

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 * This is Litir 235.*

A bheil sibh math air amalaidhean-cainnt ann an Gàidhlig? Mar eisimpleir: *dh'ith laogh òg ugh amh*. Feuchaibh ri sin aithris grunn tursan gu luath: *dh'ith laogh òg ugh amh*.

Seo fear eile: *sop air poc is cop air poit*; *sop air poc is cop air poit*. Agus fear as toigh leamsa gu mòr: *Donnchadh Mòr is an cù is an cat, is a bhrù air at cho mòr ri poit*. Donnchadh Mòr is an cù is an cat, is a bhrù air at cho mòr ri poit.

Ma tha ùidh agaibh ann an amalaidhean-cainnt, agus anns a' bheartas de ghnàthsan-cainnt is faclan a th' againn ann an Gàidhlig, 's dòcha gum bi ùidh agaibh ann an làrach-lìn ùr a tha co-cheangailte ri prògram-telebhisein air a' BhBC – “Beul-chainnt”, a th' air a bhith air BBC 2 a h-uile feasgar Diardaoin airson grunn seachdainean.

'S e prògram air leth math a th' ann agus chanainn gu bheil mòran am measg luchd-ionnsachaidh na Gàidhlig, co-dhiù an fheadhainn a tha a' fuireach ann an Alba, a tha gu math measail air. Ach 's e an duilgheadas a th' ann le prògram-telebhisein gu bheil e a' ruith seachad air an luchd-amhairc gu luath. Tha e doirbh do dhuine greimeachadh air na faclan is abairtean anns an dol-seachad.

'S e sin as coireach gu bheil mi a' moladh na làraich seo dhuibh – oir tha mòran oirre ann an cruth sgrìobhte, agus chan eil cabhag sam bith oirbh ruith chun na h-ath-abairt. Bheir mi a seòladh dhuibh aig deireadh na Litreach.

Am measg nan rudan a thog m' aire oirre, tha tòimhseachan. 'S e an t-ainm a th' air “Àireamh Muinntir Fhinn agus Dhubhain” agus chuir e tachartas inntinneach nam chuimhne. Bha mi anns an Eilean Sgitheanach o chionn grunn bhliadhnaichean agus fhuair mi cuireadh coimhead air fiolmadh a bhathar a' dèanamh de sheann bhoireannach a bhuineadh do dh'Uibhist a Deas. Bha i ag aithris an dearbh thòimhseachain.

A rèir làrach-lìn Bheul-chainnt, tha lorg air an tòimhseachan seo, Ludus Sancta Petri, cho fada air ais ris an naoidheamh linn às dèidh Chrìosda, agus tha e air innse ann an iomadh cànan. Ann an Alba is Eirinn, tha e co-cheangailte, mar as trice, ri dùbhlán eadar an gaisgeach Gaidhealach, Fionn MacCumhail, agus fear eile, Dubhan. Tha muinntir Fhinn nan suidhe am measg muinntir Dhubhain, a rèir seann rann, agus tha Fionn a' toirt seachad òrdugh gach naoidheamh duine a thoirt air falbh is a mharbhadh. Agus, mar a chaidh an gnothach a chur air dòigh gu

seòlta, 's e fir Dhubhain air fad a tha a' falbh, a' fàgail a h-uile fear de mhuinntir Fhinn aig a' bhòrd no, mar a chuala mise e, air bòrd soitheach aig muir.

Nuair a chunnaic mise an tòimhseachan air aithris, 's e clachan geala (airson gaisgich Fhinn) agus clachan dubha (airson muinntir Dhubhain) a bhathar a' cleachdadh. Ach a-nise faodaidh sibhse tadhal air an làraich-lìn a tha seo agus an geam a chluich gu h-electronaigeach.

