

LEACAN

***A' Co-òrdanachadh Leasachadh
ann an Corpas na Gàidhlig***

**Coordinating Developments in
the Corpus of Scottish Gaelic
(PR20-01)**

AITHISG DHEIREANNACH

FINAL REPORT

15 January 2024

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Geàrr-iomradh Gnìomha

Tha an aithisg seo bho sgioba rannsachaidh eadar-oilthighe (fo ùghdarras an lìonra rannsachaidh Soillse airson cànan is cultar na Gàidhlig, agus a tha a-nis a-mach à bith), a' tarraing Oilthighean Ghlaschu is Dhùn Èideann agus Sabhal Mòr Ostaig / UHI còmhla.

Chleachd an sgioba rannsachaidh dòighean traidiseanta còmhla ri modhan-obrach ùr-ghnàthach gus am pròiseact seo a choileanadh, a' cur an gnìomh sgilean acadaimigeach agus ealantas ann an gràmar, cànanachas eachdraidheil, cruth-eòlas, fòn-eòlas, sòiseo-chànanachas, cànanachas gnìomhach, cànanachas àireamhach agus raointean co-cheangailte a thuilleadh air daonnachdan didseatach, gus bun-stèidh gràmach mòidealach air-loidhne a leasachadh airson planadh air corpas Gàidhlig ann an Alba san àm ri teachd. Airson a' chiad uair, chaidh gràmar briathradair a chur an gnìomh air a' Ghàidhlig, dòigh-obrach a chuireas cuideam air faclan (leicseimean) mar phrìomh aonad ann an structar chànanan.

Bha am pròiseact (pàirt-ùine) air a libhrigeadh an dèidh a bhith a' dol thar 40 mìos, bho 1 Dàmhair 2020 gu 31 Faoilleach 2024, aig cosgais de £105,000 do Bhòrd na Gàidhlig.

A dh'aindeoin àireamh de dhùbhlain mhòra air an t-slighe, tha sinn a' creidsinn gu bheil am pròiseact seo air siostam poblach seasmhach a sholarachadh do Bhòrd na Gàidhlig airson atharrachaidhean nàdarra ann an gràmar na Gàidhlig a chomharrachadh agus a chlàradh, agus airson leasachaidhean còrdaichte ann an litreachadh na Gàidhlig a cho-òrdanachadh agus a chlàradh.

Tha buannachdan a bharrachd air a bhith aig a' phròiseact anns na co-obrachaidhean eadar-institiùdach a chaidh a leasachadh, a tha air tuilleadh co-obrachaidh air pròiseactan eile a bhrosnachadh, a' gabhail a-steach pròiseactan co-cheangailte ri AI. Tha am pròiseact air mòran luach a bharrachd a tharraing san àireamh de phàipearan rannsachaidh a chaidh a chruthachadh (**Eàrr-ràdh D**).

Tha an aithisg a' toirt iomradh air a' chùl-fhiosrachadh don phròiseact a tha a' togail air soirbheachadh phròiseactan Dlùth is Inneach agus LEACAG, an dà chuid a chaidh a mhaoineachadh le Bòrd na Gàidhlig fo stiùireadh Oilthigh Ghlaschu. Tha an t-ainm LEACAN, dìreach mar LEACAG roimhe, na gheàrr-ainm stèidhichte air Leasachadh Corpais na Gàidhlig leis a' bheachd air leac sheasmhach a chomharrachadh air am faod leasachadh corpais Ghàidhlig a bhith stèidhichte.

Tha an sgioba eadar-chuspaireil, an dreuchdan agus an dleastanasan agus na dùbhlain chudromach ris an robhar a' dèiligeadh, air am mìneachadh. Bha seo a' gabhail a-steach tinneas trom-chùiseach rè ùine san sgioba agus frithealaiche DASG a' tuisleadh, gun dùil ris, fad chòig seachdainean aig ìre chudromach sa phròiseact.

Bha an rannsachadh air cùisean cànanach air am meas mar phàirt de phròiseact LEACAN, stèidhichte sa mhòr-chuid air fo-chorpas de Chorpas na Gàidhlig, le taic bho thar-sgrìobhaidhean Gàidhlig thraidiseanta ann an cainnt na dùthcha, stèidhichte air Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal. Chaidh ceisteachain a chleachadh gus barrachd fiosrachaidh fhaighinn bho luchd-labhairt traidiseanta.

Stèidhichte air rannsachadh cànanach corpais, chaidh 50 aithisgean mion-rannsachaidh de dhiofar mheudan a chur ri chèile a' còmhachadh 13 raointean sgrùdaidh. Bha na h-aithisgean sin

mar bhunait do na ceisteachain a chaidh a chur a-mach gu co-chomhairlichean luchd-labhairt traidiseanta, agus aig a' cheann thall a' fiosrachadh an stiùiridh mhòidealaich a ghlac na taobhan as àrd-ìreile de ar toraidhean a thaobh gràmar na Gàidhlig. Chaidh 29 gu h-iomlan de phàipearan rannsachaidh mionaideach do phrìomh rointean a sgrìobhadh agus tha iad mar aon sgrìobhainn rim faotainn ann an **Eàrr-ràdh D**.

Is e làrach-lìn LEACAN prìomh thoradh a' phròiseict a tha toirt leis an stiùireadh gràmair sìmplichte, le a mhòr-structar air iomradh taobh a-staigh na h-aithisg, is a tha ri fhaotainn cuideachd air làrach-lìn LEACAN mar phàirt de DASG aig:

<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/>

Tha e stèidhichte air còig oidhirpean domhainn a-steach do dh'abairtean uireadan, ainmean agus ainmearan sònrachaidh, tuissealan ginideach is tabhartach, co-ghnìomhairean ama, agus tràth gnìomhaireach is aogas, abairtean de 'gluasad gu' agus 'tairbhe'. Tha structar an stiùiridh mhòidealaich a' faotainn taic bho theòiridhean gràmair bhriathradairich agus eisimeileachd, a tha a' togail air cudromachd fhacail fa leth (leicseimean) mar na prìomh uidheaman togail air structar cànan, agus am beachd air eisimeileachd no dàimhean structarail no ceanglaichean dìreach eadar seataichean de dh'fhacail ann an seantans.

Tha am pròiseas ath-sgrùdaidh mhòidealaich a tha air iomradh san aithisg, a' solarachadh modail airson sgrùdadh, daingneachadh agus còdachadh air atharrachadh gràmach is litreachaidh ann an Gàidhlig.

Bha tàthanachadh ann am facail fhille mar chiumse ar cuid rannsachaidh air litreachadh mar chuspair, a tha abaich airson comas atharrachaidh agus leasachaidh, agus stiùireadh ùr. Tha molaidhean dèante gu tur bho shealladh saidheansail / cànanach.

Le cead Ùghdarras Theisteanas na h-Alba (SQA), tha Gnàthachas Litreachaidh na Gàidhlig (GOC) air a ghlacadh ann an cruth mòidealach mar phàirt de làrach-lìn LEACAN. Bidh seo comasach a leasachadh san àm ri teachd, gu soilleir a' clàradh thionndaidhean nas aosta agus atharrachaidhean a bhios dèante:

<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/?q=goc>

Tha làrach-lìn Banque de dépannage linguistique (BDL) de dh'Oifis Québécois de la Langue Française a' faotainn iomradh goirid. Tha seo a' toirt seachad mhìneachaidhean agus eisimpleirean de chaochlaidhean is iom-fhillteachdan Fraingis làitheil Chanàidianach. Tha banca ùr ghoireasan cànanach don Ghàidhlig air-loidhne (*Banca na Gàidhlig*) air a sholarachadh agus air iomradh fo 16 cinn. Tha sin cuideachd ri fhaotainn mar phàirt de làrach-lìn LEACAN:

<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/?q=banca>

Tha an stiùireadh gràmair a chaidh a chruthachadh mar phàirt den phròiseact LEACAG air a chur ri làrach-lìn LEACAN ann an cruth mòidealach:

<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/>

Tha in-chorpachadh air Gnàthachas Litreachaidh na Gàidhlig (GOC), Banca Ghoireasan Cànanach don Ghàidhlig (*Banca na Gàidhlig*) agus stiùireadh gràmair LEACAG a-steach do làrach-lìn LEACAN a' togail comas air làrach-lìn LEACAN a chleachdadh mar cho-ionad air-loidhne airson phròiseactan leasachadh corpais, a chuidicheadh le ath-dhùblachadh a

sheachnadh agus a bhrosnaicheadh co-obrachadh agus tuigse nas fheàrr air cleachdadh na Gàidhlig.

Chaidh ochd blogaichean a sgrìobhadh agus fhoillseachadh air làrach-lìn DASG (**Eàrr-ràdh B** agus <https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/en>). Chaidh na blogaichean a chur gu buill Buidheann-obrach air Acadamaidh Ghàidhlig (BOAG) airson fios air ais fhaighinn bhuapa agus chaidh fios a sgaoileadh air na meadhanan sòisealta. Ghabhadh comhairle bho luchd-labhairt traidiseanta air na blogaichean. Tha iomradh agus anailis gan toirt air an fhios air ais a fhuaras (**Eàrr-ràdh C**). Tha molaidhean gan cur air adhart airson cleachdadh an uilt le *ath*, *aon*, etc.

Tha an aithisg a' tighinn gu ceann-finid le àireamh de mholaidhean airson a bhith a' togail air obair LEACAN anns an àm ri teachd. Tha seo toirt leis comataidh comhairleachaidh cànan a stèidheachadh mar fho-chomataidh de BhOAG airson co-aonta agus dearbhadh fhaighinn air ceistean a bhoineas ri stiùireadh cànan.

Tha ceithir eàrr-ràdhan san aithisg: (A) cead bho Ùghdarras Theisteanas na h-Alba (SQA) gus GOC a ghlacadh ann an cruth mòidealach mar phàirt de làrach-lìn LEACAN; (B) blogaichean LEACAN; (C) fios air ais bho luchd-labhairt traidiseanta air na blogaichean; (D) pàipearan rannsachaidh sgrìobhte mu na còig raointean air oidirpean domhainn a thuilleadh air pàipear air faclan fillte agus tàthanachadh.

Executive Summary

This report is from an inter-university research team (under the auspices of the now dissolved Soillse research network for Gaelic language and culture), bringing together the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig / UHI.

The research team used traditional methods along with innovative approaches to carry out the project, exercising academic skills and expertise in grammar, historical linguistics, morphology, phonology, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, computational linguistics and related areas as well as digital humanities to develop a modular, online grammatical foundation for future Gaelic language corpus planning in Scotland. For the first time, a lexicalist grammar approach was applied to Gaelic, which emphasises the importance of individual words (lexemes) as the primary building blocks of a language's structure.

The (part-time) project took 40 months to deliver, from 1 October 2020 to 31 January 2024, at a cost of £105,000 to Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

Despite a number of serious challenges along the way, we believe that this project has provided Bòrd na Gàidhlig with a sustainable public system for identifying and recording natural changes in the grammar of Gaelic, and for coordinating and recording popular developments in Gaelic orthography.

The project has had extra benefits in the inter-institutional synergies developed which have fostered further collaboration on other projects, including AI-related projects. The project has brought much added value in the number of research papers that were created (**Appendix D**).

The report describes the background to the project which builds on the success of the Dlùth is Inneach and LEACAG projects, both of which were funded by Bòrd na Gàidhlig and led by the University of Glasgow. The name LEACAN, just like LEACAG before it, is a partial acronym based on Leasachadh Corpais na Gàidhlig and intended to signal a firm flagstone upon which Gaelic corpus development can be based.

The interdisciplinary team, their roles and responsibilities and the considerable challenges faced are outlined. This included serious illness for a considerable period and the unprecedented crashing of the DASG server which was down for 5 weeks at a crucial stage of the project.

The research on linguistic issues considered as part of the LEACAN project was based for the most part on a sub-corpus of Corpas na Gàidhlig, supplemented by vernacular traditional Gaelic transcriptions based on Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal. Questionnaires were used to elicit further information from traditional speakers.

Based on corpus linguistic research, a total of 50 mini-research reports of varying sizes were compiled covering 13 areas of investigation. These reports underpinned the questionnaires that were sent to traditional speaker consultants and ultimately informed the modular guidance which captured the more high-level aspects of our findings on Gaelic grammar. A total of 29 detailed research papers for key areas were written up and are included as one document in **Appendix D: Aspects of Gaelic Grammar**.

The main output of the project is the LEACAN website, which includes the simplified modular grammar guidance whose macro-structure is described in the body of the report and which is also available on the LEACAN website as part of DASG at:

<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/>

It is based on five deep-dives into expressions of quantity, names and proper nouns, genitive and dative cases, time adverbials and verbal tense and aspect, expression of 'motion towards' and 'beneficiary'. The structure of the modular guidance is underpinned by the theories of lexicalist and dependency grammar, which emphasise the importance of individual words (lexemes) as the primary building blocks of a language's structure and the notion of dependency or syntactic relationships or directed links between sets of words in a sentence.

The modular review process which is described in the report provides a model for the investigation, ratification and codification of grammatical and orthographic change in Gaelic.

Hyphenation in compound words was the focus of our research on orthography as a topic that is ripe for potential change, development and new guidance. Recommendations from a purely scientific / linguistic point of view are made.

With the permission of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Gaelic Orthographic Conventions (GOC) has been captured in modular format as part of the LEACAN website. It will be possible to develop this in the future, clearly recording older versions and changes made:

<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/?q=goc>

The Banque de dépannage linguistique (BDL) website of the Office Québécois de la Langue Française is briefly described. This provides explanations and examples of the variations and intricacies of everyday Canadian French. A new online bank of linguistic resources for Gaelic (*Banca na Gàidhlig*) is provided and is described under 16 headings. It too is available as part of the LEACAN website:

<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/?q=banca>

The grammatical guidance that was created as part of the LEACAG project has been added to the LEACAN website in modular format (see §7.3.4):

<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/>

The incorporation of Gaelic Orthographic Conventions (GOC), the Bank of Linguistic Resources for Gaelic (*Banca na Gàidhlig*) and grammatical guidance from the LEACAG project into the LEACAN website raises the possibility of using LEACAN as an online hub for corpus development projects, which would help avoid reduplication and foster collaboration and better understanding of Gaelic usage.

Eight blogs were produced and published on the DASG website (**Appendix B** and <https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/en>). These were shared with members of Buidheann-obrach air Acadamaidh Ghàidhlig / Gaelic Academy Working Group (BOAG) for the purposes of feedback and promoted on social media. Traditional speakers were consulted on the blogs. Feedback from consultations is described and analysed (**Appendix C**). Recommendations are made on the use of the definite article with *ath*, *aon*, etc.

The report concludes with a number of recommendations for building on the LEACAN project going forward. This includes the establishment of a language advisory committee as a subcommittee of BOAG in order to gain consensus and ensure ratification of language guidance.

The report contains four appendices: (A) permission received from the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) to capture GOC in modular format as part of the LEACAN website; (b) LEACAN blogs; (C) feedback from traditional speakers on the blogs; (D) written-up research papers on the five deep-dive areas as well as a paper on compound words and hyphenation.

Buidheachas

Bu mhath le sgioba LEACAN ar taing agus ar taingealachd a chur an cèill dhan Dr Peadar Morgan airson a thaic agus a chomhairle rè a' phròiseict agus airson na molaidhean luachmhor a thug e dhuinn air dreachd dhen aithisg dheireannaich. Tha sinn fada ann an comain Stephen ('Stevie') Barrett a rinn obair ionmholta gus làrach-lìn DASG ath-stèidheachadh. Ar taing cuideachd do sgioba SQA a thug cead dhuinn GOC a chur ann an cruth mòidealach air làrach-lìn LEACAN agus do Cholaiste nan Ealain is nan Daonnachdan aig Oilthigh Ghlaschu a thug taic agus maoinachadh a bharrachd dhan pròiseact.

Acknowledgements

The LEACAN team would like to express its sincere gratitude to Dr Peadar Morgan for his support and advice during the course of the project and for his valuable comments on a draft of the final report. We are very indebted to Stephen ('Stevie') Barrett for his indefatigable work in restoring the DASG website. Our thanks are also due to the SQA team for granting us permission to transfer GOC into modular format as part of the LEACAN website and to the College of Arts and Humanities at the University of Glasgow which provided support and extra funding for the project.

1. Introduction

This report is from an inter-university research team (under the auspices of the now dissolved Soillse research network for Gaelic language and culture), bringing together the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig / UHI.

The research team used traditional methods along with innovative approaches to carry out the project, exercising academic skills and expertise in grammar, historical linguistics, morphology, phonology, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, computational linguistics and related areas as well as digital humanities to develop a modular, online grammatical foundation for future Gaelic language corpus planning in Scotland.

The (part-time) project took 40 months to deliver, from 1 October 2020 to 31 January 2024 (including a two-month no-cost extension until January 2024), at a cost of £105,000 to Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Further support and funding for the project was supplied by the College of Arts and Humanities, University of Glasgow.

The report describes the background to the project which builds on the success of the Dlùth is Inneach and LEACAG projects, both of which were funded by Bòrd na Gàidhlig and led by the University of Glasgow. The name LEACAN, just like LEACAG before it, is a partial acronym based on Leasachadh Corpais na Gàidhlig based and intended to signal a firm flagstone upon which Gaelic corpus development can be based.

Despite a number of serious challenges along the way (§2.5), we believe that this project has provided Bòrd na Gàidhlig with a sustainable public system for identifying and recording natural changes in the grammar of Gaelic, and for coordinating and recording popular developments in Gaelic orthography.

The main output of the project is the LEACAN website (<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/>) which includes the following components:

- Grammatical guidance in modular format on 5 topics:
 - quantities
 - verbal aspect
 - names and proper nouns
 - motion along a trajectory
 - nouns and adjectives in the dative and genitive
- Gaelic Orthographic Conventions (GOC) in modular format
- Bank of Linguistic Resources for Gaelic (*Banca na Gàidhlig*)
- Grammar guidance from LEACAG as a PDF and in new modular format.

Other outputs include:

- Transcribed vernacular interviews as part of Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal
- 29 research papers gathered in one document in **Appendix D: Aspects of Gaelic Grammar** (funded by the University of Glasgow)
- 8 published blogs

- Traditional speaker feedback on Blogs
- Recommendations.

2. Background

2.1 Dlùth is Inneach

In 2013, members of the LEACAN research team carried out the Dlùth is Inneach (CR12-03) research project for Bòrd na Gàidhlig, with the aim of establishing both linguistic foundations and an institutional framework for Gaelic corpus development, by means of comprehensive public consultation. The main outputs of this project were as follows:

- We identified the dominant language ideology among Gaelic speakers and learners as **retrovernacularity** – the belief that the most ‘desirable form’ of the language (even for younger speakers) is **traditional Gaelic** modelled on the usage of final generation Gaelic-dominant bilinguals (‘traditional speakers’), raised in Gaelic-speaking communities before the 1970s. Retrovernacularity has henceforth been the core principle guiding ongoing Gaelic corpus planning activity (its linguistic foundation), with priority given to accepted traditional usage before other variant usages.
- We identified three distinct channels of social legitimacy for Gaelic corpus development – **popular**, **scientific** and **political** – all of which should be incorporated into any formal institutional foundation for Gaelic corpus planning.
- We recommended that Bòrd na Gàidhlig run a pilot project incorporating these principles, with ‘model’ traditional speakers working with linguistic experts and experienced Gaelic policymakers on a range of corpus planning tasks, with a particular focus on **grammar standardisation and codification**. The norms having been set by traditional speakers would establish popular legitimacy for any standardisation.

