

Litir do Luchd-Ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

*A Special programme, in the form of a “ letter”, written and compiled by Roddy Maclean, and specifically aimed at Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Roddy can be contacted by e-mail at rodny.macleam:bbc.co.uk **

Dè tha am facal “iomairt” a’ ciallachadh dhuibh? ‘S e facal a th’ ann a nochdas gu math tric an-diugh anns na meadhanan, co-cheangailte ri poileataics gu h-àraidh. ‘S ann tric a bha sinn a’ cluinntinn mu dheidhinn “iomairt an taghaidh” anns na seachdainean a dh’ fhalbh. Tha agam fosgailte ri mo thaobh leabhar ùr cudthromach - Faclair na Pàrlamaid - anns a bheil briathrachas Gàidhlig airson iomadach rud co-cheangailte ri poileataics, agus tha am facal “iomairt” a’ nochdadh ann uair is uair.

Seo eisimpleirean dheth: iomairt: *enterprise, initiative, campaign, undertaking, venture*; òraid iomairt: *a campaigning speech*; Iomairt le Maoineachadh Prìobhaideach: *Private Funding Initiative, neo PFI*; Iomairt na Gaidhealtachd ‘s nan Eilean: *Highlands and Islands Enterprise ...* Is mar sin air adhart.

‘S e a th’ ann an “iomairt” eisimpleir de sheann fhacal Gàidhlig a th’ air a chur gu feum ann an dòighean ùra an-diugh. Tha an aon rud a’ tachairt anns a h-uile cànan a tha beò, agus tha e na chomharra gu bheil a’ Ghàidhlig beò is beòthail gu bheil a leithid a’ tachairt anns a’ chànan againn fhìn cuideachd.

Ach, o shean, mus robh guth air Iomairt na Gaidhealtachd ‘s nan Eilean neo càil dhen t-seòrsa, bha ciall neo dhà eile air an fhacal “iomairt”. Ann an Eirinn, bidh daoine ga chleachdadh airson “cluich” mar a chanas sinne ann an Alba. Canaidh iad “tá sé ag imirt” airson “tha e a’ cluich”. Tha a’ chiall sin cuideachd air an fhacal ann an Alba, agus chithear e co-cheangailte ri seann gheamannan mar “Iomairt na Faochag” - *the game of the whelks* - neo “Iomairt nan Clach” - *the game of the stones*.

‘S e an aon seòrsa ghèam a th’ ann. Tha an t-ainm air eadar-dhealaichte a rèir co-dhiubh thathar a’ cluich le faochagan, neo sligean-faochaig, neo le clachan beaga.

B’ iad caileagan, seach balaich, a bu mhotha a chluicheadh na geamannan agus bha Iomairt nan Clach a’ dol rudeigin mar seo. Bhiodh e a’ tòiseachadh le tè de na caileagan ag ràdh, “aon, dhà, trì, cèithir”. Thogadh i còig clachan, bhiodh i gan tilgeil suas agus gan glacadh air cùl a dùirn. Bhiodh i gan tilgeil suas a-rithist às a sin agus gan glacadh an turas seo na bois. Dhèanadh i sin ceithir tursan.

B' e an ath phàirt dhen gheam "sgapadh a h-aon", anns am biodh an nighean a' tilgeil aon chlach suas, agus mus tigeadh i a-nuas a-rithist, thogadh i tè dhen ceithir eile, deiseil airson a' chiad tè a ghlacadh. As dèidh "sgapadh a h-aon", bhiodh "sgapadh a dhà" ann, anns am biodh a' chaileag a' togail dà chloich fhad 's a bha an tè eile anns an adhar. An uairsin bhiodh a "sgapadh a trì" agus "sgapadh a ceithir" ann.

Leanaidh an geam mar sin, le diofar dhòighean eile airson clachan a thilgeil is a ghlacadh. Bhiodh pàirt ann air an robh "bleoghainn" mar ainm. Eadar a bhith a' tilgeil clach agus ga glacadh le a làimh deis, bhiodh a' chaileag a' toirt creidsinn gu robh I a' bleoghainn le bhith a' tarraing òrdag a làimhe clì le corragan a làimhe deise, mar gu robh i a' tarraing air sine bà.

