basis for at least 30 years.

		M	W
A/	mustn't could've	0	4
B/	must not could have	2	3
C/	mustn't could have	1	7
D/	might not could've	2	1
E/	Other vernacular features	6	11
E/	Other standard features	13	18

Table 4: The girls usually make me some toasted sandwiches but they _____ made any today.

The first three DMs are quite similar, morpho-syntactically speaking. However, among the female respondents, there is a slight preference for *mustn't could have*. They prefer contracting the negator belonging to *must* rather than the primary auxiliary located after *could*. Concerning male respondents, only five chose one of the four DMs and six others preferred writing their own vernacular constructions as follows:

(46) They *cannae have* made nay today.
(47) They *m'anae could've* made any today.
(48) They *may not be able to made* any today.
(49) They *mustn't made* any today.
(50) They *were unable to made* any today.
(51) They *did not made* any today.

The ellipsis of *have* occurred three times, maintaining the past participle of make after *to* and *not*. The first two clauses are Scots, in terms of spelling of the modals and the enclitic negator *nae*.

As regards standard features, some male respondents maintained the grammatical structure must *have* + *past participle* and the association of *have* with *not*:

(52) They *must not have made* any today. (mentioned three times)
(53) They *haven't made* any today. (three times)
(54) They *mustn't have* made any today. (twice)
(55) They *have not made* any today. (twice)

Women again proposed more vernacular and standard features than men in this fourth table:

(56) They *didn't made* any today. (four times)
(57) They *did not made* any today. (twice)
(58) They *couldn't made* any today.
(59) They *might made* any today.
(60) They *have nae made* any today.
(61) They *mustnae could've made* any today.
(62) They *might no could've made* any today.

The last two clauses are particularly interesting. They have two DMs, each containing one Central Scots negator, i.e. the enclitic negative *nae* and the independent negative *no* detached from *might*. These two informants wished to 'Scotticize' the DMs of the clause, which is also common in clauses containing one single modal. This really reflects the Modern Scots grammatical knowledge of the Borders inhabitants. This knowledge continues to be passed down, resisting to the pervasive influence of Southern Standard English-English. Nonetheless, the other forms of negation in Scots dialects fall more and more into oblivion over the Central Scots negative *nae*.

Standard answers given by the female informants were not significantly different from those given by male participants:

(63) They *haven't made* any today. (mentioned four times)
(64) They *have not made* any today. (three times)
(65) They *must not have made* any today. (three times)

There is an exception with the use of the past perfect instead of the present perfect:

(66) They *had not made* any today. (twice)

The following structure was just written once:

(67) They (*could not make*, *mustn't have made*, *might not have made*, *won't be able to make*, *didn't make*, *were not able to make*) any today.

The next table includes the notion of hypothesis.

		M	W
A/	might would	0	0
B/	may could	1	2
C/	could might	0	2
D/	might could	4	7
E/	Other vernacular features	0	5
E/	Other standard features	17	27

Table 5: If we _____ get a piece of a car, things would be better.

The 'queen of combinations' *might could* was mainly selected by both genders for the fifth sentence. The reversed combination *could might* and the American combination *may could* were only chosen by five respondents. Every respondent who was familiar with the Multiple Modality system in the Anglophone world recognized and used *might could*. There is still no explanation for the pervasive influence of might could in the system. The earliest Scottish-English attestations go back to the 18th century and they do not contain *might could* or similar structures, i.e. *might would*, *might should* or *might can*. This structure still represents the nerve centre of MMs already studied by Battistella in 1991. The extensive network of MMs in the English-speaking world makes me think otherwise. It is not guaranteed that the system does not hold without *might could*. In the field surveys conducted from 2010 to 2013, most respondents with some knowledge of MMs did not have might could in mind all the time or it was not necessarily identified as the pillar of the system. The possibilities to create modal combinations are so impressive that *might could* or one of the two modals of this classical combination could easily be replaced by many other modal expressions.

Regarding the other vernacular features, only five women proposed the following sentences:

(68) If we *could've get* a piece of a car, things would be better. (mentioned twice)
(69) If we *cannae get* a piece of a car, things would be better.
(70) If we *maybe get* a piece of a car, things would be better.
(71) If we *were able get* a piece of a car, things would be better.

In two clauses, the subordinate clause does not contain a preterit on the verb *get* and the modal in the negative *cannae*. This could be a levelling process in which Scottish English grammar does not require the preterit for both the main and subordinate clauses.

As observed before, many more mainstream constructions were proposed, 17 for men and 27 for women. Among the 27 female respondents, 17 mentioned *could*, interpreted here as indicating ability. This meaning is also present for *can* mentioned twice:

(72) If we *could* get a piece of a car, things would be better. (mentioned 17 times)
(73) If we *maybe could* get a piece of a car, things would be better. (three times)
(74) If we *can* get a piece of a car, things would be better. (twice)
(75) If we *could maybe* get a piece of a car, things would be better. (twice)

Concerning the 17 standard features proposed by the male respondents, *could* was again the favourite modal, chosen by 14 men. Other modal expressions were proposed only once, such as *be able to* and *can*.

