

# 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 [roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk) \**

Fhuair mi teachdaireachd tron phost-dealain an là eile bho fhear anns na Stàitean Aonaichte mu na dòighean a th’ againn ann an Gàidhlig airson *never* a ràdh. Bu mhath leam sin a dhèanamh mar chuspair na Litreach seo.

Ma tha sibh ag iarraidh faighinn a-mach mar a chanas sibh *never*, mholainn anns a’ chiad dol-a-mach gun coimhead sibh ann am faclair Beurla gu Gàidhlig no anns an leabhar a chaidh a dhèanamh le Sabhal Mòr Ostaig air a bheil “An Stòr-Dàta Briathrachais Gàidhlig”. Tha trì rudan acasan fo “never”: *a chaoidh*, *gu bràth*, agus *riamh* no *(a-)riamh*.

Chan e sin deireadh na sgeòil, ge-tà. Tha còig dòighean eile ann airson “never” a ràdh a tha a’ tighinn gu m’ inntinn an-dràsta. *Gu sìorraidh*, *tuilleadh*, *am feasd*, *gu suthainn* agus *uair sam bith*. Sin ochd dòighean uile gu lèir agus chan àichinn gu bheil barrachd na sin ann.

Bu mhath leam aon rud cudromach a ràdh mu dheidhinn *riamh* no *a-riamh*. Tha e an-còmhnaidh a’ seasamh airson rudeigin a thachair anns an ùine a chaidh seachad. Bidh an fheadhainn eile mar as trice a-mach air rudan a thachras anns an ùine a tha romhainn.

Faodaidh *a-riamh* a bhith a’ ciallachadh “ever” cuideachd. Mar eisimpleir, *tha e cho math ’s a bha e a-riamh*, “he’s as good as he ever was.” Ach le gnìomhair àicheil, tha e a’ ciallachadh “never”. *Cha do dh’fheuch mi sin a-riamh*. “I never tried that” no “I have never tried that.” Uaireannan, bidh daoine ag ràdh *riamh-roimhe*, “never before.” *Cha robh mi an seo riamh-roimhe* – “I was never here before now.”

Canaidh sinn *a-chaoidh* cuideachd airson “never”, le gnìomhair àicheil, agus a’ coimhead air adhart. Mar eisimpleir, *cha till e a-chaoidh*, “he will never return.”

Tha am facal *bràth* a’ ciallachadh “judgement” agus tha *gu là a’ bhràth* a’ ciallachadh “until judgement day”. Tha sin air a ghiorrachadh gu *gu bràth* – “for ever”. Agus, mar as trice, canaidh daoine “*gu bràch*” mar gu robh “*ch*” aig an deireadh, seach “*th*”. *Alba gu Bràth!* – “Scotland for Ever!” Ach, le gnìomhair àicheil, tha *gu bràth* a’ ciallachadh “never”. *Cha till mi gu bràth*, “I will never return”.

Tha *gu sìorraidh bràth* a’ ciallachadh “for ever and ever” ach, le gnìomhair àicheil, a-rithist, faodaidh *gu sìorraidh* seasamh airson “never”. Mar eisimpleir, *cha nochd iad gu sìorraidh*, “they will never appear”. Tha ciall car coltach air *gu suthainn*, ged nach cluinnear gu tric e. *Cha till iad gu suthainn is gu sìorraidh*, “they will never ever return”.

Tha *am feasd* a’ ciallachadh “for ever”, agus dh’fhaodadh tu ràdh *cha tig e am feasd* – “he will never come”. Agus tha *tuilleadh* a’ ciallachadh “more” no “any more”. A-rithist, le gnìomhair àicheil teachdail, tha e a’ ciallachadh “never”; *cha till e tuilleadh*, “he will never return”. Ach a’ coimhead air ais, tha e a’ ciallachadh “any more”, leithid *cha tàinig i tuilleadh*, “she didn’t come any more”.

Agus tha *uair sam bith* ann. Tha sin a’ ciallachadh “any time” ach dh’fhaodadh e bhith air eadar-theangachadh mar “never” cuideachd. Mar eisimpleir, *chan òladh e deoch làidir uair sam bith* – “he would never drink alcohol.”

Thog mo charaid anns na Stàitean ceist. Am bi am facal *idir* air a chleachdadh airson “never”? Uill, chanainn gu bheil *idir* a’ ciallachadh “at all”. Canaidh an duine aig a bheil toll na phòcaid, “*Chan eil airgead agam idir*”. Ach chan eil sin a’ ciallachadh nach bi airgead aige uaireigin. ’S e nas miosa dheth buileach am fear a chanas, “*Cha bhi airgead agam gu bràth*” oir bidh e bochd airson a’ chòrr de bheatha.

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**Faclan na seachdaine:** na Stàitean Aonaichte: *The United States*; Sabhal Mòr Ostaig: *Gaelic College in the south of Skye*; teachdail: *future (tense of verb)*.

**Abairtean na seachdaine:** teachdaireachd tron phost-dealain: *a message by (through) e-mail*; mholainn anns a’ chiad dol-a-mach: *I would recommend in the first instance*; sin ochd dòighean uile gu lèir: *that’s 8 ways altogether*; an ùine a chaidh seachad: *the past*; an ùine a tha romhainn: *the future (lit. the time that is in front of us)*; tha ciall car coltach air X: *X means something similar*; an duine aig a bheil toll na phòcaid: *the man who has a hole in his pocket*; chan eil airgead agam idir: *I have no money at all*; nach bi airgead aige uaireigin: *that he will not have money sometime*; cha bhi airgead agam gu bràth: *I will never have money*; bidh e bochd airson a’ chòrr de bheatha: *he will be poor for the rest of his life*.

**Puing-ghràmar na seachdaine:** ’S e nas miosa dheth buileach am fear a chanas...: *he is much the worse off the man who says... Two points here: The comparative nas miosa dheth is a modern Gaelic idiom, derived from the English “worse off”, but now well established in the language. People also say tha e nas fheàrr dheth as an equivalent of “he is better off”, both in terms of money and other aspects of life. And note that I started the sentence with the assertive verb “is” rather than the verb “to be”, ie by saying Tha am fear a chanas X nas miosa dheth buileach. There is no difference in the meanings of the two sentences, but there is a difference in emphasis. We often use “is” at the beginning simply to be emphatic. ’S e nas miosa dheth buileach is a stronger form of wording which emphasises the point. Here are two other examples, and note how the second verb is in the relative future: ’s e as beartaiche am fear a shàbhalas a chuid airgid (it’s the man that saves his money that is the richest); ’s e as fheàrr don àrainneachd an carbad a ruitheas air hàidraidean (the vehicle which runs on hydrogen is best for the environment). Now here is a more complicated example with two verbs, both in the relative future: ’s iad as fhaide a mhaireas beò an fheadhainn a dh’itheas am biadh ceart (those who survive longest are those who eat the right food).*

**Gnàths-cainnt na seachdaine:** Chan àichinn gu bheil barrachd na sin ann: *I wouldn’t deny there are more than that. An equivalent to this would be cha d’rachainn as àicheadh gu bheil... Note that the verb and noun àicheadh and the adjective àicheil (“negative”), which appears in the Litir several times, come from the same root. Gnìomhair àicheil means a “negative verb” ie a verb in its negative form.*

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