

# 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) \* This is Litir 246*

Tha e iongantach na thèid a-mach air an eadar-lion mu dheidhinn gach duine againn cha mhòr. Cuiribh ur n-ainm a-staigh gu inneal-rannsachaidh uaireigin agus cuiridh e iongnadh oirbh na th’ anns an t-siostam mu ur deidhinn. Sin mura h-eil ainm cumanta agaibh no an aon ainm ri fear no tè ainmeil.

Chuala mi facal ùr Beurla an là eile airson a leithid de rannsachadh a dhèanamh air a’ choimpiutar – “googling”. Cuiridh mi geall nach fhada gus an cluinnear cuideigin ag ràdh “bha mi a’ googladh” ann an Gàidhlig! O chionn beagan is trì bliadhna, sgrìobh mi tè de na litrichean seo do luchd-ionnsachaidh air gnothaichean co-cheangailte ris an fhacal *partan* no, mar a theirear ann an cuid de dh’àiteachan, *portan*. Bidh fios agaibh, no ’s dòcha gum bi cuimhne agaibh gu bheil am facal a’ ciallachadh *shore crab* ann am Beurla.

Agus sgrìobh mi gu robh *partan* air a dhol a-steach don Bheurla, a rèir choltais, mar an fhacal *partin* a th’ air a chleachdadh le muinntir na h-Albais anns an ear-thuath. Bha mo sheanair air taobh mo mhàthar à Eilginn, is cha robh Gàidhlig aige ach, mas math mo chuimhne, ’s e “partin” a chanadh esan airson nan crùbagan beaga a chithear air a’ chladach. Uill, an-uiridh, fhuair mi brath tron phost-dealain bho fhear a tha a’ dèiligeadh ris an fhacal *partin* ann am faclair ùr Beurla ann an Sasainn. Feumaidh gu robh e a’ “googladh” air a’ choimpiutar aige, feuch am facal *partin* a lorg, agus gun do nochd an Litir Ghàidhlig agam am measg a h-uile càil eile.

Co-dhiù, dh’iarr e orm an litir eadar-theangachadh is rinn mi sin dha. “A bheil thu cinnteach?” dh’fhaighnich e dhìom, “gur iad na crùbagan beaga cladaich a bha do sheanair a’ ciallachadh, oir tha e coltach nach e sin a’ chiall a th’ air an fhacal anns a’ Bheurla Ghallda an-diugh. Tha e a-nise a’ ciallachadh *crùbag ruadh*, an seòrsa a tha math airson ithe. ’S dòcha gu robh do sheanair a’ cleachdadh an fhacail anns an t-seann dòigh, agus gu robh sin na b’ fhàisge air a chiall ann an Gàidhlig.” ’S dòcha gu robh ach, leis gun do chaochail mo sheanair anns na seachdadan, chan urrainn dhomh a bhith cinnteach mu dheidhinn.

Co-dhiù, tha am facal air ais nam inntinn a-rithist leis gu robh mi ann an Eirinn o chionn ghoirid. Cha robh mi faisg air a’ chladach, ach thàinig mi tarsainn air seanfhacal ann an Gàidhlig na h-Eireann anns a bheil “partan” no “portan” a’ nochdadh. Cuiridh mi ann an Gàidhlig na h-Alba e: “Coisich gu dìreach, a mhic – mar a thuirt an seann phartan ris a’ phartan òg.”

’S e comhairle chlaon a th’ ann, nach e? “Coisich gu dìreach, a mhic – mar a thuirt an seann phartan ris a’ phartan òg.” Bidh fios agaibh nach ann gu dìreach a bhios partanan a’ coiseachd, ach air leth-oir is gu tric air fiaradh. Tha an seann phartan ag innse don fhear òg gum bu chòir dha a bhith a’ leantainn a chomhairle, seach eisimpleir fhèin.

’S e sin as coireach gu bheil mi a’ dol a chumail na Litreach seo am falach am broinn na dachaigh gus nach fhaic an gille agam i, oir cho luath ’s a bhithinn a’ toirt comhairle dha, agus mi fhìn ris an dearbh ghnòthach, chanadh e rium, “seadh – coisich gu dìreach a mhic – mar a thuirt an seann phartan ris a’ phartan òg”! Ach tha duilgheadas agam. Chan eil fhios agam nach fhaigh e greim air an Litir co-dhiù, le bhith a’ “googladh” feasgar brèagha air choreigin air an eadar-lion.

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**Faclan na seachdaine:** crùbag ruadh: *edible crab*; trithead: *thirty*; inntinn: *mind*.

**Abairtean na seachdaine:** tha e iongantach na thèid a-mach air an eadar-lìon: *it is amazing what goes out on the internet*; cuiribh ur n-ainm a-staigh gu inneal-rannsachaidh uaireigin: *put your name into a search engine sometime*; cuiridh mi geall nach fhada gus an cluinnear cuideigin: *I bet that it won't be long until somebody is heard*; a th' air a chleachdadh le muinntir na h-Albais anns an ear-thuath: *which is used by Scots speakers in the north-east*; airson nan crubagan beaga a chithear: *for the little crabs which are seen*; nach e sin a' chiall a th' air an fhacal anns a' Bheurla Ghallda: *that that is not the meaning of the word in Scots (Beurla Ghallda is an alternative to Albais)*; 's e comhairle chlaon a th' ann: *it's perverse advice*; nach ann gu dìreach a tha X a' coiseachd: *that X doesn't walk in a straight line [ahead]*; air leth-oir is gu tric air fiaradh: *sideways and often slantwise*; a bhith a' leantainn a chomhairle, seach eisimpleir fhèin: *following his advice, and not his example*; 's e sin as coireach gu bheil mi a' dol a chumail X am falach: *that is the reason I am going to keep X hidden*; am broinn na dachaigh: *inside the home*; cho luath 's a bhithinn a' toirt comhairle dha: *as soon as I would be giving him advice*; agus mi fhìn ris an dearbh ghnothach: *and myself involved in the same matter (ie guilty of the same infringement)*; chan eil fios agam nach fhaigh e greim air an Litir co-dhiù: *I don't know that he won't get hold of the Litir anyway*; feasgar brèagha air choreigin: *sometime, lit. some beautiful evening*.

**Puing-ghràmaid na seachdaine:** gu robh sin na b' fhàisge air a chiall ann an Gàidhlig: *that that was closer to its meaning in Gaelic. I would like to make two comments here. Firstly ciall is in the dative singular case, following the simple preposition air. It is a chiall not a ciall because the noun previously referred to, facal, is masculine; we are saying "his meaning" and the masculine possessive article lenites the following consonant. Secondly, the word ciall is itself feminine and you will remember that feminine nouns traditionally slenderise in the singular dative where the article is present. So I might have said air a chèill, and some would say that. The operative word here is "traditional"; I would say that the majority do not slenderise this word in the dative singular nowadays, although they still would with some similar words (eg a' ghrian, but air a' ghrèin).*

**Seanfhacal na seachdaine:** Coisich gu dìreach, a mhic – mar a thuir an seann phartan ris a' phartan òg: *walk straight, son – as the old crab said to the young one. In other words, "do as I say, not as I do."*

\* *"Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" is funded by Comataidh Craolaidh Gàidhlig*