In the next clause, all the four DMs proposed in the list have *might* in first position.

		M	W
A/	might oughta should	2	1
B/	might better	2	7
C/	might should oughta	0	1
D/	might ought to	4	12
E/	Other vernacular features	1	0
E/	Other standard features	16	22

Table 6: One of our goals _____ be to encourage non-member involvement.

This series of combinations is much different from the classical one, in which only Central Modals are found. With the help of Quirk's tables of modal expressions, the four combinations proposed, i.e. the two TMs, the Comparative DM (containing *better*) and the Hybrid DM (containing *ought to*) are described as follows:

Might oughta should	Central Modal + Marginal Modal + Central Modal
Might better	Central Modal + Comparative Modal
Might should oughta	Central Modal + Central Modal + Marginal Modal
Might ought to	Central Modal + Marginal Modal

These hybrid forms represent combinatorial possibilities in which a minority of respondents did not remain insensitive to their presence in the questionnaire. 12 female respondents had a net preference for *might ought to*, directly followed by *might better*, which was selected by seven women. Very few male respondents selected these exotic combinations and they preferred replacing them by standard syntactic structures. *Might better*, coming from *might had better*, is typically American and its presence in the Southern Scottish territory seems to increase. The presence of Americans in the regions of the Lowlands for work or vacation probably has its effects, but bringing back this DM from the American South by Scottish tourists is not impossible either. The paraphrase for this type of DM is as follows:

Maybe it would be better that one of our goals be to encourage non-member involvement.

The presence of the "mandative" subjunctive in this paraphrase is adequate. Regarding both TMs, they are too complex to be used on a regular basis. The respondents proved this very well in the table. The habitual semantic ordering for such constructions is E+R+R. The presence of the two combinations *should oughta* or *oughta should* located after *might* in these exotic combinations reinforce the sense of suggestion expressed by both genders. When *ought to* is only present in a DM with might usually in the first position, the suggestion expressed by the individual is more personal. It does not reflect the common idea expressed by other individuals in a group. Since might is in first position here, the following semantic ordering for *might ought to* is E+R.

Only one man proposed a vernacular structure of replacement, namely the *to*-deletion in *ought to*:

(76) One of our goals *ought* be to encourage non-member involvement.

Ought is quite common in Australian and New Zealand Englishes, especially in the negative and the interrogative (Bauer 2002, 53). It is more colloquial in British or American Englishes, but its usage is not rare in the spoken medium.

Concerning male standard features of replacement, *should* was written seven times, followed by *might*, *would*, *ought to* and *could*.

Regarding female standard features, the order of preference of Single Modals remains the same, except that they included one more modal only once, which is *may*.

		M	W
A/	may might can	3	0
B/	might could	4	15
C/	should could	0	1
D/	may should ought	0	1
E/	Other vernacular features	0	1
E/	Other standard features	16	26

Table 7: One of our goals _____ be to encourage non-member involvement.

There is no doubt that *might could* remains a very recognisable and very common combination in the Anglophone world. More enquiries need to be carried out to understand this behaviour of the respondents. Both tables 5 and 7 clearly show a significant increase in the choice of this classical DM. The rest is barely taken into account by both genders. The two TMs are more American, which can explain this rejection. However, *should could* is a typical Scottish-English DM and the decrease in its frequency is more difficult

to explain. Some informants were disturbed by the presence of the object pronoun *me* in the sentence because they found it to be too American. This additional element with a European modal combination does not fit very well for them.

By order of preference, the following standard clauses proposed by the 16 male respondents are as follows:

(77) I think I *might* have me a piece of cake. (nine times)
(78) I think I *could* have me a piece of cake. (twice)
(79) I think I *may* have me a piece of cake. (twice)
(80) I think I *will* have me a piece of cake. (twice)
(81) I think I *would like* a piece of cake.

Three of the 16 respondents preferred removing the object pronoun *me* to make the sentence less American and, in the last sentence, the respondent deleted the auxiliary *have* as well.

Only one vernacular structure of replacement was proposed by one female respondent:

(82) I think I *ought* have me a piece of cake.

Again, the removal of the *to*-infinitive was proposed in Scottish English, making *ought* a true modal auxiliary in the affirmative form. *Should* remains a more regular Central Modal than *ought* or *ought to* in Standard Englishes.