2.2 LEACAG

Between 2016 and 2018, a Soillse research team led by the University of Glasgow carried out the subsequent project, LEACAG (Leasachadh Corpas na Gàidhlig – CR15-02). The main aim of this project was to provide expert scholarly support to the Bòrd’s Comataidh Comhairleachaidh Cànanain (CCC) – a gender and dialect-balanced group of traditional Gaelic speakers, each of whom had significant experience in practical domains of Gaelic language policy (e.g. broadcasting, publishing). One of the main outputs of the LEACAG project was systematic grammatical guidance on eleven of the most contentious issues in contemporary Gaelic grammar as identified by a survey of language professionals including Gaelic Medium Education (GME) teachers. Evidence of authentic traditional Gaelic usage was derived from two main sources: (a) detailed analysis of recent Gaelic prose contained in Corpas na Gàidhlig, DASG’s 30-million-word online database of modern Scottish Gaelic texts; and (b) a survey of traditional Gaelic speakers living in the Western Isles and Skye. The resulting grammatical guidance was approved by CCC in 2018 and published online by DASG in 2019:

<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/LeaCaG-2019.pdf>

2.3 Project team

Professor Roibeard ('Rob') Ó Maolalaigh – Principal Investigator (PI)

Roibeard ('Rob') Ó Maolalaigh is Professor of Gaelic at the University of Glasgow. His main research interests lie in the broad area of Gaelic languages and linguistics, variation and history, although he supervises and publishes in a broad range of areas, which include: linguistic variation and change in the Gaelic-speaking world (synchronic and diachronic), phonetics, phonology, morphology, lexicology, semantics, sociolinguistics, corpus linguistics, corpus planning, Gaelic dialectology, Gaelic historical linguistics (historical phonology and morphology), the divergence between Irish, Scottish Gaelic and Manx, etc.; Gaelic onomastics and eighteenth-century Gaelic literature. He has a particular interest in Digital Humanities and the creation of freely accessible online resources for Gaelic. He is Director of the British Academy recognised project Dachaigh airson Stòras na Gàidhlig / Digital Archive of Scottish Gaelic (DASG). He is Academic Director of Faclair na Gàidhlig (Historical Dictionary of the Gaelic Language), a member of its Management Board and chair of its international Editorial Committee. He was Vice-Principal and Head of the College of Arts (2015-2022). He has led as PI and Col many successful externally funded projects, including corpus planning research projects funded by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, e.g. A Survey of Gaelic Corpus Technology (2009), Dlùth is Inneach (2014) and LEACAG (2018).

Professor William ('Will') Lamb – Grammar Consultant

William ('Will') Lamb is Professor in Gaelic Ethnology and Linguistics in the section of Celtic and Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh. Prior to joining the University of Edinburgh in 2010, he was a lecturer in Gaelic Language and Music at Lews Castle College (University of the Highlands and Islands) and an Honorary Research Fellow of the University of Glasgow. He is currently on the steering committee of the Scottish Gaelic Text Society and the Management Board of Faclair na Gàidhlig (Historical Dictionary of the Gaelic Language). His research interests lie within Gaelic linguistics and Scottish oral tradition. Within Gaelic linguistics, he focuses on dialectology, Natural Language Processing and corpus linguistics. From 2013-2015, he was the PI for a Carnegie Trust and Bòrd na Gàidhlig funded project to develop a part-of-speech tagger and reference corpus for the language. He has used a dialectometric approach to investigate nominal morphological variation in Scottish Gaelic, as found in the unpublished Linguistic Survey of Scotland (LSS) Gaelic materials. He is PI of the AI project 'ÈIST (Ecosystem for Interactive Speech Technology)' funded by the Scottish Government, and 'Decoding Hidden Heritages', funded by the AHRC and IRC. He has just completed a monograph on Scottish Gaelic grammar for Routledge.

Gordon Wells – Applied Linguistic Consultant

Gordon Wells is Project Manager and Researcher for the CIALL (Collaborative Interdisciplinary & Applied Linguistic Links) project based in the Language Sciences Institute of the University of the Highlands and Islands. He taught in India and Japan before starting his UK career with Birmingham Industrial Language Training Services in workplace-based ESOL and related areas, including work with South Asian community languages. After postgraduate studies in Applied Linguistics at Edinburgh University, he worked in the Scottish Further Education

sector, eventually settling on the Isle of Benbecula where he was instrumental in establishing the FE/HE centre at Linclate as part of the University of the Highlands and Islands network. Moving on to work for Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, but based in the Western Isles, he was then involved in various local and international language development and research projects.

The local relevance of this work is brought into focus through the Island Voices community project and website. He also undertook local community-based research projects through the Soillse research partnership, before taking on the project manager role for the whole network and seeing it through to completion and the archiving of publications. The CIALL project seeks to build upon the Soillse legacy.

Dr Mark McConville – Co-investigator (CoI), researcher and project manager

Mark McConville was a Research Associate and Project Manager in Celtic & Gaelic at the University of Glasgow. He advised the DASG team on technical and linguistic issues, and was a Systems Consultant for the inter-university Faclair na Gàidhlig project. He completed his PhD in Informatics at the University of Edinburgh in 2006 and worked as the Soillse Research Fellow at Glasgow University from 2010 to 2015.

Dr David Mandić – Corpus Researcher

Dr Mandić has a PhD in Croatian Linguistics from the University of Zagreb and has completed an Honours and postgraduate Degree in Celtic / Gaelic Studies at the University of Glasgow. He has research interests in corpus linguistics, Gaelic phonology, grammar, dialects and historical linguistics. He was the Research Assistant for the LEACAN project.

Pàdruig Moireach – Traditional Speaker Consultant

Originally from the Isle of Lewis, Pàdruig works as a distance-learning Gaelic tutor at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. He first started teaching Gaelic for Inverness College in 1995, where he was employed as a tutor on the world's first *Cùrsa Bogaidh* (Gaelic Immersion Course) for adults. He was a team member involved in the design and delivery of HE courses (in Gaelic, Social Sciences and Culture Studies) for the University of the Highlands and Islands and continued teaching Gaelic and social science subjects for Inverness College UHI until 2006.

He has worked for Sabhal Mòr Ostaig in a part-time capacity on summer and distance-learning courses since 2006 and worked for BBC Ràdio nan Gàidheal as an Archivist / Media Manager between 2007-2009. He managed the academic component of UHI's Gaelic Development Project between 2009-2011.

He was a member of the Soillse research team which published the *Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular Community* (2020) and has worked as a tutor for various local community classes (for Highland Council, Argyll and Bute Council, Sinne and Cultarlann Inbhir Nis) as well as on Aberdeen University online summer courses. He was involved in the Storas Beò project, interviewing native Gaelic speakers and recording cultural resources for the future as well as transcribing many of the recorded interviews. He has extensive Gaelic-related translation experience for various groups.

Ian MacDonald – Traditional Speaker Consultant

Ian is a native speaker from Grimsay, North Uist. He was CEO of Comhairle nan Leabhraichean for many years. He is an acknowledged leading expert on Gaelic publishing and is a freelance author and editor. He was a member of Comataidh Comhairleachaidh Cànanain (CCC).

Jo NicDhòmhnaill – Traditional Speaker Consultant

Jo is a native speaker from Ness, Isle of Lewis. She was Managing Editor of BBC Gàidhlig for many years and is a highly experienced editor of Gaelic factual and educational programmes. She has worked at Bòrd na Gàidhlig and was a member of Comataidh Comhairleachaidh Cànanain (CCC). She was also a board member of MG Alba and the Board of Directors of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. She is a much respected freelance researcher, writer and editor, and is a language consultant for Speak Gaelic.

Mòrag NicLeòid – Traditional Speaker Consultant

Mòrag is a native speaker from Scalpay, Harris. She was a researcher and lecturer at Sgoil Eòlais na h-Alba, University of Edinburgh, for many years and is an acknowledged leading expert on Gaelic song and tradition. As a teacher and author, she has a keen interest in the grammar of traditional Gaelic.

2.4 Project roles and responsibilities

- Overall responsibility for the project resided with Professor Rob Ó Maolalaigh and Dr Mark McConville as Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator respectively. Responsibility for day-to-day project management was with Dr McConville until summer 2022, when it was assumed by Professor Ó Maolalaigh.
- Responsibility for transcribing vernacular traditional Gaelic from the Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal collection lay with Gordon Wells (§3).
- Corpus research and mini-reports were undertaken by the Corpus Researcher, Dr David Mandić, whose work was supervised by Professor Rob Ó Maolalaigh, who also contributed to the work.
- The appointment of consultants and communication with them was the responsibility of Professor Ó Maolalaigh.
- Questionnaires for traditional speaker consultants were prepared by Dr McConville and feedback was incorporated from Dr Mandić and Professor Ó Maolalaigh. These questionnaires were sent to traditional speaker consultants for feedback by Professor Ó Maolalaigh.
- Traditional speaker consultants (§2.3) were responsible for providing feedback on questionnaires and grammar guidance.

- Modular guidance was drafted by Dr McConville incorporating feedback from traditional speaker consultants. Feedback was provided by Dr Mandić and Professor Ó Maolalaigh on these as they were made available by Dr McConville. Feedback on the modular guidance was also received from the Grammar Consultant, Professor Will Lamb.
- The transfer of GOC into modular format was undertaken by Dr McConville. Permission from the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) for transferring GOC to modular format as part of the LEACAN project and website was sought by Dr McConville and Professor Ó Maolalaigh. This was received in August 2023; see **Appendix A**.
- The creation and updating of the modular online structure for LEACAN guidance was the responsibility of Dr McConville. This was subsequently revised by Dr Mandić and Professor Ó Maolalaigh.
- Responsibility for DASG blogs was assumed by Professor Ó Maolalaigh during summer 2023, and these were written by Dr Mandić and Professor Ó Maolalaigh. Eight blogs were posted on the DASG website (<https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/en>) between 4 October 2023 and 21 November 2023. These are included in **Appendix B**. Valuable feedback was received from Dr Peadar Morgan (Bòrd na Gàidhlig) on a number of draft blogs prior to publication.
- The Bank of Linguistic Resources for Gaelic, Banca na Gàidhlig, was compiled by Dr Mandić with input and supervision from Professor Ó Maolalaigh.
- Responsibility for the final report lay with Professor Ó Maolalaigh.

2.5 Challenges and observations

- This project was negatively impacted by unavoidable absences during part of 2021 and most of 2022.
- We discovered as the project progressed that the scope of the project was over-ambitious for the resource available; extra resource was provided by the College of Arts and Humanities, University of Glasgow in order to complete the project to the required standard and to add extra value in the form of research outputs (**Appendix D: Aspects of Gaelic Grammar**).
- These two factors necessitated during 2021 and most of 2022 a scaling back of the goal of involving a wider sample of community and professional users in the research as it progressed via blogs, social media, etc. This was, however, addressed during the period September 2023 – December 2023.
- These factors also impacted our desire to produce the guidance in bilingual format which was not possible. This was not a requirement of the Commission Spec. However, at the start of the project, the developers implemented a system for toggling between English and Gaelic versions of the grammar modules, using standard XML lang(uage) tags on the relevant elements, and Javascript / JQuery event handlers to display and hide the appropriate bits of content. Because no Gaelic content has been created as yet, this functionality has been hidden in the current version, to avoid confusion for users.
- We devised an alternative plan which was implemented in September and October 2023 (a) to use our consultants, project partners and members of the BOAG forum as proxies for

community and professional users as a means of gathering feedback and comments on the final outputs, and in particular the modular guidance and blogs, and (b) to utilise blogposts via DASG to gather feedback and comments from a wider sample of community and professional users.

- The DASG server crashed on 28 August 2023, which left the team without access to the DASG website and its resources, including the LEACAN website. We did not think initially that this would impact on our work significantly as we thought the server would be fixed within a matter of days. Unfortunately, the drives, files and website remained inaccessible for 5 weeks. The website (with the vast majority of its resources) was restored on 29 September 2023 thanks to Stevie Barrett's tremendous work. This outage significantly impacted on LEACAN progress and work, specifically in the following areas:
 - updating the remaining modular guidance
 - extracting modular guidance for further review within the team as planned. This had a number of knock-on effects on a series of related timelines and actions, including our ability to consult on our findings during the period of outage.
 - not being able to post our planned blogs via the DASG website until the week beginning 2 October 2023 (§8.2.1).

The two-month no-cost extension granted by Bòrd na Gàidhlig enabled us to address these challenges and complete the work as planned.

3. Transcribed vernacular interviews

3.1 Background

The primary objective of the LEACAN research project was:

- “To expand in collaboration with the language community the linguistic guidance for public use of Gaelic, and to present this in a modular format online.”

The first of the three desired output of the research was:

- “A sustainable public system for identifying and recording natural changes in the grammar of Gaelic”.

The last of the five specified work methods for the project was:

- “Expanding the grammar elements in the modules by [...] research into the current community vernacular (in the field and/or through broadcasting analysis) [...]”

With these things in mind, at the start of the LEACAN project, the research team agreed the following task with the funder –

- “In order to keep track of ongoing trends in traditional Gaelic grammar, the UHI team will add at least 8 hours of transcribed vernacular video recording to *Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal*, focusing on younger speakers.”

3.2 Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal – empathetic ethnography

<https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/research-enterprise/res-themes/humanities-and-arts/language-sciences-institute/projects/storas-beo-nan-gaidheal/>

Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal [Taisce Bheo na nGael] is a pilot project with a focus on the collection of exemplary samples of Gaelic speech from vernacular communities in Scotland and Ireland with user-friendly equipment and techniques.

This project aims to establish an ongoing process of recording cultural resources in a ‘live lab’ approach that engages with Gaelic communities in an interactive and dynamic manner while producing rich resources for the future. It envisages a continuing exchange between community and academia, and between Ireland and Scotland, in relation to the lived cultural resource of the Gaelic languages. In addition to the inherent value of the process itself, the added benefit of this exchange will be the creation of an authentic cultural resource to inform and bolster language planning efforts in support of the communities producing it. It is an engagement with existing communities about their heritage with an eye to the future, that takes advantage of new advances in digital capture and language support technology to address a vital and urgent need.

Some Irish and Scottish examples have already been created and uploaded to Clilstore. Each Clilstore entry contains a full online video (on YouTube), together with a wordlinked transcript, and a summary description (under Unit Info).

3.3 Progress

In the LEACAN partnership the major responsibility of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig / UHI was to add to the body of transcribed vernacular Gaelic as represented in the Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal collection held by the UHI Language Sciences Institute. The aim was to contribute a minimum of a further eight hours of recorded, transcribed, and published Gaelic conversation broadly conforming to the ‘traditional Gaelic’ (‘retrovernacularity’) standard as outlined in the initial Dlùth is Inneach project and referenced in the project tender. Within those terms it was agreed that there should be a more even geographical balance between the various island sources than was originally achieved with Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal. Furthermore, greater representation from younger speakers should also be sought. After the recordings were completed, SMO / UHI staff continued to contribute to the overall project in a consultant capacity, providing sociolinguistic, applied linguistic, and native speaker perspectives on the ongoing work.

Due to delays in finalising and signing contracts and subcontracts, work on this stream of the project did not begin until February 2021. In the early stages work was all mediated through Zoom in view of continuing Covid lockdown restrictions. Latterly, the relaxation of these restrictions enabled some face-to-face recordings to be made again.

Following the established Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal model, each of the new recordings was also transcribed and published online on the Clilstore platform. This platform, developed principally by SMO’s Caoimhín Ó Donnaíle in a European partnership with other institutions across the continent, offers additional CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) functionality to a simple presentation of video and transcript alone through facilitating one-click online dictionary look-up at individual word level. These recordings were also publicised and disseminated online using the popular online language capture and curation project Guthan nan Eilean / Island Voices, through a series of posts at approximately monthly intervals on the project blog, further amplified through dedicated social media channels.

By October 2023, cumulative views on YouTube of *Stòras Beò* recordings for LEACAN stood at 5,760. The number of participants totalled ten (seven from Lewis and three from North Uist). At least four of these are of an age unambiguously younger than the prototypical retrovernacular speaker. These recordings totalled 8 hours 52 minutes.

3.4 Recordings

Magaidh Smith

12 Feb 2021 – 78 mins; 13 Dec 2021 – 21 mins

Guthan nan Eilean

- <https://guthan.wordpress.com/2021/02/12/storas-beo-magaidh/>
- <https://guthan.wordpress.com/2021/12/13/seanchas-le-magaidh-smith/>

Youtube

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9kvP85bR1k>

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiYtcnUrWag>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRGf-cO9INl>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUZZi2JxqNQ>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0G4pnGencqE>

Clilstore

- <https://multidict.net/cs/9169>
- <https://multidict.net/cs/9170>
- <https://multidict.net/cs/9170>
- <https://multidict.net/cs/9171>
- <https://multidict.net/cs/10037>
- <https://multidict.net/cs/10036>

Calum Alasdair Fraser

22 Apr 2021 – 26 mins

Guthan nan Eilean

- <https://guthan.wordpress.com/2021/04/22/storas-beo-calum/>

Youtube

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5S59NCL5n6o>

Clilstore

- <https://multidict.net/cs/9331>

Anna MacInnes

9 May 2021 – 41 mins

Guthan nan Eilean

- <https://guthan.wordpress.com/2021/05/09/storas-beo-anna/>

Youtube

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bOakOFmte8>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlrLXiVI4FI>

Clilstore

3. <https://multidict.net/cs/9355>

4. <https://multidict.net/cs/9356>

Christine NicLeòid

21 Jul 2021 – 36 mins

Guthan nan Eilean

- <https://guthan.wordpress.com/2021/07/21/storas-beo-christine-nicleoid/>

Youtube

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HvFkuWeNIFI>

Clilstore

- <https://multidict.net/cs/9504>

Curstaidh NicDhòmhnaill

21 Aug 2021 – 31 mins

Guthan nan Eilean

- <https://guthan.wordpress.com/2021/08/20/storas-beo-curstaidh-nicdhomhnaill/>

Youtube

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=605mlP1idmY>

Clilstore

- <https://multidict.net/cs/9629>

Pàdruig Moireasdan

8 Sep 2021 – 68 mins

Guthan nan Eilean

- <https://guthan.wordpress.com/2021/09/08/storas-beo-padruig-moireasdan/>

Youtube

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=41HK5rfgqkQ>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ULYjB49MK0>

Clilstore

- <https://multidict.net/cs/9686>
- <https://multidict.net/cs/9687>

Alasdair MacDhòmhnail

9 Oct 2021 – 60 mins

Guthan nan Eilean

- <https://guthan.wordpress.com/2021/10/09/storas-beo-alasdair-a-rithist/>

Youtube

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bsZR7RH2N6A>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AX9y0i-baK0>

Clilstore

- <https://multidict.net/cs/9723>
- <https://multidict.net/cs/9724>

Anna Frater

8 Dec 2021 – 115 mins

Guthan nan Eilean

- <https://guthan.wordpress.com/2021/12/08/storas-beo-anna-frater/>

Youtube

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BCcGp3yrr0>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkV6H5Fw5oY>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFAdfqY0zDE>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9ldCRVYTKI>

Clilstore

- <https://multidict.net/cs/10007>
- <https://multidict.net/cs/10008>
- <https://multidict.net/cs/10009>
- <https://multidict.net/cs/10010>

Coinneach MacIomhair and Maighread Stiùbhart

1 Aug 2022 – 51 mins

Guthan nan Eilean

- <https://guthan.wordpress.com/2022/08/01/storas-beo-coinneach-maighread/>

Youtube

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hP8IWcp2Rkc>

Clilstore

- <https://clilstore.eu/cs/10540>

3.5 Other

The Soillse network for research into Gaelic language and culture came to an end during the duration of the LEACAN project. Original project partners continued to participate, despite this disruption. The follow-on CIALL (Collaborative Interdisciplinary & Applied Linguistic Links) project aims to continue work in the field of empathetic ethnography, developing this model in collaboration with partner institutions and community groups.