Tha cuimhn' agam air geamannan mar sin a' dol fhathast nuair a bha mi òg, ach 's ann glè glè ainneamh a chithear a leithid an-diugh. Tha sin duilich, oir bidh iad a' brosnachadh sgilean co-òrdanachaidh eadar sùil is làmh, agus chanainn gum faigheadh clann fhathast deagh spòrs asta, ann am buidhnean Sradagain neo ann am bun-sgoiltean Gàidhlig, nan robh iad air an teagasg dhaibh. 'S dòcha gum bu chòir dhuinn iomairt a dhèanamh airson na seann iomairtean a chumail beò.

Faclan na seachdaine iomairt an taghaidh: *the election campaign*; Faclair na Pàrlamaid: *the brand new Gaelic parliamentary glossary, which is available free from the Scottish Executive (for your own copy, e-mail to william.fox@scotland.gsi.gov.uk); briathrachas: *vocabulary*; sgapadh: *scatter*; buidhnean Sradagain: *Gaelic youth groups*.*

Abairtean na seachdaine anns na seachdainean a dh' fhalbh: *in the last few weeks*; tha e na chomharra gu bheil a' Ghàidhlig beò is beòthail: *it is a sign that Gaelic is alive and lively*; mus robh guth air X: *before the existence of X (lit, before there was a report on it)*; chithear e co-cheangailte ri gheamannan mar X: *it is seen applied to games like X*; a rèir co-dhiubh thathar a' cluich le sligean-faochaig neo le clachan beaga: *according to whether whelk shells or small stones are being played with*; b' iad caileagan a bu mhotha a chluicheadh na geamannan: *it is mostly girls that would play the games*; gan glacadh air cùl a dùirn: *catching them on the back of her hand*; gan glacadh na bois: *catching them in her palm (bois is dative of bas)*; leanadh an geam mar sin: *the game would continue like that*; eadar a bhith a' tilgeil clach agus ga glacadh le a làimh deis: *between throwing a stone and catching it with her right hand*; bhiodh a' chaileag a' toirt creidsinn gu robh i a' bleoghainn: *the girl would pretend she was milking*; mar gu robh I a' tarraing air sine bà: *as if she were pulling on a cow's teat*; bidh iad a' brosnachadh sgilean co-òrdanachaidh eadar sùil is làmh: *they encourage better hand-eye co-ordination*: bu chòir dhuinn iomairt a dhèanamh airson na seann iomairtean a chumail beò: *we should campaign to keep the old games alive*.

Puing ghràmair na seachdaine *I would like this week to emphasise the use of 's ann with two words - tric and ainneamh (see also Litir 3, 04.06.99). Although you will see them used in other constructions, they are very common in this type of phrase e.g. "'S ann tric a chluinneas mi a' chuthag anns an leas agam" (it is often I hear the cuckoo in*

my garden) or “‘S ann ainneamh a ch̀ sinn mucan-mara an-diugh” (it is seldom that we see whales today). The ‘s ann construction is one which Gaelic learners tend to avoid using for as long as possible, probably because it sounds a little foreign to those used only to standard English syntax, but it is one worth working on because your Gaelic will sound much better if you can vary its construction (but don’t overdo the ‘s ann - use it sparingly and intelligently!) Here it is in a negative form: chan ann tric a chunnaic mi a leithid (I never often saw the like/I have not often seen the like). It can also be used in the interrogative form: An ann tric a thig thu seo (do you come here often?). The answer to this might be - “‘s ann” (yes), “chan ann” (no) or, if you are getting the brush-off to a chat-up line - “chan e do ghnothach-san a th’ann!” (it’s none of your business!)

Gnàths-cainnt na seachdainne: uair is uair: *Time and again, repeatedly.*

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