Standard features of replacement proposed by 26 female respondents display the same order of preference as for male respondents:

(83) I think I *might* have (me) a piece of cake. (proposed ten times and one respondent among the ten deleted *me*)
(84) I think I *may* have (me) a piece of cake (eight times and one respondent among the eight deleted *me*)
(85) I think I *will* have me a piece of cake. (four times)
(86) I think I *might be able* to have me a piece of cake. (twice)
(87) I think I *should* have a piece of cake.
(88) I think I *could* have a piece of cake.

		M	W
A/	might ought to should	1	0
B/	may should	1	3
C/	ought to should	0	2
D/	should ought to	5	10
E/	Other vernacular features	1	1
E/	Other standard features	17	28

Table 8: You _____ have the oil changed.

Should ought to remains the favourite DM that, according to 15 respondents, best corresponds to the clause. Although the meaning of a personal suggestion is expressed by the respondents in the clause, *ought to should* seems less natural for most respondents, due mainly to the first position that *ought to* takes in the DM. Furthermore, the grammatical meaning of *ought to* is sometimes blurred for some respondents. The other two MMs *might ought to* and *may should* are apparently not used much either, due to the morphological complexity for the TM and the American South origin for the DM.

In the table, one man and one woman each proposed a vernacular sentence:

(89) You *ought* have the oil changed.
(90) You *might outta* have the oil changed.

Battistella (1995, 22) lists *might otta* and *shouldn't otta* in his manuscript. He asserts that this spelling variant of ought to, based on a preference scale, is often used among citizens of the American South. Either this feature variant was brought to Scots and Ulster later in the 20th century, or groups of Scots and Scotch-Irish immigrants brought the spelling variant *outta* into the new world, later changing into otta during the 18th and 19th centuries.

For both genders, *should* remains the most chosen standard feature in this last clause. Here are the standard features proposed by men:

(91) You *should* have the oil changed. (mentioned twelve times)
(92) You *ought to* have the oil changed. (three times)
(93) You *must* have the oil changed.
(94) You *can* have the oil changed.

Regarding the use of Central Modal *must*, the person is quite sure that the oil has been changed. Those who use the Marginal Modal *ought to* again have a more personal thought that is not necessarily linked with the general viewpoint.

The types of standard features proposed by female respondents a generally similar to those given by male respondents:

(95) You *should* have the oil changed. (fifteen times)
(96) You *ought to* have the oil changed. (nine times)
(97) You *maybe* should have the oil changed.
(98) You *could* have the oil changed.
(99) You *might* have the oil changed.
(100) You *will* have the oil changed.

Could have + NP + changed and *might have + NP + changed* can generate different meanings. The sentence with could have has the following semantic interpretation:

(101) You *could* have had the oil changed, but you didn't do it.

The grammatical structure expresses an 'irrealis' or 'counter-factual' event, meaning that it has never occurred, unlike the other structure *might have + NP + past participle*:

(102) You *might have* had the oil changed, don't you remember?

There is a slight chance that this event occurred in the past.

4 Conclusion

The results obtained for this section of the questionnaire show that the dialectal knowledge of MMs has not been completely lost and that some preferences in the use of these combinations have clearly been emphasised by both genders. The table below sketches the most frequent combinations selected by the respondents:

WOMEN	MEN
might could (22 times)	**might could (8 times)**
might not can (18 times)	**might not can (5 times**)
might ought to (12 times)	should ought to (5 times)
'll might can (11 times)	might ought to (4 times)
should ought to (10 times)	may might can (3 times)
may not could (9 times)	should might better (twice)
mustn't could have (7 times)	must not could have (twice)
might better (7 times)	might not could've (twice)

Although more women participated in this study, both genders generated the same tendency in in the first two lines of the table above. They gave priority to the 'ubiquitous' *might could* as well as the DM in the negative *might not can*. DMs having *might* in first position remain the most understandable non-standard dialectal structures to be

used essentially in the spoken medium. In total, both DMs were selected 40 times by women and 13 times by men. As regards the other modal sequences, *might ought to* is also regularly used, 12 times by women. However, it is only used four times by men. This result could have been different if more male respondents had participated in the survey. *Should ought to* also belongs to one of the favourite combinations of the informants in Kelso and Jedburgh. These first four sequences, i.e. the two classical ones with Central Modals *could* and *can* and the two hybrid ones with Marginal Modal *ought to* are quite common to both genders. Nevertheless, the remaining combinations in the table are hardly used. This table does not indicate Scottish MMs only. The field study reveals that some citizens of the Borders have extended their range of MMs over the past two decades since Brown's (1991) and Miller's (1993) research. Hearing American DMs, such as *may not could* and *might better* or DMs from North-Eastern England like *mustn't could have* and *might not could've*, in Kelso and Jedburgh is not peculiar any more. Furthermore, several respondents also proposed to write their own personal DMs, i.e. *'ll might* or *may well*. Some Scots spellings for negative particles have also been suggested by some respondents, such as the Central Scots *nae* and the Broad Scots *na*. Their knowledge of MMs is far from vague. The pursuit of these dialectal enquiries generates further clarification in the Scottish Multiple Modality system. What has already been described by Brown continues to change and to be preserved 20 years later by Scottish-English respondents in the Borders. In the near future, it is necessary to continue this research in the other regions of the Lowland Scots area in order to obtain a complete status on the stability and morphosyntactic richness of the Multiple Modality system in this part of Europe.