<https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/research-enterprise/res-themes/humanities-and-arts/language-sciences-institute/projects/ciall/>

Having already noted the synergies between LEACAN and Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal, it may also be worth noting that the foundational work described above also stands to benefit other initiatives within the broader Gaelic development field. Exciting progress is currently being made with AI-related projects such as Gaelic Automatic Speech Recognition (University of Edinburgh and ÈIST (Ecosystem for Interactive Speech Technology, Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow). Guthan nan Eilean and Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal recordings as well as DASG (Digital Archive of Scottish Gaelic) have had pivotal roles in the development of these projects. In turn, the results have been tried out to an extent on some of the latest recordings, through experimentation with Closed Caption YouTube subtitles. While not a required output from this project, such developments may be viewed as additional benefits, also contributing to a 'virtuous circle' resulting from effective inter-institutional collaboration and close island community involvement under the (erstwhile) Soillse banner.

4. Modular online guidance

4.1 Background

The requested work methods for the LEACAN project included the following –

- “[...] modular formatting of the Bòrd's grammar guidance [...], along the lines of the Briathradan terminology hub”
- “Implementation of the modular formatting so as to present the elements of corpus guidance such that they are easy to locate and to read, and to permit amendment (if required) individually without undermining the whole.”

4.2 Some concepts

This subsection describes three concepts which are key to our theoretical approach:

- **lexicalist grammar**, which emphasises the importance of individual words (lexemes) as the primary building blocks of a language's structure
- **lexical inheritance**, which acknowledges the way in which words inherit grammatical properties or features from other words in a sentence or linguistic construction and how words interact with one another
- **dependency grammar**, which focuses on the grammatical relationships between words in a sentence.

4.2.1 Lexicalist grammar

Lexicalist grammar is a linguistic approach that emphasises the importance of individual words (lexemes) as the primary building blocks of a language's structure. This approach contrasts with more traditional grammar theories that focus on abstract rules and structures governing sentence formation.

Key features and principles of lexicalist grammar include –

- **Lexical entries** – In lexicalist grammar, each word in a language is associated with a unique lexical entry. These entries contain information about the word's meaning, syntactic properties, and any grammatical or morphological features it may have.
- **Idiosyncrasy** – Lexicalist grammar recognises that not all aspects of language can be accounted for by applying general rules or principles. It acknowledges the presence of idiosyncratic or irregular language phenomena, often associated with specific words, and suggests that these idiosyncrasies should be dealt with on a word-by-word basis.
- **Valency** – Valency refers to the number of arguments or complements a verb can take and the grammatical relationships between the verb and its arguments. Lexicalist grammar pays close attention to valency patterns and considers them an important aspect of lexical entries.

- Construction grammar – Lexicalist grammar is often associated with construction grammar, which explores the idea that language is composed of various constructions or patterns that involve different words and their relationships. These constructions can be simple, like a transitive verb followed by a direct object, or more complex, involving multiple words and their interactions.
- Non-Generative approach – Unlike generative grammar, which seeks to generate sentences through a set of rules and transformations, lexicalist grammar tends to be more focused on the description of linguistic knowledge and how words combine to form meaningful utterances.
- Usage-based approach – Lexicalist grammar often incorporates insights from usage-based linguistics, which emphasises the importance of real-world language usage in shaping linguistic knowledge. This perspective recognises that language is not static but evolves based on how people use it in context.
- Cognitive and psycholinguistic considerations – Lexicalist grammar may take into account cognitive and psycholinguistic factors in language processing. It explores how the mental lexicon (the mental store of lexical information) is organised and accessed during language production and comprehension.

Lexicalist grammar offers a valuable perspective for understanding how language is structured, learned, and processed, with a particular emphasis on the role of individual words and their properties in shaping linguistic knowledge.

4.2.2 Lexical inheritance

Lexical inheritance is a concept in linguistics that refers to the way in which words inherit grammatical properties or features from other words in a sentence or linguistic construction. It plays a significant role in understanding how words within a sentence or phrase interact with each other, and it is particularly important in some linguistic theories, such as Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar (HPSG).

Key features of lexical inheritance are:

- Dependency relations – Lexical inheritance involves the establishment of dependency relations between words within a sentence. These dependencies determine how words interact with each other in terms of grammatical and semantic roles.
- Grammatical and semantic features – In lexical inheritance, words can inherit various grammatical and semantic features from other words in the sentence. These features can include tense, mood, aspect, case, number, gender, and more. The specific features inherited depend on the particular words involved.
- Hierarchy of inheritance – Lexical inheritance often follows a hierarchical structure. For example, in HPSG words are organised into a hierarchy based on their thematic roles (agent, patient, etc.) and grammatical functions (subject, object, etc.). Words lower in the hierarchy inherit features from words higher in the hierarchy.
- Syntactic and semantic roles – Lexical inheritance is closely related to the assignment of syntactic and semantic roles within a sentence. Words higher in the hierarchy typically

assign roles to words lower in the hierarchy, and these roles may involve the transfer of grammatical and semantic information.

- Grammatical agreement – Grammatical agreement is a common aspect of lexical inheritance. In many languages, words in a sentence must agree in certain features, such as gender and number. This agreement is often achieved through the inheritance of features from one word to another.
- Simplification of rules – Lexical inheritance can simplify the rules governing sentence construction. Instead of stipulating rules for each individual word in a sentence, a theory that incorporates lexical inheritance can reduce complexity by specifying how features are inherited within a sentence structure.

4.2.3 Dependency grammar

Dependency grammar is a linguistic framework that focuses on the grammatical relationships between words in a sentence, emphasising the notion of dependency or syntactic relationships rather than the traditional concept of phrase structure or constituency. In dependency grammar, a sentence is represented as a set of words connected by directed links, or dependencies, which indicate how words relate to one another syntactically.

Key aspects of dependency grammar are:

- Directed dependencies – In dependency grammar, each word in a sentence is connected to another word by a directed link. These links typically have labels indicating the grammatical relationship between the two words. The direction of the link shows the head-dependent relationship, with one word being the ‘head’ and the other the ‘dependent’.
- Root node – In a dependency tree, there is typically one word designated as the root node. The root represents the main verb or main predicate in a sentence, and all other words are connected to it through a series of dependencies.
- Syntactic roles – Dependencies in dependency grammar represent syntactic roles or functions. For example, a word might be labelled as the subject, object, modifier, or complement of another word. These labels provide information about the grammatical and semantic relationships between words.
- No constituency – Unlike phrase structure grammars, which emphasise the hierarchical grouping of words into phrases and constituents (noun phrases, verb phrases, etc.), dependency grammar does not focus on constituent structure. Instead, it represents grammatical structure purely in terms of directed dependencies.
- Projectivity – Dependency trees are typically ‘projective’, meaning that the dependencies do not (usually) cross over one another. In other words, there is (usually) no crossing of lines in the graphical representation of a sentence’s syntax.
- Simplicity and elegance – Dependency grammar is often praised for its simplicity and elegance in representing syntactic structure. It can be a more intuitive framework for certain linguistic phenomena and has gained popularity in various natural language processing applications.

Dependency grammar is a versatile framework that provides valuable insights into the structural relationships between words within sentences and offers an alternative perspective on linguistic analysis compared to phrase structure grammars.

4.3 Grammatical dependencies for Gaelic

This subsection describes briefly with illustrative examples some of the grammatical dependencies that exist in Gaelic, which guided us in establishing links within the modular guidance.

4.3.1 Verb dependencies

Subject

A grammatical subject is a fundamental syntactic and grammatical element in a sentence. It typically performs two primary functions:

- agent of the action – The subject is often the doer or performer of the action described by the verb in a sentence, i.e. the entity that carries out or initiates the action.
- topic of the sentence – The subject often serves as the topic or focus of the sentence, i.e. the entity that the rest of the sentence provides information about.

For example:

1. *Chunnaic Raonaid an cù.*

- The (nominative singular feminine) proper noun *Raonaid* is the subject of the verb *chunnaic* (the past independent active form of *faic*).

2. *Tha iad sgith.*

- The (third person plural) personal pronoun *iad* is the subject of the verb *tha* (the present independent form of *bh*).

3. *Sgrìobh an ceathramh balach beag gu a mhàthair.*

- The (nominative masculine singular) common noun *balach* is the subject of the verb *sgrìobh* (the past independent active form of *sgriobh*).

Object

A (direct) object is a grammatical element in a sentence that receives the action of a transitive verb – the noun or pronoun that is directly affected by or receives the action described by the verb.

For example:

1. *Chunnaic Raonaid an cù.*

- The (masculine singular) common noun *cù* is the object of the transitive verb *chunnaic* (the past independent active form of *faic*). (The form *cù* here is syncretic with the nominative.)

2. *Bhuail mise esan.*

- The (masculine singular emphatic) personal pronoun *esan* is the object of the verb *bhuail* (the past independent active form of *buail*).

3. *Am faca tu Màiri?*

- The (nominative singular feminine) proper noun *Màiri* is the object of the verb *faca* (the past dependent active form of *faic*).

Complements

A complement of a verb is a grammatical element which is essential to its meaning, but is not a subject or an object.

For example:

1. *Cha tèid lain a-mach.*

- The adverb *a-mach* is the complement of the verb *tèid* (the future dependent active form of *rach*).

2. *Sgrìobh an ceathramh balach beag gu a mhàthair.*

- The preposition *gu* is the complement of the verb *sgrìobh* (the past independent active form of *sgrìobh*).

3. *Thuirt Seumas gun do dh'fhalbh Màiri an-dè.*

- The (positive declarative subordinate) verb particle *gun* is the complement of the verb *thuirt* (the past independent active form of *abair*).

Predicate

The verb *bi* takes a subject and a special kind of complement called a 'predicate'.

For example:

1. *Tha iad sgìth.*

- The adjective *sgìth* is the predicate of the verb *tha* (the present independent active form of *bi*).

2. *An robh thu ann an Glaschu?*

- The (reduplicated) preposition *ann an* is the predicate of the verb *robh* (the past dependent active form of *bi*).

3. *a' chaileag a bhios a-muigh*

- The adverb *a-muigh* is the predicate of the verb *bhios* (the future relative active form of *bi*).

Modifiers

Any dependent of a verb which is not a subject, object or complement is a modifier – an optional element that adds additional detail to the description of a situation or event.

For example:

1. *Chunnaic Raonaid an cù a-raoir.*
 - The adverb *a-raoir* is a temporal modifier of the verb *chunnaic* (the past independent active form of *faic*).
2. *Sgrìobh an ceathramh balach beag gu a mhàthair, ged a bha e sgìth.*
 - The conjunction *ged* is a contrastive modifier of the verb *sgrìobh* (the past independent active form of *sgrìobh*).
3. *Am faca tu Màiri anns a' bhaile?*
 - The (linking) preposition *anns* is a locative modifier of the verb *faca* (the past dependent active form of *faic*).
4. *An robh thu ann an Glaschu gus am faiceadh tu do bhràthair?*
 - The particle *gus* is a purposive modifier of the verb *robh* (the past dependent active form of *bi*).

4.3.2 Noun dependencies

Specifier

A specifier is a dependent of a noun which serves to narrow down or specify the reference of the noun, often indicating definiteness or possession.

1. *balach*
 - The common noun *balach* has no specifier here.
2. *am balach*
 - The (nominative masculine singular) definite article *am* is the specifier of *balach*.
3. *do bhalach*
 - The (second person singular) possessive determiner *do* is the specifier of *balach*.
4. *balach Sheumais*
 - The (genitive masculine singular) proper noun *Sheumais* is the specifier of *balach*.
5. *balach a' mhinisteir*
 - The (genitive masculine singular) common noun *m(h)inisteir* is the specifier of *balach*.
 - The (genitive masculine singular) definite article *a'* is the specifier of *m(h)inisteir*.

6. *balach ministear na h-eaglaise*

- The (nominative masculine singular) common noun *ministear* is the specifier of *balach*.
- The (genitive feminine singular) common noun *eaglaise* is the specifier of *ministear*.
- The (genitive feminine singular) definite article *na* is the specifier of *eaglaise*.

Modifier

A dependent of a noun which is not a specifier is (usually) a modifier – an optional element that adds additional detail to the description of an entity.

For example:

1. *balach beag ruadh*

- The (attributive) adjectives *beag* and *ruadh* are both modifiers of *balach*.

2. *am balach anns a' ghàrradh*

- The (linking) preposition *anns* is a modifier of *balach*.

3. *balach sgoile*

- The (feminine, singular, genitive) common noun *sgoile* is a modifier of *balach*.

4. *am balach a chaidh a-steach*

- The (positive) relative particle *a* is a modifier of *balach*.

5. *am balach nach deach a-mach*

- The (negative) relative particle *nach* is a modifier of *balach*.

4.3.3 Other dependencies

Prepositional complements

A preposition has an obligatory complement, usually a noun.

For example:

1. *fo bhòrd*

- The (dative masculine singular) common noun *b(h)òrd* is the complement of the preposition *fo*.

2. *fon a' bhòrd*

- The (dative masculine singular) common noun *b(h)òrd* is the complement of the (linking) preposition *fo*.
- The (dative masculine singular) definite article *a'* is the specifier of the (dative masculine singular) common noun *b(h)òrd*.

3. *ri taobh na h-aibhne*

- The (dative masculine singular) common noun *taobh* is the complement of the preposition *ri*.
- The (genitive feminine singular) common noun *aibhne* is the specifier of *taobh*.
- The (genitive feminine singular) definite article *na* is the specifier of *aibhne*.

Verb particle complements

A verb particle has an obligatory complement – a (dependent) verb or another verb particle.

For example:

1. *Chan eil Màiri sgiùth.*

- The (present dependent active) verb *eil* is the complement of the (negative declarative) particle *cha(n)*.

2. *An do dh'ith sibh?*

- The (past dependent active) verb *ith* is the complement of the (reduplicated past tense) particle *do dh'*.
- The verb particle *do (dh')* is itself the complement of the (positive interrogative) verb particle *an*.

3. ... *gus am bris an latha ...*

- The (future dependent active) verb *bris* is the complement of the particle *am*.
- The particle *am* is itself the complement of the particle / conjunction *gus*.

Verbal nouns

1. *Tha Iain ag ionnsachadh na Gàidhlig.*

- The verb *tha* (the present independent active form of *bh*) is the root of this sentence.
- The proper noun *Iain* is the subject of *tha*.
- The progressive particle (preposition) *ag* is the predicate of *tha*.
- The verbal noun *ionnsachadh* is the complement of *ag*.
- The common noun *Gàidhlig* is the specifier of *ionnsachadh*.
- The definite article *na* is the specifier of *Gàidhlig*.
- Note also that:
 - The proper noun *Iain* is also the semantic subject of *ionnsaich (ionnsachadh)*.
 - The noun *Gàidhlig* is also the semantic object of *ionnsaich*.

2. *Feumaidh tu a' Ghàidhlig (a) ionnsachadh.*

- The verb *feumaidh* (the non-past independent form of the modal verb *feum*) is the root of this sentence.
- The personal pronoun *tu* is the subject of *feumaidh*.
- The following statements are open to question:
 - The particle *a* is the complement of *feumaidh*.
 - The verbal noun *ionnsachadh* is the complement of *a* (which is elided and not usually written).
 - The noun *Gàidhlig* is a dependent of *ionnsachadh*.
- Note also:
 - The pronoun *tu* is also the semantic subject of *ionnsaich*.
 - The noun *Gàidhlig* is the semantic object of *ionnsaich*.

3. *Tha Iain ga h-ionnsachadh.*

- The (fused) particle / preposition *ga* is the predicate of *tha*.
- The verbal noun *ionnsachadh* is the complement of *ga*.
- The embedded possessive determiner *a (h-)* is the deep object of *ionnsaich*.

4. *Feumaidh tu a h-ionnsachadh.*

- The verbal noun *ionnsachadh* is the complement of *feumaidh*.
- The possessive specifier / determiner *a (h-)* is the specifier of *ionnsachadh*.
- The possessive specifier / determiner *a (h-)* is also the deep object of *ionnsaich*.

4.4 Modular structure

Grammaticographical modules have (as far as is reasonable) the following basic structure:

- **header** – the headword, basic meaning, part of speech, etc.
- **forms** – inflectional forms of the headword, categorised by morphosyntactic features
- **dependents** – the kinds of grammatical dependent that the headword typically co-occurs with
- **uses** – the kinds of word that the headword is typically a grammatical dependent of (i.e. reverse valency patterns, etc.)

4.4.1 Noun modular structure

An example of a noun module is that for the feminine common noun *eaglais* ‘church’.

The **header** for this module might go something like:

- *eaglais* ‘church, kirk’ is a feminine (architectural) simple common noun.

This header will thence contain hyperlinks to ‘super-modules’ like the following:

- Architectural common nouns – a list of common nouns denoting kinds of building or edifice, along with some general properties common to all.
- Simple common nouns – a list of common nouns which are morphologically simple, i.e. not derivations or compounds.

These super-modules might in turn relate to even more general super-modules, such as those for ‘topological common nouns’, ‘common nouns’, all the way up to ‘nouns’.

The **forms** section of the *eaglais* module contains first of all the principal parts of the nouns:

The principal parts of *eaglais* are:

- *eaglais* – nominative / dative (/ vocative) singular
- *eaglais(e)* – genitive singular
- *eaglaisean* – plural.

There follows three different ways of classifying the declensional forms of the noun (automatically generated from a database where possible), thus allowing the user to browse for the form they are looking for in three different ways:

- definiteness – number – case
- number – definiteness – case
- case – definiteness – number.

The **dependents** section of the *eaglais* module presents examples of the word in context, classified according to the different kinds of grammatical dependent it can co-occur with (collocational classes), specifically:

- **specifier** – examples of *eaglais* used with both:
 - pre-specifiers, e.g. *Bha an eaglais falamh.*
 - post-specifiers, e.g. *Bha eaglais Sheumais falamh.*
- **modifier** – examples of *eaglais* used with different kinds of modifier e.g.
 - *an eaglais mhòr* (attributive)
 - *an eaglais ri taobh na h-aibhne* (locative)
 - *an eaglais nach eil falamh* (relative).

The various sub-sections of the **dependents** section can also be used to list relevant **idioms** (lexicalised multi-word expressions) involving *eaglais*, e.g.

- *Eaglais nam Manach Liath* ‘Greyfriars’ Church’ – *manach* is the specifier of *eaglais*
- *eaglais bhàn* ‘a vacant church’ – *b(h)àn* is a modifier of *eaglais*.

These idioms can in turn be hyperlinked to grammatical modules for the relevant component terms – *manach*, *liath*, *bàn*.

The **uses** section of the *eaglais* module presents further examples of the word in content, classified according to the different kinds of word it can be a grammatical dependent of (reverse collocational classes), specifically:

- **subject** – examples of *eaglais* used as the subject of a verb
- **object** – examples of *eaglais* used as the object of a verb
- **complement** – examples of *eaglais* used as the complement of a preposition
- **modifier** – examples of *eaglais* used as the modifier of another noun.

Again, these various sub-sections of the **uses** section can also be used to list relevant idioms involving *eaglais*, e.g.

- *maor-eaglaise* ‘beadle, church officer’ – *eaglais* is a modifier of *maor*.

Finally, the **uses** section of the *eaglais* module can be used to list (or link to) sub-modules where *eaglais* is used as a stem:

- compound nouns – *cathair-eaglais*, ...
- derivatives – *eaglaiseach*, *eaglaiseil*, ...

4.4.2 Hierarchy of noun modules

As mentioned previously, modules are organised into a complex hierarchy of super-modules and sub-modules, similar to the following:

- nouns
 - common nouns
 - GRAMMAR
 - simple common nouns – *bòrd*, *eaglais*, ...
 - derived common nouns – *bàrdachd*, *ceartas*, ...
 - compound common nouns – *beul-aithris*, *leth-chois*, ...
 - SEMANTICS
 - anthropic common nouns – *Leòdhasach*, *ministear*, ...

- architectural common nouns – *eaglais, taigh, ...*
- quantity nouns –
 - generic quantity nouns – *beagan, uiread, ...*
 - numeric quantity nouns – *dithis, fichead, ...*
- proper nouns
 - anthroponymic proper nouns – *Seumas, Raonaid, ...*
 - toponymic proper nouns – *Glaschu, Nirribhidh, ...*

In the course of the current project, it has only been possible to flesh out a small part of this complex hierarchy. It is expected that more branches will be added in future work.

