

Study wants a word about dual dialects

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ACADEMICS are to launch a study into why phrases like "Fit ye deein' the morn?" can help map Scotland's linguistic future.

A research project is being launched that will trace how Scotland's traditional regional dialects are changing and how they are likely to affect words and dialects in years to come.

Experts hope the study will uncover why increasing numbers of people have developed a dual linguistic identity and are now using two separate dialects in their everyday lives.

Researchers from Glasgow University say previous studies have shown people in smaller communities develop a local dialect that is used among members of the same community – but also a more formal standard dialect which they use when talking to members outside of it.

The study will primarily focus on Buckie in Moray with researchers set to speak to locals aged between 15 and 80. The team aims to find out the reasons for the "new dual identity".

Study leader Dr Jennifer Smith said: "In this project we are investigating one commu-

nity, Buckie, which has a highly specialised dialect. This local dialect is used the majority of the time when talking to other community members, and indeed speaking 'posh' is a big no-no within the community.

"However, speakers do use a more standard variety in certain situations, such as in school and talking to outsiders. The question is where, when and how do speakers switch and can all speakers switch fluently or does it depend on the individual?"

The three-year project is being funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

