

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for 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, Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 503. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 199 corresponds to Litir 503.

Tha am faclair Gàidhlig a rinn Eideard Dwelly o chionn ceud bliadhna air leth math. Tha beartas ann a tha iongantach. Seo agaibh eisimpleir. 'S dòcha gu bheil sibh air an abairt **b' àill leibh?** no **b' àillibh** a chluinntinn. Ma chanas cuideigin rudeigin mar ... agus mura cuala sibh ceart e, dh'fhaodadh sibh a ràdh ris, “B' àill leibh?” Uill, dh'fhaodadh sibh rudeigin mar “eh?” no “dè rud?” no “dè thuirt thu?” a ràdh ris. Ach bhiodh e na bu mhodhaile a bhith ag ràdh “b' àill leibh?”.

Chan fhaigh sibh lorg air *b' àill leibh* ann am mòran fhaclairean. Co-dhiù cha lorg sibh an abairt fon cheann-fhacal sin. Ach tha i ann an Dwelly. *B' àill:* (for bu àill). *Would.* B' àill leam, leat, leis etc – I, thou, he etc would; am b' àill leat mo mharbhadh? – *wouldst thou kill me?* Ciod a b' àill leibh? *what would you have?* Agus chan eil Dwelly deiseil le sin. Aig deireadh a' pharagraif, tha seo. “B' àill leibh?” (*a slovenly pronunciation of the last*) is often used as an equivalent of *I beg your pardon? when one speaker has not understood a remark made by another and wishes it repeated.*

Mar a bha mi ag innse dhuibh an t-seachdain sa chaidh, tha Faclair Dwelly a-nise air an eadar-lìon – agus bheir mi an seòladh-lìn dhuibh aig deireadh na Litreach. Chaidh mi air an làraich agus chuir mi *I beg your pardon* don lorgair. Agus nochd an dearbh rud air an duilleig-lìn air a' choimpiutair 's a th' air an duilleig anns an fhaclair phàipeir. *B' àill leibh*, agus a h-uile càil eile.

Nise, chan eil mi ag ràdh nach eil *b' àill leibh* anns na faclairean eile idir. Tha e, ach fo *àill* – “*wish, desire*”. Agus chan eil inneal lorg ri fhaighinn do na faclairean eile anns an aon dòigh.

'S e dithis a rinn a' chuid a bu mhotha dhen obair ann a bhith a' cur Faclair Dwelly ann an riochd eileagtronaigeach. 'S iad sin Micheal Bauer agus Uilleam MacDhonnchaidh. Thòisich Micheal air an obair o chionn **aona bhliadhna' deug**, an toiseach le bhith a' taidhpeadh gach facal air a' choimpiutair. An dèidh greis, rinn e sganadh de sheann lethbhreac dhen fhaclair. Bha sin na bu luaithe.

Thòisich Uilleam air an aon seòrsa pròiseict ann an 2005, gun fhiosta mu obair Mhìcheil. Thàinig an dithis còmhla ann an 2008 agus eatarra, chuir iad crìoch air a' phròiseact gu sgiobalta.

Fhuair mi moladh bho neach ann am post-dealain an latha eile mu aon fhacal ann am Beurla. Thuirt e – thallaibh don làraich sin, cuiribh am facal Beurla seo ann agus gheibh sibh caogad 's a seachd (57) faclan Gàidhlig air a shon. Uill, seo agaibh

feadhainn dhiubh. Tha mi airson 's gun dèan sibh tomhas air an fhacal Bheurla a chuir mi ann: cliabhach, cliùin, gladaman, glaidheaman, leidire, sidheach, siogach agus uilbh. Tha am facal mu dheireadh – uilbh – à Cataibh agus tha amharas agam gun tàinig e bhon t-seann Lochlannais – ma tha sin gu feum sam bith dhuibh!

Mura h-eil e agaibh fhathast, seo agaibh faclan Gàidhlig eile a tha a' ciallachadh an aon rud: faol, faol-allaidh, faol-ulaith, mac-tìre. Tha mi cinnteach gu bheil e agaibh a-nise. Chan eil? Uill, seo faclan eile: coille-chù, cù-allaidh, cù-fàsaich, fiadh-chù ...

madadh-allaidh. Tha fios agaibh a-nise. Tha iad uile a' ciallachadh *wolf*. Eadar Dwelly, Bauer agus MacDhonnchaidh, faodaidh beartas na Gàidhlig thighinn a-steach gu taigh sam bith anns an t-saoghal a-nise. Is math a rinn iad. Agus – an seòladh:

www.dwelly.info. Feuchaibh e!

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Faclan na Litreach: abairt: *phrase, saying*; lorgair, inneal lorg: *search engine*; eatarra: *between them*; post-dealain: *e-mail*; thallaibh: *go (imperative)*; Cataibh: *Sutherland*.

Abairtean na Litreach: tha beartas ann a tha iongantach: *it has a wealth that is amazing*; ma chanas cuideigin rudeigin mar: *if somebody says something like*; mura cuala sibh ceart e: *if you didn't hear him correctly*; na bu mhodhaile: *more polite*; fon cheann-fhacal sin: *under that headword*; bheir mi an seòladh-lìn dhuibh: *I'll give you the web address*; 's e dithis a rinn a' chuid a bu mhotha dhen obair: *two people did most of the work*; ann an riochd eileagtronaigeach: *in an electronic format*; Micheal Bauer agus Uilleam MacDhonnchaidh: *Michael Bauer and Will Robertson*; a' taidhpeadh gach facal: *typing every word*; rinn e sganadh de sheann lethbhreac: *he scanned an old copy*; na bu luaithe: *faster*; chuir iad crìoch air a' phròiseact gu sgiobalta: *they finished the project quickly*; tha mi airson 's gun dèan sibh tomhas air an fhacal Bheurla: *I want you to guess the English word*; tha amharas agam gun tàinig e bhon t-seann Lochlannais: *I suspect it came from Old Norse*; ma tha sin gu feum sam bith dhuibh: *if that is of use to you*; a tha a' ciallachadh an aon rud: *that means the same thing*; feuchaibh e!: *try it!*

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Thòisich Micheal air an obair o chionn **aona bhliadhna'** **deug**: *Michael started the work eleven years ago. We looked at the lenition of deug in Litir 199 (11 April 2003) and I gave you the general rule as follows: deug works in the same way as an adjective. Breac is a masculine word – we say breac mòr in the nominative case, not breac mhòr. So for “eleven trout” we say aona bhreac deug, not aona bhreac dheug. Thus, you would expect me to say aona bhliadhna dheug because bliadhna is a feminine noun. Well, we would, except that in speech we generally elide the end of bhliadhna and say bhliadhna' (pronounced “vlin”). So now, to the ear and tongue, the word ends with an “n”. Because the next word “deug” starts with a “d”, another rule comes into play – “d” acting as a “lenition blocker” to the “n” (the best known example is Beinn Dearg, the red mountain, rather than Beinn Dhearg, even though beinn is a feminine noun). Thus we don't lenite deug and we say “aona bhliadhna' deug”.*

Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach: **b' àill leibh?**: *I beg your pardon? (ie please repeat what you just said).*

Tha “Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh” air a maoineachadh le MG ALBA