In addition, similar hierarchies are being developed for other parts of speech, in particular verbs and prepositions. In all of these modules, sub-modules and super-modules, the same structure is maintained where possible:

- header, forms, dependents, uses (see §4.4 above).

4.5 Modular review process

Desired output: “agreement between the community, the academics and the professionals on the minimum general standards for grammar and orthography in the presentation and teaching of Gaelic”.

The review process used for grammatical modules, sub-modules and super-modules was as follows:

1. A particular word or class of words (either grammatical or semantic) was selected as being worthy of detailed study by consultation with professional users of Gaelic (political legitimacy).
2. Initial research was carried out by consulting existing dictionaries and grammar books. This research was used to establish hypotheses for empirical investigation using *Corpas na Gàidhlig* (including *Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal* materials).
3. Corpus research was undertaken in two stages:
 - (a) Using the Meanma system (developed primarily for use by *Faclair na Gàidhlig* staff) to conduct detailed analysis of a 10-million word 20th-century sub-corpus.
 - (b) Using the DASG-CQPweb version of *Corpus na Gàidhlig* to conduct additional research on the full 30-million word corpus.
4. Detailed descriptions of the results were written up as mini-reports, of which there were 50 for the LEACAN project (see §7.3.1). This research was used to establish further hypotheses and areas for investigation with the help of the traditional speaker consultants in the form of detailed questionnaires.

5. Feedback from the questionnaires was collated and used to draft detailed, hierarchic grammatical modules, assigned a bronze star to indicate candidate status.
6. These modules were exported as MS Word documents, and reviewed by Professor Ó Maolalaigh, Dr Mandić and Professor Lamb. The resulting revised modules were assigned a silver star, to indicate that they had come through a quality control process involving both traditional speakers (popular legitimacy) and grammar experts (scientific legitimacy).
7. It is envisaged that after an agreed period of time in the public domain, a module may be upgraded to gold star status, by some as yet to be agreed process. These status levels could be represented next to the headword on the guidance modules.
8. The process for compound words and hyphenation was different. This involved corpus research as well as traditional desk research into previous work in these areas. This was conducted by the Corpus Researcher, Dr David Mandić, whose work was supervised by the PI, Professor Rob Ó Maolalaigh, who also contributed to the work. An initial mini-report was written and issues identified. A detailed questionnaire was prepared and an interview with a traditional speaker (a member of the professional Gaelic community) was conducted following a successful research ethics application to the College of Arts. A separate report with recommendations was prepared by Professor Ó Maolalaigh and Dr Mandić and a small set of supplementary questions was sent to the traditional speaker whose responses were incorporated into the final research report.

4.6 Access to and future use of LEACAN resources

The LEACAN website can be found at <https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/>. The modular guidance itself is stored as a collection of lightly annotated XML files in a public GitHub repository, published under a CC-BY-NC licence. Anyone (with a basic knowledge of XML) wishing to build upon this guidance (for example, adding to an existing module, or adding a new module) can do this by cloning the public repository to their own computer and making their own changes locally. Of course, any changes or additions can only be merged back into the public repository with the agreement and authorisation of the LEACAN editorial team. In addition, anyone is free to adapt the website content to be used for their own (fully attributed, non-commercial) purposes, for example teachers using it to prepare learning materials for their students.

4.7 LEACAN Content Management Systems (CMS) documentation

The LEACAN website is part of the DASG website.

4.7.1. The repository

The master copy of the LEACAN repository is located here:

- <https://github.com/Digital-Archive-of-Scottish-Gaelic/leacan>

4.7.2 Macrostructure – code

The code macrostructure is as follows:

```
leacan
> index.php
> controllers
  > module.php
> models
  > module.php
> views
  > module.php
> module.xsl
> print.xsl
> references.xsl
```

These files can be explained as follows:

- index.php – HTML/Bootstrap¹ for the main page
- controllers/module.php – the main (lone) controller for the app
- models/module.php – converts an XML module into HTML/Bootstrap using one of the XSLT scripts discussed below; also creates main homepage content
- views/module.php – prints the converted HTML/Bootstrap in the browser
- module.xsl – converts an XML module into HTML/Bootstrap, using collapsing section
- print.xsl – converts an XML module into HTML/Bootstrap suitable for printing
- references.xsl – used by both previous XSLT scripts; encodes references.

In retrospect it is probably overkill to organise a very simple webapp like this using MVC ('model-view-controller' paradigm), and it could certainly be simplified/refactored.

4.7.3 Macrostructure – data

The data macrostructure is as follows:

```
data
> en
  > a, b, c, ...
  > i
```

¹ Bootstrap is the framework used to simplify the creation of the webpages. It contains a lot of sophisticated standardised dynamic components that we would otherwise need to program ourselves – drop-downs, toggles, etc.

```
> if.xml
> j, k, l, ...
> gd
  > a
    > abair.xml
    > ag.xml
    > ...
  > b
    > barrachd.xml
    > beir.xml
    > ...
  > ...
> q
  > banca.xml
  > goc.xml
  > verbal_aspect.xml
  > ...
> xx
  > nouns
    > nouns.xml
    > names.xml
    > ...
  > adjectives
    > adjectives.xml
    > ...
  > ...
```

The top-level data directories are described as follows:

- en – modules for English terms, organised alphabetically
- gd – modules for Gaelic terms, organised alphabetically
- q – modules for grammatical questions, etc.
- xx – modules for grammatical topics, organised by part-of-speech.

4.7.4 Modular microstructure

The schema for the modular XML files is here:

leacan

> module.rnc

The basic macrostructure of a module is as follows:

module @status

> h

> p *

> (module | section) *

In other words:

- Every module has a status – bronze, silver, gold – denoting the ‘maturity’ of the grammatical description as defined in the LEACAN report.
- A module starts with a header h, representing the title of the module.
- The header can be followed by one or more paragraphs p of content.
- These content paragraphs can be followed by one or more sections or sub-modules.

Sections and sub-modules have the same internal structure as the main modules (headers, paragraphs etc.), with the following additional feature:

- If the module or section has an id attribute, then it will be expandable and collapsible in the web browser. If there is no id attribute, it won't.

4.7.5 Textual microstructure

The content of a header h or paragraph p can consist of normal plain text content, marked up where necessary with the following elements:

- g – Gaelic-language terms (currently displayed in bold face)
- m – text with highlighted background
- emph – emphatic text (currently displayed using italics)
- en – English-language translation of Gaelic examples (currently displayed as muted text in single quotes)
- bad – ungrammatical Gaelic examples (currently displayed preceded by * and decorated with a wibbly green line underneath)
- ed – an editorial note (currently displayed in red type).

The following empty elements are used to ensure a consistent display of grammatical terms and typographical abbreviations:

- <masc/> – masculine noun
- <fem/> – feminine noun
- <adj/> – adjective
- <vb/> – verb

- `<slen/>` – slenderised form
- `<etc/>` – et cetera
- `<eg/>` – for example.

There are two kinds of hyperlink elements, each of which takes a standard href attribute:

- `a` – an internal (ie. within LEACAN) link (opens in same tab/window)
- `ax` – an external link (opens in a new tab/window).

The two standard HTML list types are allowed in text content:

- `ul` – unordered list
- `ol` – ordered list (i.e. numbered).

If either of these has an id attribute, then it will be expandable and collapsable in the web browser.

There is also a special list type `xl` ('example list') for examples of grammatical usage:

```
<xl>
  <li>
    <gd>Tha Calum sgith.</gd>
    <tr>Malcolm is tired.</tr>
    <ref text="23">td. 54</ref>
  </li>
  . . .
</xl>
```

In other words, an example consists of three parts:

- a Gaelic sentence in `gd`
- an English translation in `tr` (optional)
- a textual referent in `ref` – the corpus text numbers and details are defined in `references.xsl` as explained above.

Liberal use is made of XML comments `<!-- blah -->` in the files for two main purposes:

- to encode additional comments from consultants and reviewers for future reference
- to 'comment out' chunks of deprecated content that may be useful in future iterations of the guidance modules.

4.8 DASG server

The following statement on the DASG server was provided by Mike Irwin, Head of IT College of Arts & Humanities, University of Glasgow (28 Sept 2023), which provides assurance for future sustainability and security of DASG-related resources, including LEACAN:

“The recent incident on the DASG server which led to the websites being offline for an extended period was caused by the complete failure of one hard disk on a ten-year-old server, with the remaining one disk of the mirrored pair having bad sectors, and not able to be booted.

The initial drive failure was due to a combination of age and the failure of a power supply on the server, which had been running well past its intended production lifespan of three to five years.

The problem was compounded by backup scripts that were in place, written ten years previously not being updated to reflect changes on the machine’s configuration.

Going forward wherever possible research related websites including DASG’s will be hosted by an external service provider. Many of the College’s websites have already been migrated to this provider, facilitated by the Information Services Research Computing As A Service (RCAAS) Team. This service provision is inclusive of security updates and backups.²

DASG resources requiring local-on-campus hosting are to be housed on new server hardware along with other locally hosted College sites. Backups will be appropriately configured and the integrity of the revised backup process inclusive of file recovery on that server has already been tested and confirmed.³

A full review and modernisation of existing hardware lifespan, monitoring and backup procedures within the College of Arts & Humanities IT Infrastructure was underway prior to this outage. The planned changes will lead to further data security for DASG and other sites.”

² This has now been implemented.

³ This has now been implemented.

5. Gaelic orthography

5.1 Background

The second output required from the LEACAN project was:

- “a sustainable public system for coordinating and recording popular developments in Gaelic orthography”.

The first of the five desired work methods included:

- “[...] modular formatting [...] of the Gaelic Orthographic Conventions (GOC) [...]”.

In response to this, the project team agreed the following task with the funder:

- “We will incorporate GOC 2009 into the modular online system.”

5.2 Gaelic Orthographic Conventions

The introduction to the *Gaelic Orthographic Conventions* (2009) provides the following background (p. 1):

- “In 1976, the Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board (SCEEB), at the request of its Gaelic Panel, set up a Sub-committee of the Panel to investigate issues related to Gaelic orthography. Inconsistencies in the standard of written Gaelic had been noted by SCEEB Examiners and it was felt that guidelines should be created to ensure that an authoritative set of orthographic conventions was adopted by teachers and examination candidates. It was also important that Examiners, Setters and Markers would use the document when dealing with Gaelic examination papers and scripts.
- “The findings of the Sub-committee were published in 1981 in the document *Gaelic Orthographic Conventions (GOC)*. This document has proved to be a valuable foundation for many areas of Gaelic development since then as Gaelic usage has expanded into different domains of public life in Scotland.
- “The need for new terminology arising from the growth of Gaelic Medium Education, the expansion of Gaelic in the media and the increased use of language in public administration led the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), which superseded the SCEEB, to conclude that the document should be reviewed and updated, whilst adhering to the principles and recommendations contained in the original. It is intended that this updated document should be easier to use, and the extended word list is designed to illustrate more fully the application of the conventions. In most cases a single orthographic form is recommended, although it is recognised that, in some instances, more than one form is in use. The revised word list is not intended to be, nor to resemble, a dictionary. It is a source of reference which users of the document may wish to consult when in doubt as to how a word, or related word or phrase, should be spelt. Explanatory notes have been kept to a minimum. This edition — published in bilingual format as part of SQA’s Gaelic Language Plan — contains a number of amendments to the new 2005 edition.”

The 2014 Dlùth is Inneach report on ideologic foundations and institutional frameworks for Gaelic corpus development noted the need for further work on GOC (p. 149):

- “Some participants requested that further progress be made with standardisation of Gaelic spelling. This was particularly needed for consistency of new terminology and the spelling of loan words.”

5.3 Progress

The 2009 GOC guidelines have been modularised (with permission from SQA, **Appendix A**) and imported into the online guidance, available here:

- <http://www.leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/index.php?q=goc>

The GOC guidelines remain the copyright of the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

Note that the standardised Bootstrap markup implemented in the guidance CMS allows for the following additional functionality:

- Appropriate cross-references between the orthographic guidance and the grammatical guidance can be inserted easily.
- Changes can be made to the orthographic guidance without impacting on the underlying original structure.
- Future changes to the orthographic guidance, including comments, additions and deletions, can be marked or highlighted visually so that original and amended entries will be clear to users.

5.4 Hyphenation

Desk, including corpus, research was carried out on hyphenation by the Corpus Researcher, Dr David Mandić, with supervision and input from Professor Rob Ó Maolalaigh. An initial mini-report was written and issues were identified. A detailed questionnaire was prepared and an interview with a traditional speaker (a member of the professional Gaelic community) was conducted following a successful research ethics application to the College of Arts. A separate mini-report on Gaelic compounds with recommendations on hyphenation from a purely scientific / linguistic point of view was prepared by Dr Mandić and Professor Ó Maolalaigh, and a small set of supplementary questions were sent to the traditional speaker, the results of which have been included in our research output. A research paper on these topics has been included in the research papers gathered together in **Appendix D: Aspects of Gaelic Grammar**. Two draft blogs on these issues were prepared and posted on the DASG website during October 2023. Recommendations from a purely scientific / linguistic point of view are made. If changes are to be made to the guidance on the use of hyphenation in Gaelic, a much wider consultation exercise will be needed.

6. Bank of Linguistic Resources for Gaelic (*Banca na Gàidhlig*)

6.1 Background

The following work method was specified in the guidance for this research project:

- “Design of a bank of linguistic issues for public access to guidance elements and other publications about Gaelic corpus in the public domain (cf. <http://bdl.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca/bdl> by the Government of Québec).”

At the start of the project, the research team made the following commitment:

- “We will incorporate, within or adjacent to the online, modular grammar guidance system, a comprehensive public bank of publications relating to Gaelic corpus issues, comparable in vision and scope to the Office québécois de la langue française’s Banque de dépannage linguistique.”

The Banque de dépannage linguistique (BDL) website of the Office Québécois de la Langue Française provides explanations and examples of the variations and intricacies of everyday Canadian French. Below is a summary of the organisation and contents of their indexing methods.

6.1.1 Alphabetic index

In this, words are organised by alphabetical order. Clicking on a word opens a page which gives a description of the word, including a brief definition, gender, examples, and the presence of any existing homophones (e.g. [Banque de dépannage linguistique - Chœur et cœur \(gouv.qc.ca\)](http://bdl.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca)) (this latter feature is, probably, more of an issue for French than Gaelic (or indeed most languages) and is therefore not perhaps a feature which must be given prime importance in database development).

Words that change form depending on their usage are also listed and the reasons for their changes explained.

Names of organisations are also included, and their alphabetical categorisation explained (e.g. [Banque de dépannage linguistique - Associations \(gouv.qc.ca\)](http://bdl.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca)).

Words that feature notable grammatical features are given further explanation, particularly for pronunciation. This could be as important for Gaelic as it is for French (e.g. [Banque de dépannage linguistique - Chœur et cœur \(gouv.qc.ca\)](http://bdl.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca)).

A colour coding system is used in examples, with green indicating a favoured usage of a word or term, and red the discouraged usage.

This index is useful for those searching for specific words, but slightly less so for grammatical comparisons. It is self-explanatory and simple to use, and would be readily accessible for general users. It would also be of use for those conducting linguistic research.

N Nouveautés

Index alphabétique
[A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#) [Autre](#)

[Index alphabétique](#)

[Index thématique](#)

[Liste des articles](#)

N Nouveautés

Index alphabétique
[A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#) [Autre](#)

[Index alphabétique](#)

[Index thématique](#)

[Liste des articles](#)

C
 C
 C
 C, c
 C, c, l
 Cest
 Cest
 Cest-à-dire
 C'est avec plaisir que
 C'est là que
 C'est... que
 C'est... que
 C'est... ma
 C'est... oui
 C, Y
 c
 Ca
 Ca
 Ca
 Ca et là
 Cabine téléphonique
 Cabinet
 Cabinet-conseil
 Cabine
 Cabine à booster
 Câbleur, câbleuse
 Cadreur
 Cadet, cadette
 Cadran
 Caduc
 Cadre exécutif
 Cadreur, cadreuse
 Caduc
 Cafetier, cafetière
 Cahier
 Cahot
 Caisseau
 Caissier, caissière
 Calculer
 Calécan
 Calécanneur

N Nouveautés

Résultats de la recherche

[Chœur et cœur](#) [[Homophones lexicaux](#)]
[Lettre double ç](#) [[Prononciation de certaines lettres](#)]

[Index alphabétique](#)

[Index thématique](#)

[Liste des articles](#)

N Nouveautés

Résultats de la recherche
 L'orthographe
 Homophones lexicaux

[Index alphabétique](#)

[Index thématique](#)

[Liste des articles](#)

Chœur et cœur

Chœur et cœur sont des homophones, c'est-à-dire des mots de même prononciation mais de sens différents.

Chœur est un nom masculin qui désigne un groupe de chanteurs et, par métonymie, la composition musicale que chante un chœur. Le chœur est aussi la partie de l'orgue où est situé le maître-autel. Des mots tels que chorale et même chorégraphe ont une origine commune avec chœur.

Exemples :

- Elle chante dans un **chœur** depuis plusieurs années.
- Les opéras et oratorios de Haendel contiennent de nombreux **chœurs**.
- La chœur était située à l'extrémité gauche du **chœur**.

Cœur est un nom masculin qui désigne d'abord le muscle situé dans la poitrine responsable de la circulation sanguine. Ce mot désigne aussi le centre des émotions. Il est enfin employé pour parler de la partie centrale de quelque chose. L'aspect du cœur étant caractéristique, le mot évoque aussi cette forme particulière. De nombreux mots ont avec cœur une origine commune, dont courage, découragement, Accuser, Accablement. Quelques mots composés sont construits à partir de cœur : *crève-cœur, accroc-cœur, haut-le-cœur, saut-cœur*.

Exemples :

- Son **cœur** n'a pas résisté à l'opération.
- Prendre l'ascenseur lui soulevait le **cœur**.
- Il était avéré qu'**cœur** pour conserver sa vie aux paumes.
- Leurs nouveaux bureaux sont situés en plein **cœur** de la ville.

6.1.2 Thematic index

This index is broken up into 12 subdivisions: grammar; orthography; syntax; vocabulary; English loan words; punctuation; pronunciation; typography; proper nouns; acronyms, abbreviations and symbols; phrasing and communication; and ‘behind the scenes’ of the language. Each of these subdivisions then itself is split into sections; see the below screen-grab images as examples.

The final pages give examples of usage; explanations of usage of words/terms; why they are used in specific ways; gender variations in suffixes, etc.; information on tone/register; specific pronunciation points through IPA; etc.

This Index provides very useful and important grammatical information but is less direct than the alphabetical index when searching for a specific word. The construction of this index raises questions of when one should stop sub-dividing, as it is rather complicated for what it sets out to do, which could put people off using it.

Some of the terms used, even when translated, are somewhat convoluted and/or technical. A grammatical index of this nature would certainly be easier for experienced academics and linguists to use rather than students and members of the public, which raises the question of site accessibility for a broader audience.

Nevertheless, it does still offer a better service for those searching broader themes, and particular grammar points, than the alphabetical index, and would therefore still be of use to people conducting Gaelic research.

The screenshots show the following content:

- Top Screenshot:** A search bar titled "Banque de dépannage linguistique" with a "CHERCHER" button. Below it are navigation buttons: "Nouveautés", "Index alphabétique", "Index thématique", and "Liste des articles". The "Index thématique" section lists 12 categories with article counts: La grammaire (506 articles), L'orthographe (301 articles), La syntaxe (194 articles), Le vocabulaire (652 articles), Les encadrements à fautes (355 articles), La ponctuation (85 articles), La prononciation (130 articles), La typographie (205 articles), Les noms propres (58 articles), Les sigles, abréviations et symboles (95 articles), La rédaction et la communication (248 articles), and Dans les coulisses de la langue (10 articles).
- Middle Screenshot:** A sub-section titled "Index thématique" and "La grammaire". It lists "La grammaire (9 sous-thèmes)": Le nom (144 articles), Le verbe (155 articles), L'adjectif (73 articles), Les déterminants (26 articles), Les pronoms (23 articles), L'adverbe (22 articles), Les homophones grammaticaux (23 articles), La nouvelle grammaire (20 articles), and Références (2 articles).
- Bottom Screenshot:** A sub-section titled "Index thématique" and "La grammaire" with a sub-sub-section "Le nom". It lists "Le nom (3 sous-thèmes)": Accord du nom en phrase (77 articles), Pluriel des noms (47 articles), and Genre des noms (20 articles).