Annas a' phrògram Beul-chainnt, bithear a' cèilidh gach seachdain air Iain MacIlleathain ann an Eilean Leòdhais, aig a bheil stòras air leth de ghnàthsan-cainnt is abairtean. Tha Iain uabhasach fiosrachail air ainmean airson tinneas. Mar eisimpleir, a bheil fios agaibh dè a' Ghàidhlig a th' air *bulimia nervosa*, an tinneas a tha a' toirt air daoine diathad mòr a ghabhail is an uair sin am biadh a chur a-mach? Uill, tha Iain ag innse dhuinn gur e *lon-chraois* a th' air. Lon-chraois.

Is iomadh rud eile air am faighear lorg air làrach-lìn Bheul-chainnt. 'S e an seòladh a th' aice: www.bbc.co.uk/beulchainnt. Tha mi an dòchas gun còrd e ribh.

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Faclan na seachdaine: amaladh-cainnt: *tongue-twister*; tòimhseachan: *puzzle*; gaisgeach: *hero*; gu h-electronaigeach: *electronically*; tinneas: *diseases*; lon-chraois: *bulimia nervosa*.

Abairtean na seachdaine: a h-uile feasgar Diardaoin airson grunn seachdainean: *every Thursday evening for several weeks*; co-dhiù an fheadhainn a tha a' fuireach ann an Alba: *at least the ones living in Scotland*; 's e prògram air leth math a th' ann: *it's a particularly good programme*; gu bheil e a' ruith seachad air an luchd-amhairc: *that it runs past the audience*; tha e doirbh do X greimeachadh air na faclan anns an dol-seachad: *it is difficult for X to catch hold of the words as they go past him*; gu bheil mi a' moladh na làraich seo dhuibh: *that I am recommending this [web]site to you*; ann an cruth sgrìobhte: *in a written form*; chan eil cabhag oirbh ruith chun na h-ath-abairt: *you are not in a hurry to run to the next phrase*; Àireamh Muinntir Fhinn agus Dhubhain: *the number of Fionn's men and Dubhan's men*; a bhuineadh do dh'Uibhist a Deas: *who belonged to S. Uist*; tha lorg air X cho fada air ais ri Y: *X is found as far back as Y*; tha Fionn a' toirt seachad òrdugh gach naoidheamh duine a mharbhadh: *Fionn orders that each ninth man be killed*; mar a chaidh an gnothach a chur air dòigh gu seòlta: *as the matter was setting up cunningly*; air bòrd soitheach aig muir: *on board a vessel at sea*; bithear a' cèilidh gach seachdain air X: *X is visited each week*; is iomadh rud eile air am faighear lorg: *many other things are [can be] found*; tha mi an dòchas gun còrd e ribh: *I hope you enjoy it*.

Puing-ghràmar na seachdaine: Tha muinntir Fhinn nan suidhe am measg muinntir Dhubhain: *Fionn's people are sat among Dubhan's men*. Note that Fhinn is the genitive of Fionn (ie of Fionn). It occurs in this form three times in the Litir. A misinterpretation of this is responsible for the incorrect naming of the famous cave on Staffa as Fingal's Cave, first recorded as such by Sir Joseph Banks. In

fact, the Gaels call(ed) it an Uamh Bhinn (the melodious cave), due to the sounds made by the surf echoing within its chamber. This, however, sounds not unlike “Uamh Fhinn” if the terminal “mh” in uamh is sounded, which it is in some dialects and this led to a wrong translation being made for Sir Joseph Banks. And, in the final insult to the integrity of the Gaelic heritage, some modern-day Gaels, unaware of the issue, now translate the anglicised “Fingal’s Cave” into Gaelic and call the cave Uamh Fhinn. This process of Gaels retranslating place names from an erroneous anglicised form is still taking place in many parts of the country – and should be thoroughly resisted!

Amaladh-cainnt na seachdainne: Donnchadh Mòr is an cù is an cat, is a bhrù air at cho mòr ri poit: *big Duncan, the dog, the cat and his belly which has expanded as big as a pot. Of course, it makes no sense, but try saying it six times quickly!*

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