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Questionnaire of 2011 (Sociolinguistic Study)

Name: _____
Forename: _____
Age: _____
Gender: M / F
Employment: _____
Workplace: _____

I

1) I know I might could and should enjoy myself.
After reading the first sentence evoking a context, try to answer the following questions:

A/ Have you ever heard this kind of underlined structure?
B/ Would you use it yourselves in a similar context? If yes, would you use it regularly, occasionally or rarely?
C/ If not, try to replace it by another one which, according to you, would be more suitable in this context. Do the same for the other seven sentences.

A/ _____
B/ _____
C/ _____

2) He willnae can come.
A/ _____
B/ _____
C/ _____

3) He'll can help us the morn.
A/ _____
B/ _____
C/ _____

4) I was afraid you might couldn't find this address.
A/ _____
B/ _____
C/ _____

5) A good machine clipper would could do it in half a day.
   A/ _____
   B/ _____
   C/ _____

6) I think that we should have ought've done that yesterday.
   A/ _____
   B/ _____
   C/ _____

7) He wouldn't could've worked, even if you had asked him.
   A/ _____
   B/ _____
   C/ _____

8) He should can go tomorrow.
   A/ _____
   B/ _____
   C/ _____

II

Choose only one structure (by circling one letter) that, according to you, would be the best choice in the following clauses.

1) He _____ refuse.

   A/ might not can
   B/ might not could
   C/ used to couldn't
   D/ might used to couldn't
   E/ another similar construction (in this case, write it in the gap. **It must be the same type of grammatical structure as the first four**)

2) I thought maybe I better put it (a hearing aid) on or I _____ understand you.

A/ might not couldn't
B/ might couldn't
C/ may not could
D/ might will can't
E/ another similar construction (in this case, write it in the gap)

3) He _____ do it for you.

A/ should might better
B/ will might can
C/ 'll should could
D/ 'll might can
E/ another similar construction (in this case, write it in the gap)

4) The girls usually make me some toasted sandwiches but they _____ made any today.

A/ mustn't could've
B/ must not could have
C/ mustn't could have
D/ might not could've
E/ another similar construction (in this case, write it in the gap)

5) If we _____ get a piece of a car, things would be better.

A/ might would
B/ may could
C/ could might
D/ might could
E/ another similar construction (in this case, write it in the gap)

6) One of our goals _____ be to encourage non-member involvement.

A/ might oughta should
B/ might better
C/ might should oughta
D/ might ought to
E/ another similar construction (in this case, write it in the gap)

7) I think I _____ have me a piece of cake.

A/ may might can
B/ might could
C/ should could
D/ may should ought
E/ another similar construction (in this case, write it in the gap)

8) You _____ have the oil changed.

A/ might ought to should
B/ may should
C/ ought to should
D/ should ought to
E/ another similar construction (in this case, write it in the gap)

III

Add the question tag you wish to write after each underlined dialectal construction.

1) I might could do that, _____ ?
2) He must wouldn't steal, _____ ?
3) He'll can do it, , _____ ?
4) He might used to could run the marathon, _____ ?
5) You might could see Uranus if you had a telescope, _____ ?

Additional questions concerning these structures

IV
In which other contexts do you use them? (Circle one or several letters)

A/ In family
B/ Between friends
C/ At work
D/ Alone
E/ Other suggestions: _____

V
How often do you use (orally) these types of grammatical constructions? (Circle only one letter)

A/ a lot
B/ often
C/ occasionally
D/ rarely
E/ not at all

You write these types of constructions: (Circle only one letter)

A/ a lot
B/ often
C/ occasionally
D/ rarely
E/ not at all

You write these structures: (Circle only one letter)

A/ When taking notes during meetings or conferences
B/ When leaving a note for a friend
C/ When writing a report
D/ When writing an e-mail to someone
E/ When doing something else (What would it be?): _____

VI To conclude

Put each of the underlined dialectal constructions in the negative & in the interrogative.

1) I may can get it out tomorrow.

NEG: _____
INT: _____

2) He'll should can come the morn.

NEG: _____
INT: _____

3) You should ought to make the rules clear.

NEG: _____
INT: _____

4) He might can tell you.

NEG: _____
INT: _____

5) The children used to would kind of stay in the background, you know.

NEG: _____
INT: _____

Thank you for your cooperation!