6.1.3 'Liste des articles'

This index simply lists all the articles, i.e. pages at the end of each index search that actually contains the information, categorised in the same 12 subdivisions as the Thematic Index.

This list is easier to navigate than the thematic index as it simply lists all the pages but is rather time consuming given the volume of material on offer. We believe this list to be slightly less useful from a research perspective than the other two indexes, or a simple search function. Whilst simpler to use than the thematic index for a broader range of site users, its extent and long-windedness would potentially lead to accessibility issues for some users, and is perhaps of less use on a site that already includes two indexes and a search function.

Liste des articles (3074 articles)

Afficher tout Masquer tout

- La grammaire
- L'orthographe
- La syntaxe
- Le vocabulaire
- Les emprunts à l'anglais
- La ponctuation
- La prononciation
- La typographie
- Les noms propres
- Les sigles, abréviations et symboles
- La rédaction et la communication
- Dans les coulisses de la langue

La grammaire

Le nom

Accord du nom en phrase

Nom complément du nom

Chasse à Confiture, compote, jus de..., Fin de semaine, Genre de, espèce de, suivis d'un complément, Nombre du complément du nom, Taux de

Nom épithète

- Généralités sur le nom épithète: Beauté, Bénéfice, Bon marché, Cadeau, Cadre, Chef, Choc, Cible, Cité, Conseil, Dernier cri, Éclair, Grand public, Jeunesse, Laser, Limite, Maison, Maître, maîtresse, Mère, Modèle, Nature, Papier, Papillon, Phare, Pilote, Pirate, Plafond et plancher, Record, Santé, Souvenir, Surprise, Synthèse, Témoin, Tendances, Type, Vedette, Web

Nom après une expression de quantité ou de catégorie

Nombre fractionnaire inférieur à deux

Nom après certaines prépositions

À parts égales, À problèmes, À risque, De... en, En, Expressions avec moment, Par, Sans

Cas particuliers d'accord du nom

- Tableau-synthèse - noms invariables, Amateur, Avant-midi et après-midi, Couleur, Couple de noms épithètes d'un autre nom, De toute manière et de toute façon, Effectif, Election, En région, Félicitations, Jours de la semaine, Moment, Mots employés occasionnellement comme noms, Nom des lettres de l'alphabet, Nom qualifié par plus d'un adjectif, Noms dérivés d'infinitifs, Numéraux cardinaux employés comme noms, Onomatopées, Personnel, Remerciement, Sortir en salle, Trouver, suivi d'un nom, Un de ces, Zéro

Chasse à

Le nom *chasse* peut s'employer seul, mais il peut aussi être déterminé par un autre nom précisant soit l'animal qui est chassé, soit l'instrument ou le moyen employé pour chasser, soit l'endroit où se déroule la chasse : *chasse au chevreuil, aux papillons; chasse à l'affût, au chien d'arrêt; chasse au bois, en plaine*.

Lorsque *chasse* est déterminé par un nom désignant l'animal poursuivi, on peut se demander si ce nom d'animal doit se mettre au singulier ou au pluriel : écrit-on *chasse au lièvre* ou *aux lièvres*? *chasse au phoque* ou *aux phoques*? Il n'existe pas de règle précise à ce sujet dans les grammaires, mais les emplois recensés dans les dictionnaires et dans l'usage indiquent que le singulier est beaucoup plus fréquent, probablement parce qu'on fait alors référence à l'espèce en général et que le singulier évoque justement la généralité.

Exemples :

- Ici, la population ne s'oppose pas à la **chasse au phoque**
- Comme son nom l'indique, le lièvre était entraîné pour la **chasse au lièvre**.
- Le Japon évoque la recherche scientifique pour permettre la **chasse à la baleine**.
- Mon père est depuis toujours un adepte de la **chasse à l'original**.

Le pluriel est pour sa part le plus souvent observé lorsqu'il s'agit de petits animaux que l'on capture habituellement en nombre (*chasse aux gélinoles, aux perdrix, aux alouettes*, etc.), même si le singulier est également correct dans ces cas. Bien sûr, le pluriel s'impose tout naturellement dans certains contextes en raison du sens de la phrase : soit parce que l'on désigne plusieurs espèces à la fois, soit parce que l'on insiste sur la pluralité des animaux chassés.

Exemples :

- Son père lui a appris les rudiments de la **chasse aux canards** (ou : **chasse au canard**)
- Pourquoi ne pas organiser une **chasse aux papillons** avec les écoliers? (capture en grand nombre)
- Ils vivaient principalement de la **chasse aux fauves** : lions, tigres, guépards, etc. (plusieurs espèces désignées)

Chasse s'emploie aussi par extension, dans des sens figurés ou analogiques, pour désigner la recherche de quelque chose, ou même la cueillette de végétaux sauvages. Selon le sens de la phrase, selon aussi le nombre et la taille des objets ainsi « chassés », on optera pour le singulier ou le pluriel.

6.1.4 Search function

The site also features a simple 'search function', which allows one to search for specific words or articles. This means one can search not only for specific words in the language, but general terms such as 'adjective' to find articles relating to that topic. This is a particularly useful function as it is both quick and self-explanatory. It is however easier for people who know specifically what they are looking for, whereas the indexes are easier to browse for someone less used to this kind of database, or who is perhaps looking more broadly for grammatical themes. It is a very useful accompaniment to the indexes and is certainly of benefit to anyone using the site. Below is an example of how the search function works for a word search.

Banque de dépannage linguistique

seul

Résultats de la recherche

[Seul \[Adjectif employé comme adverbe\]](#)
[Seul à seul \[Cas particuliers d'accord de l'adjectif\]](#)

Nouveautés

Résultats de la recherche
[La grammaire](#)
L'adjectif > Adjectif employé comme adverbe

Index alphabétique

Index thématique

Liste des articles

Seul

L'adjectif *seul* a plusieurs sens. Il peut entre autres vouloir dire « qui n'est pas avec un autre ou d'autres », « qui est isolé », « qui est esseulé », « qui est unique », « qui est incomparable ». Comme n'importe quel autre adjectif, *seul* s'accorde en genre et en nombre avec le nom qu'il caractérise.

Exemples :

- Les élèves étaient **seuls** dans la classe; personne ne savait où était passé l'enseignant.
- Marie vit toute **seule** avec sa fille.
- Malheureusement, il est mort comme il a vécu : entièrement **seul**.
- Elle respire avec un **seul** poumon.
- Clique une **seule** fois sur le bouton droit de la souris.
- La **seule** raison de la participation de Luc à ce comité est que Sophie y siège.
- Julie et sa jumelle sont **seules** en leur genre : quelles filles épatantes!

Par ailleurs, l'adjectif *seul* est aussi parfois employé avec une valeur adverbiale. Dans ce cas, il a toujours une valeur restrictive comme *seulement*. Il signifie « sans rien, sans personne de plus ». À première vue, logiquement, l'invariabilité de *seul* dans ce contexte devrait s'imposer. Mais la tradition grammaticale dicte pourtant son accord et l'usage est bien fixé. Ainsi, le mot *seul* employé comme adverbe recevra les marques de genre et de nombre du nom sur lequel il fait porter une restriction.

Exemples :

- **Seuls** ses parents savaient qu'elle était malade.
- La peur **seule** empêchait la révolte du peuple.
- Son amitié compte **seule** pour moi.
- **Seuls** sont invités à cette fête nos amis les plus proches.

▲

Below is an example of the search function when searching for a grammatical term rather than a word. Individual articles are listed that include the term; when clicked on, one is taken straight there rather than through the thematic subdivisions, which is quite a bit quicker than the index

functions. Note the use of green and red word colouring for preferred and discouraged language usage as previously mentioned.

Banque de dépannage linguistique

N Nouveautés

Résultats de la recherche

- Généralités sur l'adjectif employé comme adverbe [[Adjectif employé comme adverbe](#)]
 Abréviations des mots qui commencent par A [[Listes d'abréviations](#)]
 Adjectif après un complément du nom [[Cas particuliers d'accord de l'adjectif en phrase](#)]
 Adjectif attribut du sujet [[Accord de l'adjectif attribut](#)]
 Adjectif attribut introduit par se faire [[Accord de l'adjectif attribut](#)]
 Adjectif attribut lorsque le sujet est sous-entendu [[Accord de l'adjectif attribut](#)]
 Adjectif attribut lorsque le sujet est un infinitif [[Accord de l'adjectif attribut](#)]
 Adjectif avec des noms synonymes [[Cas particuliers d'accord de l'adjectif en phrase](#)]
 Adjectif avec deux noms joints par comme, ainsi que, etc. [[Accord de l'adjectif qualifiant plus d'un nom](#)]
 Adjectif avec deux noms joints par et [[Accord de l'adjectif qualifiant plus d'un nom](#)]
 Adjectif avec deux noms joints par ni ou par ou [[Accord de l'adjectif qualifiant plus d'un nom](#)]
 Adjectif avec vous de politesse [[Accord de l'adjectif qualifiant un pronom personnel](#)]
 Adjectif employé à la forme neutre [[Cas particuliers d'accord de l'adjectif en phrase](#)]
 Adjectif en tête de phrase [[Cas particuliers d'accord de l'adjectif en phrase](#)]
 Adjectif introduit par de [[Cas particuliers d'accord de l'adjectif en phrase](#)]
 Adjectif qualificatif ou participe passé détaché du reste de la phrase [[Constructions syntaxiques boiteuses](#)]
 Adjectifs coordonnés [[Cas particuliers d'accord de l'adjectif en phrase](#)]
 Adjectifs invariables en genre [[Formation du féminin des adjectifs](#)]
 Adjectifs terminés par -c [[Formation du féminin des adjectifs](#)]
 Des devant un adjectif antéposé [[Articles](#)]
 Formation et accord des adjectifs composés [[Formation du pluriel des adjectifs](#)]
 Graphies du son j [[Problèmes liés aux consonnes](#)]
 L'accord de l'adjectif se rapportant à un doublet [[La féminisation syntaxique](#)]
 L'adjectif et le groupe adjectival [[Les classes de mots et les groupes](#)]
 Le complément de l'adjectif [[Les fonctions](#)]
 Le complément du nom [[Les fonctions](#)]
 L'emploi des adjectifs épiciques [[La formulation neutre](#)]
 Les adjectifs dans les noms composés féminins [[Formation de noms féminins](#)]
 Les adjectifs et les participes passés [[Doublets abrégés](#)]
 Liste d'adjectifs de couleur [[Formation du pluriel des adjectifs](#)]
 Nom qualifié par plus d'un adjectif [[Cas particuliers d'accord du nom](#)]
 Participe passé d'un verbe pronominal suivi d'un adjectif, d'un autre participe passé ou d'un infinitif [[Cas particuliers d'accord du participe passé](#)]
 Pluriel des adjectifs en -al [[Formation du pluriel des adjectifs](#)]
 Répétition du déterminant devant le nom précédé de plusieurs adjectifs [[Articles](#)]

N Nouveautés

Résultats de la recherche

[La grammaire](#)
 L'adjectif - Adjectif employé comme adverbe

- Généralités sur l'adjectif employé comme adverbe

Il existe une certaine ressemblance entre l'adjectif et l'adverbe. Le premier se joint à un nom ou à un pronom pour en compléter le sens, le second précise le sens d'un verbe, d'un adjectif, d'un autre adverbe ou d'une phrase. Le parallèle qu'on peut établir entre les rôles syntaxiques de l'un et de l'autre dans la phrase explique sans doute que l'adjectif soit parfois employé adverbiallement. Cela dit, quand l'adjectif est utilisé à la manière d'un adverbe, il demeure généralement invariable.

Exemples :

- Ces bijoux diamantés coûtent **cher**.
- La gamine endormie pesait **lourd** sur l'épaule de sa mère.
- Les chouettes sont des oiseaux qui volent **bas**.
- Elle a coupé **court** à la conversation.
- Lucie était **fin** prête à recevoir ses invités.
- Les employés se sont montrés **fort** attentionnés envers le nouveau stagiaire.

Notons qu'en dehors des expressions consacrées, l'emploi d'un adjectif pour compléter le sens d'un verbe relève de la langue familière.

Exemples :

- Après le travail, Hélène se rend **direct** à la maison. (plutôt : **directement**)
- Quand je joue à ce jeu vidéo, je récolte **facile** cent mille points. (plutôt : **facilement**)
- Ses trois enfants, Jean les aime tous **pareil**. (plutôt : **pareillement**)

Par ailleurs, dans quelques contextes, l'adjectif peut être considéré soit comme un adverbe, soit comme un adjectif attribut. Dans le premier cas, il modifie le sens du verbe et demeure invariable. Dans le second, il exprime une caractéristique du sujet par l'intermédiaire du verbe, et s'accorde ainsi en genre et en nombre avec le nom auquel il se rapporte.

6.1.5 New features

Another feature of the site is the 'Nouveautés' tab, which provides links to the most recent articles to be uploaded. This feature is a good way of showing what work has recently been done (and perhaps serves as much to inform the public and those funding the project what work is currently being done).

Banque de dépannage linguistique

CHERCHER

Nouveautés Index des nouveautés (7 articles)

[Campagne et opération](#) [[Emploi de la majuscule pour des noms particuliers](#)]
[Climatisé et conditionné](#) [[Mises au point](#)]
[Confiner et déconfiner](#) [[Usages](#)]
[Diplôme et finissant](#) [[Nuances sémantiques](#)]
[Fest est-il acceptable en français?](#) [[Emprunts intégraux](#)]
[Graduation et graduer](#) [[Emprunts sémantiques](#)]
[Isolation et isolement](#) [[Nuances sémantiques](#)]

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Nouveautés Index des nouveautés

[La typographie](#)
Majuscules > [Emploi de la majuscule pour des noms particuliers](#)

Campagne et opération **Nouveauté**

Les noms *campagne* et *opération* peuvent désigner des actions ou des séries d'actions très diverses, par exemple à visée caritative, promotionnelle ou informative, ou encore, de nature policière ou militaire. Selon le contexte, ils s'écriront avec ou sans majuscule initiale.

Opérations caritatives, promotionnelles, etc.

Lorsqu'ils constituent le premier mot d'une dénomination officielle enregistrée, comparable à une marque de commerce, les noms *campagne* et *opération* prennent une majuscule initiale. Par ailleurs, une telle dénomination s'écrit en romain, et non en italique.

Exemples :

- La **C**ampagne du partage
- La **C**ampagne pour la prévention du suicide
- L'**O**opération patrimoine Québec
- L'**O**opération bienveillance

Lorsqu'ils précèdent une dénomination officielle, mais qu'ils n'en font pas partie intégrante, ou lorsqu'ils ont une valeur générique, *campagne* et *opération* s'écrivent avec une minuscule initiale. Il en va de même lorsqu'ils désignent une activité sans caractère officiel; on peut alors, dans ce cas, employer les guillemets pour encadrer la dénomination qui les caractérise.

Exemples :

- La **c**ampagne Entraide (le mot *campagne* ne fait pas partie de la dénomination officielle)
- La **c**ampagne de financement de l'Hôpital Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré (le mot *campagne* a une valeur générique)
- L'**o**opération Environnement-Plage (le mot *opération* ne fait pas partie de la dénomination officielle)
- L'**o**opération « grand ménage » de la maison (ou : L'**o**opération grand ménage; le mot *opération* fait référence à une activité courante, sans caractère officiel)

6.1.6 Conclusion

All the above indexes and functions have benefits and drawbacks. In our opinion, the search function is the most useful individual function, and is complimented by the two indexes – the Alphabetic Index, and the Thematic Index. Our view is that the presence of both these indexes reduces the need for the List of Articles, though it does still have some merit and in any case would almost certainly feature on any site of this type to allow an easier starting point for those undergoing a general browse of articles.

The ‘Nouveautés’ function is interesting, but perhaps of limited use.

The website is a solid design from which to draw experience and inspiration for a future Gaelic site of a similar style and purpose. It currently has the following main components:

- [L’orthographe \[297 articles\]](#)
- [La grammaire \[502 articles\]](#)
- [La rédaction et la communication \[311 articles\]](#)
- [La syntaxe \[191 articles\]](#)
- [La ponctuation \[92 articles\]](#)
- [Le vocabulaire \[562 articles\]](#)
- [Les emprunts à l’anglais \[349 articles\]](#)
- [La typographie \[164 articles\]](#)
- [Les abréviations et les symboles \[44 articles\]](#)
- [Les noms propres \[12 articles\]](#)
- [La prononciation \[143 articles\]](#)

6.2 Output: Bank of Linguistic Resources for Gaelic (*Banca na Gàidhlig*)

The Bank of Linguistic Resources for Gaelic, *Banca na Gàidhlig*, can be viewed online at:

<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/?q=banca>

This Bank is arranged under the following 16 headings or sections:

- grammars and grammar guides
- dictionaries and thesauri
- specialist vocabulary
- online dictionaries
- lexical databases
- corpora
- place-name databases
- collections of audio recordings
- learner materials

- online learning resources
- TV programmes for learners
- podcasts
- orthography
- information technology
- academic publications
- Gaelic dialects
- academic projects.

6.3 Recommendation

The incorporation of Gaelic Orthographic Conventions (GOC), the Bank of Linguistic Resources for Gaelic (*Banca na Gàidhlig*) and grammatical guidance from LEACAG into the LEACAN website raises the possibility of using LEACAN as an online hub for corpus development projects, which would help avoid reduplication and foster collaboration and greater understanding of traditional Gaelic usage. Consideration might also be given to incorporating the Am Briathradan website / resource into the LEACAN website and a plan devised to develop it.

7. Corpus studies

The specification for this research project contained the following desired work method:

- “Expanding the grammar elements in the modules by research based on [...] research in such as the DASG database [...]”.

One of the specified outputs was:

- “The grammar guidance must be expanded by resolving at least ten problematic issues, informed by the practical priorities of professional users, with proven corpus research and investigation methodologies that could be sustained in any further expansion.”

7.1 Year 1 – pilot studies

During the first year of the project, a number of short pilot studies were undertaken by Dr David Mandić, as part of a training programme in Gaelic corpus linguistics with post-1950 materials and the Meanma corpus excerpting and lexicographic analysis system.

Three topics are covered in this section:

- the definite article
- lenition of names in genitive contexts
- adverbs meaning ‘ever / never’

These topics were chosen from the following sources:

- the LEACAG survey of professional Gaelic users in 2016
- lists of difficult grammar topics collated by Mòrag NicLeòid (‘Gràmar ann an Cunnart!’), Michael Bauer and Dr Peadar Morgan.

7.1.1 The definite article

What form of the definite article should be used in the following contexts?:

- when the following word begins with a **vowel** in the nominative masculine singular
- when the following word is an ordinal numeral beginning with **c-** or **f-**
- when the following word is an ordinal numeral beginning with **s-**
- when the following word is the ordinal numeral *ciad*
- when the following word is the dual cardinal numeral *dà*

an t- + ath / aon(amh) / ochdamh

In the nominative masculine singular, the form of the definite article used before a word beginning with a vowel is traditionally **an t-**, e.g. *an t-òran*, *an t-eilean*.

However, when the following word is not a noun, modern usage varies in this regard:

- *an t-ath cheum* or *an ath cheum* ?
- *an t-aon fhear* or *an aon fhear* ?
- *an t-aonamh fear deug* or *an aonamh fear deug* ?
- *an t-ochdamh fear* or *an ochdamh fear* ?

The general conclusions of the corpus study are as follows:

Nominative usages like **an ath cheum** are strongly preferred to the traditional *an t-ath cheum* in modern literary Gaelic. These usages started to appear in the 19th century and had become the norm before 1950.

Nominative usages like **an aon fhear** are generally, though not strongly, preferred to the traditional *an t-aon fhear* in modern literary Gaelic. The former are around three times more prevalent in post-1950s prose.

Only one relevant instance of *aonamh* was found in the post-1950 corpus – **an t-aonamh neach deug**.

Only one relevant instance of *ochdamh* was found in the post-1950 corpus – **an t-ochdamh linn**.

an + ceathramh / còigeamh / ceudamh / ficheadamh

In the nominative and dative feminine singular, and in the dative and genitive masculine singular, the form of the definite article used before a word beginning with **c-** is traditionally **a' ch-**, e.g. *a' chraobh*, *a' chaileag*, *leis a' chat*. Similarly, the form used before a word beginning with **f-** is traditionally **an fh-**, e.g. *an fheòrag*, *leis an fhraoch*.

However, when the following word is not a noun, there is a feeling that modern usage may vary in this regard, especially in the nominative:

- *(leis) a' cheathramh tè* or *(leis) an ceathramh tè* ?
- *(leis) a' chòigeamh tè* or *(leis) an còigeamh tè* ?
- *(leis) a' ceudamh tè* or *(leis) an ceudamh tè* ?
- *(leis) an fhicheadamh tè* or *(leis) am ficheadamh tè* ?

The general conclusions of the corpus study are as follows:

Usages like **(leis) an ceathramh tè** are strongly preferred to traditional usages like *(leis) a' cheathramh tè* in post-1950 Gaelic literary prose, especially in the nominative.

No evidence was found to suggest that usages like *(leis) am ficheadamh tè* were starting to replace the traditional **(leis) an fhicheadamh tè**. Lenition is preferred here.

an + siathamh / seachdamh

In the nominative and dative feminine singular, and in the dative and genitive masculine singular, the form of the definite article used before a word beginning with **s-** (but not **sg-**, **sp-**, **st-**) is traditionally **an t-s-**, e.g. *an t-sràid*, *an t-seann tè*, *leis an t-sagart*.

However, when the following word is not a noun (or adjective), there is a feeling that modern usage may vary in this regard, especially in the nominative:

- *(leis) an t-siathamh tè* or *(leis) an siathamh tè* ?
- *(leis) an t-seachdamh tè* or *(leis) an seachdamh tè* ?

The general conclusions of the corpus study are as follows:

Usages like **an t-siathamh tè** appear to be marginally more common than usages like *an siathamh tè* in post-1950 literary prose.

Surprisingly, a considerable amount of variation was discovered in the nominative masculine singular as well – usages like *an t-siathamh fear* appear to be just as common as traditional usages like *an siathamh fear*.

It should be noted that not enough examples were found to be statistically significant.

an + ciad

In traditional literary Gaelic, the ordinal numeral *ciad* combined with the definite article in a regular fashion, in particular:

- nominative masculine singular – *an ciad fhear*
- genitive feminine singular – *(fear) na ciad tè*
- plural – *na ciad chraobhan*.

However, there is a feeling that modern usage is changing so that **a' chiad** is being used in all contexts:

- nominative masculine singular – *a' chiad fhear*
- genitive feminine singular – *(fear) a' chiad tè*
- plural – *a' chiad chraobhan*.

The general conclusions of the corpus study are as follows:

Masculine usages like **a' chiad fhear** have completely replaced traditional usages like *an ciad fhear* in modern written Gaelic.

Traditional genitive feminine usages like **(fear) na ciad tè** remain much more common than innovative usages like *(fear) a' chiad tè*, apart from the specific phrase *airson a' chiad uair*; *airson na ciad uair* occurs very rarely in post-1950 texts and *airson na ciad uarach* occurs once.

Traditional plural usages like **na ciad chraobhan** remain much more common than innovative usages like *a' chiad chraobhan*.

an + f- loanwords

Finally, we investigated practices within the corpus on use of the definite article with recent loanwords from English starting with **f-** (e.g. *fòn, film, frids, flat*) and **v-** (*bheat, bhan, bhidio*).

There is a very strong tendency not to lenite recent loanwords in **f-**, e.g.

- *am fòn*
- *air a' fòn*
- *àireamh a' fòn*

In addition, loanwords in **v-** are usually written as **bh-** in both lenited and non-lenited contexts:

- *am bheat*
- *leis a' bheat*
- *mu dheidhinn a' bheat.*

We tried to do a similar investigation for recent loanwords in **z-** but were unable to find sufficient corpus data to make any kind of generalisation.

In the final few months of the project we developed our initial work on the definite article further by distributing a detailed questionnaire to four traditional speakers. The results and analysis of this work can be found in **Appendix C** and is summarised in §8.4.

7.1.2 Lenition – names in genitive contexts

Should names of the following kinds of entity be lenited when they appear as genitive specifiers of another noun?:

- places
- organisations and institutions
- documents and creative works
- events and eras.

Place-names

Results from the study of the post-1950 corpus are as follows:

Place-names which consist of a simple common noun are usually lenited in the genitive, e.g. *X + Pheairt, X + Mhuile, X + Chluaidh, X + Chanada.*

Non-settlement place-names which consist of a complex noun phrase are usually not lenited in the genitive e.g. *X + Bàgh Hudson, X + Siorrachd Pheairt, X + Dùthaich MhicAoidh, X + Beinn Nibheis.*

However, names of settlements consisting of complex noun phrases are usually lenited in the genitive, *X + Dhùn Dè, X + Bhaile Ailein, X + Bhàgh a' Chaisteil.* Other such 'lexicalised' (and hence lenitable) complex names include *X + Cheann-tìr,* etc.

Names of organisations and institutions

Names of organisations and institutions are generally complex noun phrases (rather than simple common nouns), and these are usually not lenited in the genitive in the post-1950 corpus. This includes names of banks, boards, societies, groups, agencies, commissions, colleges, committees and councils e.g. *X + Bòrd na Gàidhlig*, *X + Colaiste a' Chaisteil*, *X + Comhairle Ghlaschu*.

Interestingly names of clans, a traditional kind of Gaelic institution, are usually lenited in the genitive, e.g. (*triath*) *Chlann Dòmhnail Shlèibhte*.

Names of documents and creative works

Names of legal documents are usually complex noun phrases (rather than simple nouns) and do not appear to be lenited in the genitive (though data is very sparse). This includes names of contracts, treaties, agreements, declarations, proclamations, etc.

The name of the literary publication *Gairm* is frequent in the corpus and consists of a simple proper noun (though derived from the homophonous common noun of course). The vast majority of the genitive instances of *Gairm* are not lenited.

It was difficult to find data on other names of published literary works (poems, songs). However, the few genitive examples which could be found were unlenited.

Names of events and eras

The corpus contains few examples of names of events and eras used in the genitive. However, the few examples that were found (battles, notable years) were not lenited.

In the final few months of the project we developed our initial work on this topic further by distributing a detailed questionnaire to four traditional speakers. The results and analysis of this work can be found in **Appendix C** and is summarised in §8.4.

7.1.3 Translating 'ever / never' into Gaelic

There are at least three ways of translating 'ever / never' into Gaelic:

- *a-riamh*
- *a-chaidh*
- *gu bràth*.

a-riamh

The adverb (*a-*)*riamh* (sometimes intensified with a following *roimhe* or *tuilleadh*) is generally used in one of the following three contexts:

- negative e.g. *Chan fhaca mi gin a-riamh cho àlainn.*
- interrogative e.g. *An aithne dhut gun do dh'ith siorc duine a-riamh?*
- comparative and superlative e.g. *A' chiad leannan a bh' agam a-riamh.*

In these cases, the adverb is equivalent to the English 'ever', as in 'during the entire (past) time period leading up to the moment under discussion'. The Gaelic verb is usually in the simple past tense, even though English equivalents usually have the present or past perfect.

However, some examples of *a-riamh* in other contexts are found too, usually with the English meaning 'always', again in the sense of 'during the entire (past) time period leading up to the moment under discussion' e.g. *Sin mar a bha e a-riamh.* Note also *na h-uile duine riamh agaibh* 'every [single] man of you' (Dwelly's Gaelic dictionary).

The complex adverbial *bho riamh* appears to be a stylistic equivalent to *a-riamh*, especially in positive declarative contexts, e.g. *Bha e mar a bha e bho riamh.* Also, (*a-*)*riamh* can be used to modify the preposition / conjunction *bho*, as in *riamh bho* 'ever since' e.g. *Riamh bho mharbh am mathan athair, Bairn Mór, 's e a mhàthair Agadh a thog e, a stiùir 's a sheòl e;* this is likely to be a calque on English. Again, the sense here is 'during the entire (past) time period leading up to the moment under discussion' but with an initial time boundary.

Although *a-riamh* usually modifies a simple past tense verb, it can sometimes be found with a conditional e.g. *Is beag an t-iongnadh ged a bhiodh i riamh cho searbh.* The sense here is that of 'past habitual' i.e. repeated occasions in the past.

a-chaoidh

The adverb *a-chaoidh* appears to be the mirror image of the adverb *a-riamh*, with the basic sense 'during the entire (future) time period starting from the moment under discussion'. For example:

- positive – *Bidh mise 's mo leannan a-chaoidh nar flaitheas fo thuinn.*
- negative – *Chan fhaic e sinne a' dannsa a-chaoidh.*
- interrogative – *An till iad a-chaoidh do na glinn san robh iad òg?*

The adverb *a-chaoidh* usually occurs with a verb in the future tense. However, it sometimes occurs with the conditional in the 'future-in-the-past' sense e.g. ... *ged nach aidichinn a-chaoidh gur e Leòdhasach a th' annam ...* Occasionally a past simple verb is used instead of a conditional, e.g. *'S chan fhaca an Sgeilbheag iad a-chaoidh tuilleadh,* but still referring to relative future time.

gu bràth

Initial investigations suggested that *gu bràth* is a stylistic variant of *a-chaoidh*, at least as far as the tense of the verb that can occur with these adverbs is concerned. However, more

research is needed into this question, as there might well be particular constructions that favour one or the other.

In the final few months of the project we developed our initial work on this topic further by distributing a detailed questionnaire to four traditional speakers. The results and analysis of this work can be found in **Appendix C** and is summarised in §8.4.

7.2 Years 2 and 3 – five deep dives

7.2.1 Background

During the first year, it became clear that using an approach based on studying individual controversial questions one at a time, in isolation from related questions, was leading to shallow, fragmented work. For instance, work on the question of how to translate ‘ever’ and ‘never’ into Gaelic in different tense contexts raised a number of questions of tense and verbal aspect related to many other adverbials of time that would then need to be explored (e.g. already, yet, still, recently, beforehand, previously, always, frequently, sometimes, occasionally, since, etc.). In other words, doing justice to the grammatical usage of words like *a-riamh* and *a-chaoidh* necessitates doing more of a ‘deep dive’ into the more general topic of adverbs of time in Gaelic. Similarly it was felt that the work on genitive forms of names in Gaelic would benefit from a much more strategic, systematic study of names and proper nouns in the language, something it was felt would be outside the scope of the question as narrowly construed.

7.2.2 The deep dives

In our Interim Report in November 2021, it was proposed that the research team would spend the remaining two years of the LEACAN project conducting five deep dives into more general areas of Gaelic grammar, which have come to light as being *generally problematic* during the work previously done on individual questions. It was expected that this kind of refocusing would lead to the drafting of better, less fragmented and hence more useful guidance in future.

The following five themes were proposed for this kind of ‘deep dive’ treatment:

- **expressions of quantity**, building on the brief study of numbers during LEACAG, but expanded to include the full range of quantifiers and quantifier-like expressions (‘some’, ‘all’, ‘several’, ‘many’, ‘more’, ‘enough’, ‘too much’, etc.).
- **names and proper nouns**, building on work already done on names of groups and organisations in the genitive, but expanded to include the full gamut of onomastic types, including acronyms, abbreviations, place-names, and personal names.
- **genitive and dative cases**, building on work done during LEACAG, but expanded to account for accompanying adjectives and a wider range of genitive-related constructions, like compound prepositions, ascriptive genitive, lenition, syntactic complexity, etc.
- **time adverbials and verbal tense and aspect**, building on work already done on ‘ever’ and ‘never’ but expanded to encompass the use of the perfect construction in Gaelic (*tha mi air a’ bhò a mharbhadh*), and the different ways of expressing habitual actions – progressives,

future/conditional tense, constructions involving *àbhaist*, etc. (Also touching on different progressive encodings e.g. *tha mi a' suidhe* versus *tha mi nam shuidhe*.)

- **expression of 'motion towards' and 'beneficiary'**, building on the very brief work undertaken during LEACAG on different ways of translating English 'to', but involving a much more systematic analysis of the Gaelic preposition *do*, *gu*, *chun*, *gu ruige*, etc. Related to this is work on directional adverbs like *suas*, *a-nuas*, etc. and expressions of 'motion away from' and 'benefactor'.

We proposed devoting a good four months (albeit part-time) to each deep dive theme, allowing for sufficient time for proper in-depth analysis, consultation, and feedback loops. This was agreed with the Bòrd. We envisaged the following pattern of work for each deep dive:

1. Conduct an initial scoping exercise based on review of relevant prior grammatical work, as well as initial corpus searches, laying out the scope of the problem including identifying any key questions that might be involved, and drafting a brief initial modular organisation for the online guidance.
2. Formulation of specific questions for detailed corpus analysis.
3. Analysis of corpus data, drafting of initial conclusions and guidance in modular form, and formulation of further related questions for more detailed analysis.
4. Repeat from 1.

These steps were construed as an ongoing conversation between the whole project team, including the researchers, the grammar consultant, the traditional speaker consultants, and the funders. The proposal was to work with a small number of paid traditional speaker consultants as linguistic informants, working closely with the researchers to elicit underlying intuitions about language usage (for this reason we preferred to work with traditional speakers who have not been involved in teaching Gaelic). The grammar consultant was consulted regularly. The researchers acted as both conduit and firewall between the academic and traditional speaker consultants.

7.3 Outputs

7.3.1 Case Studies

A total of 50 mini-research reports of varying sizes were compiled covering 13 areas of investigation; these were compiled by the Corpus Researcher, Dr David Mandić, under the supervision of the PI, Professor Rob Ó Maolalaigh, who also inputted to them. These reports underpinned the questionnaires that were sent to consultants and ultimately informed the modular guidance which captured the more high-level aspects of our findings. A total of 29 research papers for key areas were written up by Dr Mandić and Professor Ó Maolalaigh and are included as one document in **Appendix D: Aspects of Gaelic Grammar**; this aspect of the work was funded by the University of Glasgow.

The 13 areas of focus and the 50 mini-reports are as follows:

Areas of Investigation	Mini-Reports
1. Definite article (#6)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The article 2) <i>An (t-)aon</i> 3) The article with ordinal numbers 4) <i>A' chiad, an dà</i> 5) The article + <i>b-, bh-, z-</i> 6) The article: Summary
2. Expressions of quantity (#12)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Expressions of quantity: General 2) Expressions of quantity: Analysis & categorization 3) Expressions of quantity: <i>tuilleadh, barrachd</i> 4) Expressions of quantity: <i>còrr</i> 5) Expressions of quantity: <i>uimhir, uiread</i> 6) Expressions of quantity: <i>cus, dìth</i> 7) Expressions of quantity: <i>mòran, beagan, uiread</i> 8) Expressions of quantity: <i>liuthad, feadhainn, gin</i> 9) Expressions of quantity: <i>deannan, leòr, uireasbhaidh, easbhaidh</i> 10) Expressions of quantity: <i>pailteas</i> 11) Expressions of quantity: Fractions 12) Expressions of quantity: <i>leth</i>
3. <i>Fad</i> (#1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Fad</i>: Description and uses
4. Genitive & dative (#2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Genitive and dative after compound prepositions 2) Genitive and dative: Adjectives

5. Grammatical number (#1)	1) Collective nouns and pluralia tantum ⁴
6. Compounds and hyphenation (#2)	1) Hyphenation: General 2) Hyphenation and lenition in Gaelic compounds
7. Irregular verbs (#2)	1) Irregular verbs: Idiomatic usages 2) Irregular verbs: Idiomatic examples
8. Modality (#2)	1) Modals 2) Modals: Permission and ability
9. Motion towards & beneficiary (#4)	1) Motion towards & beneficiary: <i>ri</i> 2) Motion towards & beneficiary: <i>gu, chun</i> 3) Motion towards & beneficiary: <i>do</i> 4) Motion towards & beneficiary: Motional adverbs
10. Names: Genitive and lenition (#9)	1) Genitive and lenition: Names in genitive contexts 2) Genitive and lenition: Female names
11. 'Never' and 'ever' (#9)	1) 'Ever' and 'never': <i>riamh, chaoidh, gu bràth</i> 2) 'Ever' and 'never': <i>uair sam bith</i> 3) 'Ever' and 'never': Additional 4) 'Ever' and 'never': <i>riamh</i> summary
12. Passive (#1)	1) Passive constructions
13. Tense and aspect (#11)	1) Habitual aspect: Adverbial expressions 2) Habitual aspect in <i>Corpas na Gàidhlig</i>

⁴ i.e. plural-only nouns, e.g. *speuclairean* 'spectacles'; cf. English *scissors, trousers*. Such nouns in English correspond to singular nouns in Gaelic, e.g. *deamhas* 'shears', *aodach* 'clothes', *briogais* 'trousers', etc.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Habitual aspect: <i>tric</i> 4) Habitual aspect 5) Perfective aspect and perfect tense 1 6) Perfective aspect and perfect tense 2 7) Progressive aspect <i>ag vs an</i> 8) Progressive aspect: <i>ri</i> 9) Ingressive / inceptive aspect 10) Terminative aspect 11) Prospective aspect 12) <i>caidil</i> 13) <i>bean, buin</i> 14) Lexical aspect and telicity
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7.3.2 Research papers

The 29 research papers funded by the University of Glasgow are consolidated into one document in **Appendix D: Aspects of Gaelic Grammar**, the contents of which are:

1. Adverbs ‘ever’ and ‘never’:

1.1 *riamh, chaoidh, gu bràth*

1.2 *uair sam bith*

2. Expressions of quantity:

2.1 *deannan, leòr, uireasbhaidh, easbhaidh*

2.2 *liuthad, feadhainn, gin*

2.3 *cus, dìth*

2.4 *pailteas*

2.5 *leth*

2.6 *còrr*

2.7 *tuilleadh, barrachd*

2.8 *uimhir, uiread*

3. Case morphology:

3.1 Genitive after compound prepositions

3.2 Case forms of adjectives

4. Tense and aspect:

4.1 Lexical aspect and telicity

4.2 Habitual aspect

4.3 Habitual aspect: *tric*

4.4 Progressive aspect *ag* vs *an*

4.5 Progressive aspect: *ri*

4.6 Perfective aspect and perfect tense

4.7 Prospective aspect

4.8 Ingressive / inceptive aspect

4.9 Terminative aspect

4.10 *buin*, *bean*

4.11 *caidil*

5. Motion towards & beneficiary:

5.1 Motional adverbs

5.2 *ri*

5.3 *gu*, *chun*

5.4 *do*

6. Proper names:

6.1 Lenition of names in genitive contexts

6.2 Lenition in female names

7. Compound words:

7.1 Hyphenation and lenition in Gaelic compounds

7.2 Recommendations from a purely linguistic point of view.

7.3.3 Modular guidance

Grammar modules based on the five deep dives are accessible from the following URL:

- <http://www.leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/>

The modular macro-structure for these five deep dives has the following format (also available at <http://www.leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/>):

quantities:

- numeric quantity expressions
- generic quantity expressions (nouns)
 - simple quantities
 - *beagan, mòran, cuid, ...*
 - comparative quantities
 - *barrachd, uiread, ...*
 - implicitly comparative quantities
 - *cus, (gu) leòr, ...*
 - superlative quantities
 - *cuid as motha, ...*
- absolute quantities
 - *air fad, gu lèir, ...*

verbal aspect:

- perfectives
 - simple perfective
 - inchoative (ingressive)
 - *tòisich*
 - *teann ri*
 - etc.
 - cessative (terminative)
 - *sguir*
 - *stad*
 - *gu crìoch*
 - etc.
- imperfectives
 - progressives
 - *ag*
 - *na*
 - habituals
 - retrospectives
 - *air*
 - prospectives
 - *gu*
 - *an impis*
 - etc.

names and proper nouns:

- names:
 - proper nouns
 - simple proper nouns
 - acronyms
 - improper nouns
 - forms
 - modifiers
 - specifier
 - apposition
 - name-descriptions
 - forms
 - senses
 - lenition
 - anthroponyms [people]
 - toponyms [places]
 - ergonyms [groups of people]
 - chrematonyms [creative works]
 - glottonyms [languages]
 - chrononyms [historical events]
- proper nouns [↑nouns, →common nouns]:
 - simple proper nouns
 - acronyms
 - improper nouns
 - forms
 - modifiers
 - specifier
 - apposition
 - uses
 - lenition

motion and trajectories:

- terminology
- vocabulary
 - verbs
 - *rach*
 - *thig*
 - prepositions
 - *bho*
 - *gu*
 - *à*
 - *do (dha / a)*
 - *tro*
 - *air*
 - *far*
 - *aig*
 - *an*

- *air*
- adverbs
 - *a-null*
 - *a-nall*
 - *a-steach*
 - *a-mach*
 - *suas*
 - *sios*
 - *a-nìos*
 - *a-nuas*
- semantics: social events
- semantics: boxes and containers – illative and elative
- semantics: surfaces – sublative and delative

nouns and adjectives: genitive and dative:

- nouns:
 - ↓proper nouns
 - ↓common nouns
 - forms
 - dependents
 - modifiers
 - lenition
 - non-lenition
 - specifier
 - apposition
 - uses
 - nominative
 - dative
 - genitive
 - senses
 - concrete / abstract
 - countable / uncountable
- adjectives:
 - derivation
 - forms
 - masculine
 - nominative
 - dative
 - genitive
 - feminine
 - nominative
 - dative
 - genitive
 - plural
 - nominative
 - dative

- genitive
- uses

7.3.4 LEACAG

The grammatical guidance produced as part of the LEACAG project was approved by Comataidh Comhairleachaidh Cànanain (CCC) in 2018 and published online by DASG in 2019:

<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/LeaCaG-2019.pdf>

As part of the output of the LEACAN project, this guidance was reproduced in modular format with the following macro-structure:

- What are the irregular verbs in Gaelic?
 - **abair** 'say', **beir** 'bear', **cluinn** 'hear', **dèan** 'do, make', **faic** 'see', **faigh** 'get', **rach** 'go', **ruig** 'reach', **thig** 'come', **thoir** 'give, take',
 - forms
 - tense
 - status
 - voice
 - imperative
- Should nouns governed by a progressive verbal noun be in the genitive or nominative case?
- Should feminine nouns and their adjectives be slenderised after prepositions?
- When should the object precede the verb(al noun)?
- How does the **rach**-passive construction work?
- Should intransitive verbal nouns (infinitivals) be lenited?
- How should object pronouns be expressed in the progressive?
- How should English **if** be translated into Gaelic?
- How do relative clauses work with prepositions?
- How do numeric quantity expressions work in Gaelic?

This can be accessed by clicking on the hyperlinked works or phrases or here:

<https://leacan.gla.ac.uk/leacan/>

8. Project interaction, consultation and blogs

8.1 Project interaction

Updates have been submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig over the course of the project, including monthly reports since January 2023.

Updates on LEACAN were presented to BOAG, the forum for Gaelic corpus development in 2021 and 2023. Unfortunately, due to illness (§2.4), an update to BOAG for the 2022 meeting was not possible.

Regular team meetings have been held since January 2023.

A draft of the final LEACAN report was sent to Peadar Morgan at Bòrd na Gàidhlig on 2 October 2023. He provided very helpful feedback which has been incorporated into this final report.

8.2 Consultation

It was our original intention to consult with relevant stakeholders during the course of the project and to publish regular blogs (*Tairgse* §3.3). This aspect of our work was impacted by unavoidable absences during part of 2021 and most of 2022. As a result, we had to prioritise the core research for the LEACAN project and decided to concentrate on consultation towards the end of the project once the modular guidance had been finalised. This was scheduled for September and October 2023, but this in turn was seriously impacted by the DASG server and website being down for a significant period. See §2.5.

We consulted on the findings of the five deep dives with our traditional native speaker consultants as proxies for community and professional users, some of whom were former members of Comataidh Comhairleachaidh Cànanain (CCC). Our consultants' expertise covered the spheres of education / teaching, education / research, applied linguistics, publishing and broadcasting (§2.3). Their feedback has been incorporated into the online modular guidance.

8.2.1 Blogs

Once the DASG website was restored (29 September 2023), we published 8 blogs on the DASG website (<https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/en>) between 4 October 2023 and 21 November 2023 (included in **Appendix B**) and these were promoted via social media with a view to reaching as wide a Gaelic audience as possible:

LEACAN BLOG 1: Gaelic compounds and hyphenation (1),
<https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/329/en> (4 October 2023)

LEACAN BLOG 2: Gaelic compound words and hyphenation (2),
<https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/331/en> (9 October 2023)

LEACAN BLOG 3: The definite article with *ath* 'next', *aon* 'one; same', *aonamh* 'first', *ochdamh* 'eighth', <https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/332/en> (30 October 2023)

LEACAN BLOG 4: The definite article with *ciad* ‘first’, *ceathramh* ‘fourth’, *còigeamh* ‘fifth’, *ceudamh* ‘hundredth’, *ficheadamh* ‘twentieth’, *siathamh* ‘sixth’, *seachdamh* ‘seventh’, <https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/333/en> (9 November 2023)

LEACAN BLOG 5: The definite article with loanwords beginning with *f-*, *v-* / *bh-*, *y-*, *w-*, *s-*, *z-* / *x-* and *j-*, <https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/334/en> (10 November 2023)

LEACAN BLOG 6: The definite article with the number *dà* ‘two’, <https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/335/en> (15 November 2023)

LEACAN BLOG 7: Lenition of names in the genitive, <https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/336/en> (20 November 2023)

LEACAN BLOG 8: ‘Ever’ and ‘never’, <https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/337/en> (21 November 2023)

All eight blogs were sent to members of Buidheann-obrach air Acadamaidh Ghàidhlig / Gaelic Academy Working Group (BOAG) as representative members of community and professional users of Gaelic from whom we sought feedback. Detailed feedback was received from one member of BOAG (summarised in §8.3). Some feedback was also received from a member of the public on the blogs on compound words (§8.3). This illustrates that relying solely on voluntary input on corpus planning issues from members of the community, who are busy in their domestic and professional lives, is problematic. Interaction with a dedicated funded language advisory group would have been preferable, an arrangement that worked very well for the previous LEACAG project.⁵

Feedback was also sought from four traditional native speakers on five of the blogs in order to address gaps based on the corpus research. Their feedback is presented and analysed in **Appendix C** and is summarised in §8.4.

Between October and December 2023, the eight blogs had 1,078 page views in total as follows:

Blog 1	204
Blog 2	274
Blog 3	246
Blog 4	87
Blog 5	96
Blog 6	43
Blog 7	75
Blog 8	53
TOTAL	1,078

⁵ Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh and Mark McConville, “Risk-free” corpus-planning for Scottish Gaelic? Collaborative development of basic grammatical norms for 21st century speakers’, in *Language on the Move Across Contexts and Communities*. Series: The languages of Scotland and Ulster (6), ed. by J. Kopaczyk and R. M. Millar (Aberdeen, 2020), pp. 1-36 (p. 20).

8.3 Feedback from BOAG and the public: Summary

Helpful feedback on a number of the draft blogs prior to publication was received from Dr Peadar Morgan of Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Detailed feedback on the published blogs was received via email from one other member of Buidheann-obrach air Acadamaidh Ghàidhlig / Gaelic Academy Working Group (BOAG) (B) as well as a member of the public (P). This low rate of return means that the feedback cannot be taken as being representative of the general community, although some good points are made, particularly in relation to the potential impact of changes on technology and technological tools.

B describes points 1, 2 and 3 in the summary of Blog 1: *Left-branching compounds* as 'fairly uncontroversial', although in their view 3a might not be consistent across all speakers.

1. Left-branching compounds that have initial stress and whose head element is completely unstressed should be written as single words, e.g. *farchluais* 'eavesdropping', *lethcheud* 'fifty'.
2. Other left-branching compounds should be hyphenated, e.g. *cis-mhaor* 'tax-collector', *leth-làn* 'half-full'.
3. A left-branching expression whose modifier is a preposed adjective should be treated as a 'true' compound and written accordingly:
 - a. if its head element is unstressed (and possibly reduced), e.g. *an drochfhear* 'the Devil', *fiorghlan* 'pure';
 - b. if its meaning is different from the meanings of its constituent parts, e.g. *an droch-shùil* 'the evil eye'.

B considers GOC hyphenation rules unclear regarding prefixed modifiers and finds pre-GOC usage to be by far the most practical.

In B's opinion, the alternative solution of adopting the Irish model of writing left-branching compounds as single words is not ideal because of the following considerations:

- It would make vowel reduction (as in *farchluais*) unpredictable, which is a fairly high cost.
- It would affect readability (cf. *droch dhuine* vs *drochdhuine*).
- Spelling hyphenated expressions as single words (along with all their inflected forms) would reduce the functionality of spellcheckers and predictive texting tools (whose size is limited). Increasing the size of spellcheckers and predictive texting tools would raise their cost.

P comments that combinations of two lenited consonants have always been avoided in Scottish Gaelic by inserting either a space or a hyphen between them, which makes words easier to read (cf. *leth-cheud* vs *lethcheud*). P considers the subject of hyphenation as not particularly important in Scottish Gaelic: in their view, where controversy or inconsistency exists, multiple variants should be accepted rather than imposing tight rules (which might not be accepted by Canadian Gaels).

According to P, rather than being restrained by standardisation, variation in expression should be encouraged in order to maintain the richness of the language. In P's view, there is relatively little variation in writing [of compounds?] in any case, compared to some other languages.⁶

P prefers to hyphenate combinations of *sìor* with verbs.

8.4 Feedback from traditional native speakers

The information obtained by corpus research turned out to be insufficient in some respects in allowing us to formulate clear conclusions about the following blog topics:

- inflection of the definite article (Blogs 3, 4 and 6)
- lenition in names in the genitive (Blog 7)
- 'ever' and 'never' (Blog 8).

In order to clarify a number of issues, a questionnaire was composed and sent to four traditional native speakers for feedback. A paper analysing their responses under the three headings above was prepared and may be found in **Appendix C**. Each section contains a set of conclusions on usage. The section on the article also includes a set of preliminary recommendations (**Appendix C, Table 4**). The following is a brief summary of the findings.

8.4.1 Inflection of the definite article with *ath*, *aon*, *aonamh*, *ochdamh*; *ciad*, *ceudamh*, *ceathramh*, *còigeamh*, *ficheadamh*, *siathamh*, *seachdamh*; *dà*.

Tendencies towards either conservative or innovative patterns vary across speakers and appear to be related to their dialect and age. However, one innovation in the inflection of the article is firmly established in contemporary Gaelic – using the original feminine nominative singular form of the article (with the appropriate initial mutation where applicable) with *ath*, *aon* and *ciad* before both masculine and feminine nouns, i.e. *an ath*, *an aon*, *a' chiad*.

The other attested innovations are:

- the original **feminine nominative singular** form of the article (*an* before vowels *a'* + lenition) used with *aonamh* / *ochdamh* / *ceudamh* + masculine noun, e.g. *an aonamh oileanach fichead*, *a' cheudamh leabhar*.
- the original **masculine nominative singular** form of the article (*an t-* before vowels, *an* / *am* before consonants) used with *aonamh* / *ochdamh* / *ceudamh* / *ceathramh* / *còigeamh* / *siathamh* / *seachdamh* / *ficheadamh* + feminine noun, e.g. *an t-ochdamh bliadhna*, *an còigeamh bliadhna*, *an siathamh bliadhna*, *am ficheadamh caora*.
- the original **masculine genitive singular** form of the article (*an* before vowels, *an t-* before *s-*, *a'* + lenition before other consonants) used with *aonamh* / *ochdamh* / *ciad* /

⁶ Note that the intention was not to recommend these particular examples as more acceptable than or somehow superior to other ways of expressing the same meanings. Their purpose here was mainly to test the status of particular (types of) expressions as either compound nouns or syntactic phrases.

ceudamh / ceathramh / còigeamh / siathamh / seachdamh / ficheadamh + feminine noun, e.g. deireadh an aonamh bliadhna fichead, deireadh a' chiad bhliadhna, deireadh a' chòigeamh bliadhna, deireadh an t-siathamh bliadhna, mu dheidhinn an fhicheadamh bliadhna.

- the original **feminine nominative singular** form of the article (*a'* + lenition, *an* before vowels) used with *ciad / ath / aon* + a nominative or genitive plural noun, e.g. nom. *an ath àitichean, a' chiad taighean*; gen. pl. *mu dheidhinn a' chiad leabhraichean*.
- the original **nominative plural** form of the article (*na h-*) used with *ath / aon* + a genitive plural noun, e.g. *chun na h-aon daoine*.
- the original **genitive plural** form of the article (*nan*) used before *dà* instead of original dual *an*, e.g. *mullaichean nan dà bheinn*.

The dative singular (of both genders) and masculine genitive singular (which are all identical) preserve the conservative patterns with all speakers.

In other words, there is a tendency (1) to reduce the variety of inflectional forms and related initial mutations with these words, and (2) to reduce the differences between genders.

Certain speakers prefer the innovative forms, especially with singular nouns. Others prefer only some of them, or consider them acceptable even when they would use the conservative ones. Some speakers generally prefer the conservative forms of the article.

Noun and adjective inflections have not been considered in this research, but it can be inferred that (1) speakers who prefer innovative forms of the article generally avoid noun inflection, and (2) even those who preserve more conservative inflection patterns with the article sometimes avoid inflected noun forms.

Conclusion

The variation exhibited in the responses of traditional speakers suggests that further research with a broader range of traditional speakers is needed. Nevertheless, it is possible to make preliminary recommendations based on some of the most conservative traditional forms. These are presented in **Appendix C, Table 4** (reproduced immediately below), where the innovative nominative singular masculine forms *a' chiad*, *an ath* and *an aon* are given in bold. These recommendations would need to be tested by engagement with a wider group of traditional speakers and discussed further with Buidheann-obrach air Acadamaidh Ghàidhlig / Gaelic Academy Working Group (BOAG) and modified accordingly as relevant.

	ciad	ceudamh	ceathramh & còigeamh	ficheadamh	siathamh & seachdamh	aonamh & ochdamh	ath & aon
Nom.sg. m.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>an ceudamh</i>	<i>an ceathramh an còigeamh</i>	<i>am ficheadamh</i>	<i>an siathamh an seachdamh</i>	<i>an t-aonamh an t-ochdamh</i>	<i>an ath an aon</i>
Nom.sg. f.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>a' cheudamh</i>	<i>a' cheathramh a' chòigeamh</i>	<i>an fhicheadamh</i>	<i>an t-siathamh an t-seachdamh</i>	<i>an aonamh an ochdamh</i>	<i>an ath an aon</i>
Dat.sg. m./f.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>a' cheudamh</i>	<i>a' cheathramh a' chòigeamh</i>	<i>an fhicheadamh</i>	<i>an t-siathamh an t-seachdamh</i>	<i>an aonamh an ochdamh</i>	<i>an ath an aon</i>
Gen.sg. m.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>a' cheudamh</i>	<i>a' cheathramh a' chòigeamh</i>	<i>an fhicheadamh</i>	<i>an t-siathamh an t-seachdamh</i>	<i>an aonamh an ochdamh</i>	<i>an ath an aon</i>
Gen.sg. f.	<i>na ciad</i>	<i>na ceudamh</i>	<i>na ceathramh na còigeamh</i>	<i>na ficheadamh</i>	<i>na siathamh na seachdamh</i>	<i>na h-aonamh na h-ochdamh</i>	<i>na h-ath na h-aon</i>
Nom./dat.pl.	<i>na ciad</i>	---	---	---	---	---	<i>na h-ath na h-aon</i>
Gen.pl.	<i>nan ciad</i>	---	---	---	---	---	<i>nan ath nan aon</i>

(Appendix C, Table 4: Recommended forms of the definite article)

8.4.2 Lenition of names in the genitive

It can be concluded that, generally speaking:

- (1) lenition of genitive names is more widespread in some dialects than elsewhere, i.e. it affects certain types of names that are not lenited in other dialects; and
- (2) there are sporadic exceptions: some speakers avoid leniting certain names belonging to the types that are normally lenited in the genitive in their dialect, and vice versa.

More precisely, the following can be concluded about lenition of names in the genitive:

- Female personal names are lenited in the genitive only in certain dialects.
- Non-Gaelic personal names are often not lenited, but there are exceptions.
- Lenition of personal names does not seem to depend on the gender or number of the (preceding) noun that they modify.
- In double-barrelled personal names, both parts are normally lenited and slenderised (according to the rules of the dialect) although the second part can remain unchanged.
- Place-names that do not have traditional Gaelic forms tend to be lenited by some speakers whilst others use unlenited forms too, depending on the place-name.
- River names are lenited in the genitive, with some exceptions.
- Compound names of mountains and hills are lenited only in certain dialects and even there with exceptions.
- Compound names that are neither personal nor geographical (e.g. names of institutions and titles of literary works) are not lenited in the genitive, with some exceptions depending on the speaker. This also applies to compound personal nicknames such as *Caraid nan Gàidheal*.

Some information has been obtained on the inflection of names:

- Female personal names are palatalised in the genitive, with exceptions. However, this is avoided in certain dialects (as is noun inflection generally).
- Genitive inflection of surnames is still common.
- Genitive inflection of compound names that start with the definite article is inconsistent. This depends on the speaker's dialect, age and familiarity with the name.
- Names that consist of an indefinite common noun are not inflected for the genitive.

8.4.3 'Ever' and 'never'

Concerning the use of *gu bràth* (*tuilleadh*), *a-chaidh* (*tuilleadh*) and *riamh tuilleadh* with affirmative and negative verbs when the reference point is in the past, the conclusion is that there is a lot of variation across speakers, which probably reflects the usages peculiar to their native dialects.

Regarding the use of *a-chaidh* and *gu bràth* with negative past habituals, some speakers accept both adverbs in this context, but the majority would prefer *uair sam bith*.

8.4.4 Guidance and recommendations

Finally, there was general agreement from the traditional speakers with the recommendations made in the blogs, though there were differences in some of the minor details. A mechanism is needed in order to gain a broader consensus on recommended guidance and usage. This could be achieved via Buidheann-obrach air Acadamaidh Ghàidhlig / Gaelic Academy Working Group (BOAG).

8.5 General feedback on the LEACAN website

General feedback on the LEACAN website has been very positive and welcoming with the words *feumail* 'useful' and *furasta a chleachdadh* 'easy to use' often used. Feedback received is best summarised in the words of Jo NicDhòmhnaill (former member of BBC and CCC), one of the four traditional speakers consulted:

'S e goireas air leth feumail a tha ann. A bharrachd air an stiùireadh fhèin, chuir mi fàilte mhòr air a' ghlossary (taiceil agus cuideachail) agus chòrd e gu mòr rium gun gabh gach duilleag a chlà-bhualadh. Bu chòir gum biodh sin gu h-àraid math dha sgoilearan, luchd-ionnsachaidh agus luchd-teagaisg. Tha Banca na Gàidhlig sgoinneil cuideachd – 's e goireas feumail a tha sin leis fhèin. [...] Nì mi fhìn feum dheth gun teagamh sam bith agus molaidh mi e do dhaoine.

'[The LEACAN website] is a particularly useful resource. In addition to the guidance itself, I greatly welcomed the glossary (which I found supportive and helpful) and it really pleased me that I could print every page. That should be particularly useful for scholars, learners and teachers. Banca na Gàidhlig ('the linguistics resource database') is terrific too – it is a useful resource in its own right. [...] I myself will make use of for certain and I will recommend it to others.'

and by Professor Rob Dunbar, University of Edinburgh:

The LEACAN project is a tremendously valuable one. Although there is a range of useful resources available with respect to aspects of Gaelic grammar, the creation of a comprehensive, on-line modul[ar] grammar is an extremely important development, and is of great value to all users of the language, not least those who teach the language at schools and in universities, those working in Gaelic news and current affairs, broadcasters, writers and students. The LEACAN blogs have been extremely useful. They deal with particular points of grammar, and provide an exceptionally clear and detailed presentation of the particular point being considered. They have become essential points of reference for me with regard to each point of grammar they address, and are of great use to our students. Prof. Ó Maolalaigh and the LEACAN team are to be congratulated on this project.

8.5.1 Web stats

Overall web stats for the LEACAN website between October 2023 and 12 January 2024 include an encouraging total of 13,738 page views as follows:

October 2023	6,169
November 2023	2,045
December 2023	2,536
January 2024	2,988
TOTAL	13,738

8.6 Conference feedback

The team was invited to present a paper at the *Emergent Norms, Models and Target Varieties in Celtic Language Revitalisation* colloquium held at the National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland, on 27 November 2023. Dr David Mandić attended and gave a talk entitled 'LEACAN: Investigating variation in Scottish Gaelic grammar'. The aim of the talk was to present the LEACAN project, its background and findings, and to receive feedback. Feedback was very positive on the outputs of LEACAN. One leading Irish sociolinguist thought that a similar project would be very useful for Irish Gaelic corpus and language development in Ireland.

9. Recommendations

The five deep dives illustrate the great richness and diversity of traditional Gaelic idiom and usage, which can be accessed via Corpus na Gàidhlig, complemented by the knowledge and speech of competent traditional speakers. This dual approach has proved to be very fruitful in describing accepted traditional usages, which will in turn enhance the materials available to support the learning and language skills of learners and speakers of the language.

Obtaining feedback from members of the general and professional community proved challenging. Sole reliance on voluntary input on corpus planning issues from members of the community, who are busy in their domestic and professional lives, is problematic. Working with dedicated paid traditional speaker consultants with formal links to the LEACAN project proved to be a very fruitful partnership. As well as providing insights into gaps in corpus data, they provided crucial input on acceptable and unacceptable usages, often providing nuances that are not found in grammars and dictionaries.

It is **recommended** that the dual approach of combining insights from written corpora and traditional speaker usage be continued as the basis of research into traditional Gaelic and corpus planning for Gaelic. This 'partnership' approach will require the ongoing capture of written texts and current traditional vernacular speech as part of projects such as DASG, Corpas na Gàidhlig and the UHI's Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal and other linked community-based projects such as Guthan nan Eilean / Island Voices.

The research that is summarised in the LEACAN blogs (§8.2.1) and follow-up research with traditional speakers (§8.4 and **Appendix C**) illustrates clearly that current traditional Gaelic is characterised by a significant degree of variation (some of it dialectal), perhaps to a surprising degree. This is found even in basic structures containing the definite article, which are not adequately described in Gaelic grammars and pedagogical resources. It is **recommended** that further research be carried out into variation in current traditional Gaelic using methodologies used as part of LEACAN in order to enable language planners to make robust recommendations on guidance and usage. This will enhance confidence in language skills and competence.

If changes are to be made to the guidance on the use of hyphenation in Gaelic, it is **recommended** that a much wider consultation exercise be undertaken with oversight by Buidheann-obrach air Acadamaidh Ghàidhlig / Gaelic Academy Working Group (BOAG).

The greatest challenge of all is (a) gaining consensus and agreement amongst bodies and individuals involved in writing, publication, education and the media on recommended usage where there is variation in current traditional usage and (b) ensuring that agreed recommendations are adhered to. A website such as LEACAN can help with this but would be insufficient on its own for these purposes. We would **recommend**, reiterating the recommendations made in the Dlùth is Inneach project (§2.1), the establishment of a funded language advisory committee as a sub-committee of Buidheann-obrach air Acadamaidh Ghàidhlig / Gaelic Academy Working Group (BOAG), which would make recommendations to BOAG for ratification on accepted usage in grammar and orthography. This would ensure the tripartite popular, scientific and political legitimacy required for authoritative decision making on language guidance and corpus planning issues in Gaelic. We further **recommend** funding

for a part-time liaison officer who will communicate and disseminate guidance ratified by BOAG.

It is also **recommended** that the LEACAN website be used as an online hub for corpus development projects, which would help avoid reduplication and foster collaboration and greater understanding of traditional Gaelic usage as well as ensuring dissemination of agreed and approved usage. Consideration should be given to incorporating the Am Briathradan website / resource into the LEACAN website and a plan devised to develop it.

In summary, in order to build on and develop further the LEACAN project going forward (and Dlùth is Inneach and LEACAG before it), funding for the following human resources will be required as a minimum (with fte dependent upon available funding):

- a researcher / researchers with expertise in Gaelic language and orthography (including corpus linguistics)
- a project manager / Principal Investigator with expertise in Gaelic language and orthography
- at least one external adviser with expertise in Gaelic language and orthography
- access to a systems / web developer
- access to at least four paid traditional native speakers
- access to a funded language advisory committee as a sub-committee of Buidheann-obrach air Acadamaidh Ghàidhlig / Gaelic Academy Working Group (BOAG), which would make recommendations to BOAG for ratification on accepted usage in grammar and orthography
- a part-time liaison officer to communicate and disseminate guidance ratified by BOAG.

Appendix A: Permission from SQA to capture GOC

From: Permissions <permissions@sqa.org.uk>
Sent: 22 August 2023 14:12
To: [REDACTED]; Permissions
Subject: RE: SQA Website Feedback - [REDACTED]@glasgow.ac.uk

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your patience while I looked into your query with my colleagues with responsibility for Gaelic content in SQA.

We can confirm that we can give you permission to incorporate the GOC guidance into your content as outlined in your email of 9 August 2023. If you could please include an acknowledgement to SQA in an appropriate place using the following copyright line: Copyright © Scottish Qualifications Authority.

For information, while permissions/copyright enquiries should indeed come to this mailbox, should you have any queries about the GOC guidance or SQA Gaelic content in general, you can contact [REDACTED], Qualifications Manager ([REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk).

We would like to wish you all the best for the project.

With best wishes

[REDACTED]
SQA Permissions

Appendix B: Blogs

Eight blogs were published on the DASG website at <https://dasg.ac.uk/blog/en>. These are included here for ease of reference.

LEACAN BLOG 1: Gaelic compounds and hyphenation (1)

Posted by Robby on 4th October, 2023

This is the first blog associated with the LEACAN project, funded by *Bòrd na Gàidhlig*. LEACAN is concerned with developments in the corpus of Scottish Gaelic and how these developments are coordinated and agreed. It is an inter-university project involving the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh and *Sabhal Mòr Ostaig* / UHI, originally under the auspices of the now dissolved *Soillse* research network for Gaelic language and culture. The purpose of our blogs is to share some of our research findings and to gather comments and feedback on trends, developments and recommendations arising from the work. Our first blog is concerned with certain types of compounds and the related question of hyphenation in such compounds.

Left-branching compounds

Gaelic compound words are either left-branching or right-branching, depending on the position of the modifier with respect to the head or generic element, which is written in bold in the following examples. The (bold) head or generic element is modified in its meaning by the word or element that occurs to its left or right:

- left-branching: *mòrchuis* ‘pomp’, *coileanadh* ‘completing’; *ro-ràdh* ‘foreword’, *ath-leasaich* ‘reform’
- right-branching: *tìr-mòr* ‘mainland’, *taigh-seinnse* ‘pub’, *bean-ghlùine* ‘midwife’.

Left-branching compounds are usually hyphenated in Scottish Gaelic, unless their two parts have merged to such an extent that the whole expression is perceived and pronounced as a single lexeme (word) with the head element significantly reduced or shortened. In that case, they are spelt as single words.

- *bana-phrionnsa* ‘princess’, *meanbh-chuileag* ‘midge’, *uile-chumhachdach* ‘almighty’
- *mòrchuis* ‘pomp’, *coileanadh* ‘completing’, *aindeoin* ‘reluctance’, *soisgeul* ‘gospel’ (< so ‘good’ + *sgeul*).

It is not always clear, however, whether the second part of a compound is ‘reduced enough’ for the compound to be spelt as a single word, cf. *mòrchuis* ‘pomp’ vs *àrd-sgoil* ‘high school’. Additionally, when the head element is not completely unstressed, it can be unclear whether an expression is a syntactic phrase, comprised of two separate words, or a compound, which acts as a single lexeme. This makes it difficult to decide whether such expressions should be hyphenated or not.

Left-branching compounds are easily identified in most cases, since modifiers rarely precede the head in syntactic phrases in Gaelic, the exception being numbers and certain preposed adjectives (which also function as adverbs and intensifiers), e.g.

- *ceithir casan* ‘four legs’
- *an ath sheachdain* ‘the next week’, *droch shìde* ‘bad weather’

- *fior charaid* ‘a true friend’; *fior ghlan* ‘really clean’
- *sìor dhol* ‘constant going / going constantly’.

It can be argued, however, that preposed adjectives such as *grad* and *sìor* below always make a morpho-syntactic compound with the word that they modify, as is obvious from the following examples.

- ***Ghrad-tharraing e thuige an ròpa.*** ‘He suddenly pulled the rope towards himself.’
- ***Bha e ga shior-mholadh.*** ‘He was praising him constantly.’

Both *grad-tharraing* and *sìor-mholadh* can only be interpreted as compound verbs. The adverb *grad* precedes the verb *tarraing* (and finite verbs are clause-initial in Gaelic!) and it is lenited to mark the past tense. The words *sìor* ‘constant(ly)’ and *moladh* ‘praising’ act as a single verbal noun, which is lenited by the preceding pronominal object *ga* lit. ‘at-his’.

Similarly, *droch-nàdar* has to be interpreted as a compound noun since nouns can be modified by the intensifier *fior* but not *glè* which modifies only adjectives, e.g. *glè mhath* ‘very good/well’:

- *fior dhroch-nàdar* ‘really bad temper’ (lit. ‘real bad temper’)
- **glè dhroch-nàdar* ‘very bad temper’ (where * indicates an unacceptable formation)

When two syntactic phrases contain an identical element and occur in a coordinate structure (e.g. with *agus* ‘and’), the repeating element can normally be omitted from one of the phrases, e.g. *cù dubh agus cat dubh* ‘a black dog and black cat’ or *cù agus cat dubh* ‘a black dog and cat’.

That, however, does not apply to compounds with identical head elements, which means that the expressions below should be interpreted as compound lexemes. We can have:

- *seann choin agus (seann) chait* ‘old dogs and (old) cats’
- *deagh dhaoine agus droch dhaoine* ‘good (people) and bad people’

but not:

- **deagh agus droch dhaoine*

Based solely on this, from a purely linguistic point of view, it could be argued that all such expressions should be hyphenated to reflect their morpho-syntactic status as compounds.

On the other hand, these combinations are productive: any noun can be preceded by *droch* ‘bad’ and any verbal noun can be modified by *sìor* ‘constant(ly)’, as long as the resulting expression makes sense. It might, therefore, be better to hyphenate only semantic compounds, i.e. expressions that have a specific meaning that does not necessarily follow from its constituent parts, e.g. *an droch-shùil* ‘the evil eye’ as opposed to *an droch shùil* ‘the bad eye’.

As has already been mentioned, many left-branching compounds are pronounced as single words: they have initial stress and the originally stressed vowel of the head element is reduced. These are often spelt as single words even though the original form of both parts is usually maintained.

- *coilean* ‘fulfil’ < *co(mh)+lìon* ‘co-+fill’; *barrad* ‘top layer of peat’ < *bàrr+fhàd* ‘top+single peat’
- *asbhuaìn* ‘stubble’, *athbhliadhna* ‘next year’ rather than **asbhain*, **aifleann*, which would correspond to the actual pronunciation more faithfully, although the etymology of the compound would be obfuscated. (Note that Gaelic Orthographic Conventions

(GOC) has *ath-bhliadhna*. If the hyphen were to be dropped and the *caol ri caol* spelling rule were to be followed, this would then be spelt as *aithbhliadhna*.)

In many cases, the originally stressed vowel of the head element maintains its original quality even though it is unstressed or stressed very weakly. If originally long, this vowel may have been shortened. Hyphenation is not regular in such examples, e.g.

- *mòrchuis* ‘pomp’
- *leth-chrùn* ‘half-crown’
- *àrd-sgoil* ‘high school’.

Such compounds are more commonly written as single words if their first element is a prefix, e.g. *aineol* ‘stranger (unknown person)’, *eucoir* ‘crime’, *soisgeul* ‘gospel’.

* * * * *

Based on the above brief description, the following guidelines might be recommended from a purely scientific or linguistic points of view:

1. Left-branching compounds that have initial stress and whose head element is completely unstressed should be written as single words, e.g. *farchluais* ‘eavesdropping’, *lethcheud* ‘fifty’. (Note that GOC has *farchluais* but *leth-cheud*.)
2. Other left-branching compounds should be hyphenated, e.g. *cis-mhaor* ‘tax-collector’, *leth-làn* ‘half-full’.
3. A left-branching expression whose modifier is a preposed adjective should be treated as a ‘true’ compound and written accordingly.
 - if its head element is unstressed (and possibly reduced), e.g. *An Drochfhear* ‘the Devil’, *fiorghlan* ‘pure’.
 - if its meaning is different from the meanings of its constituent parts, e.g. *an droch-shùil* ‘the evil eye’.
4. Other left-branching expressions whose modifier is a preposed adjective should be written as two separate words, e.g. *deagh charaid* ‘a good friend’, *fior ghlan* ‘really clean’.

An alternative, more radical solution would be to write all these expressions as single words, following the practices adopted in Irish.

We would be very interested to receive comments, feedback and suggestions about hyphenation in Gaelic. We are keen to understand if there is appetite for change and regularisation and clearer guidance on the use of hyphens in Gaelic. Would the strictly linguistically based recommendations outlined here be acceptable? If not, why not?

Please email us with your feedback and comments at mail@dasg.ac.uk.

We will soon post a second blog on right-branching compounds.

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LEACAN BLOG 2: Gaelic compound words and hyphenation (2)

Posted by Robby on 9th October, 2023

This is the second blog associated with the LEACAN project, funded by *Bòrd na Gàidhlig*. LEACAN is concerned with developments in the corpus of Scottish Gaelic and how these developments are coordinated and agreed. It is an inter-university project involving the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh and *Sabhal Mòr Ostaig / UHI*, originally under the auspices of the now dissolved *Soillse* research network for Gaelic language and culture. The purpose of our blogs is to share some of our research findings and to gather comments and feedback on trends, developments and recommendations arising from the work. This our second blog is concerned with certain types of compounds and the related question of hyphenation in such compounds.

Right-branching compounds

Syntactic structures are described as ‘right-branching’ if their head or generic element is followed by its modifiers, i.e. the modifiers are to the right of the head, which is written in bold in the following examples:

- (compounds) **tìr-mòr** ‘mainland’, **taigh-òsta** ‘hotel’, **neach-lagha** ‘lawyer’
- (phrases) **duine mòr** ‘a big man’, **taigh cloiche** ‘a stone house’, **glainne uisge** ‘a glass of water’.

Right-branching compound words are normally hyphenated in Scottish Gaelic, although this practice has not always been regular: older texts contain numerous examples of compounds that are written as two separate lexemes (words) without a hyphen.

Additionally, unlike left-branching expressions, right-branching word combinations are often ambiguous in that it can be difficult to determine whether they are syntactic phrases or compound lexemes. One reason for this is phrase structure: most syntactic phrases are right-branching in modern Gaelic.

Right-branching compounding is productive in Gaelic and numerous modern terms have been coined in this way recently to meet the needs of the modern world. These, however, are still not well-established in the language and, hence, tend to be perceived as syntactic phrases rather than compounds, and are thus often spelt as separate words without hyphens.

Due to all of this, it can be difficult to decide whether such an expression should be interpreted as a compound and hyphenated or not.

There are a number of criteria that can help to determine whether a right-branching expression ‘qualifies’ as a compound word or not:

- the degree of phonetic reduction in the head element
- head or modifier omission in coordination
- position of determiners and adjectives
- pluralisation of the modifier
- use of the genitive case
- if its meaning is different from the meanings of its constituent parts
- hypernymy (explained below)
- use of preposed intensifiers

- gender: in at least one compound, the gender does not reflect the current gender of the main noun element, e.g. masculine *tìr-mòr* ‘mainland’ (cf. feminine *tìr*).

The head element of compounds tends to be reduced to a certain degree, albeit not consistently. These reductions are indicated in the phonetic transcriptions in square brackets which precede the following examples:

- [tə'βeg] *taigh-beag* ‘toilet’ vs. ['trj' βeg] *taigh beag* ‘small house’
- [rʌd'mo:r] *rathad-mòr* ‘highway’ vs. ['rʌ-əd' mo:r] *rathad mòr* ‘big road’.

When several plural syntactic phrases contain an identical element and occur in a coordinated structure, that element can be omitted from all phrases but one. This appears to be limited in compounds:

- *craobhan ghiuthais is (craobhan) daraich* ‘pine (trees) and oak trees’
- *taighean-seinnse 's (taighean-)bìdh* ‘pubs and restaurants’
- *madaidhean-ruadha 's madaidhean-allaidh* ‘foxes and wolves’
- **madaidhean-ruadha 's allaidh* (where * indicates an unacceptable formation).

Unlike syntactic phrases, compounds cannot generally be divided by adjectives:

- *craobh mhòr ghiuthais / craobh ghiuthais mhòr* ‘a big pine tree’
- *taigh-òsta mòr* ‘a big hotel’
- **taigh mòr òsta*.

Determiners (the definite article and possessives) normally precede both compounds and phrases that they modify. However, when the modifying element refers to a specific entity it (rather than the whole expression) is preceded by the determiner. Such expressions are interpreted as syntactic phrases:

- (compounds) *an taigh-seinnse* ‘the pub’; *m' eachdraidh-beatha* ‘my biography’
- (phrases) *am plana leasachaidh* ‘the development plan’
- (phrases) *bean an taighe* ‘the landlady’ (lit. ‘[the] woman of the house’); *bràthair mo mhàthar* ‘my maternal uncle’ (lit. ‘my mother’s brother’); *comhairle a' bhaile* ‘the town council’; *mullach an taighe* ‘the roof’ (lit. ‘[the] top of the house’).

When the modifying element is not definite (i.e. not preceded by a determiner) some of these expressions can behave like compounds (indicated in the examples immediately below with hyphens) in certain contexts, as can be seen by the final position of the modifying adjective and by the initial position of the determiner in the last example:

- *bean-taighe òg* ‘a young housewife’
- *comhairle-baile ùr* ‘a new town council’
- *mullach-taighe ùr* ‘a new roof’
- *mo bhràthair-màthar eile* ‘my other maternal uncle’.

Noun modifiers can be pluralised in plural syntactic phrases but not in plural compounds:

- (phrase) *mullaichean bheanntan* ‘mountaintops’
- (compound) *cèisean-litreach* ‘envelopes’
- **cèisean-litrichean*.

Genitive case nouns act as modifiers in compounds, but the genitive can be optional or archaic / inherited in syntactic phrases:

- (compounds) *sgian-arain* 'bread knife', *taigh-bidh* 'restaurant'
- (phrases) (optional genitive) *glainne fion(a)* 'a glass of wine', (optional genitive) *blas ara(i)n* 'taste of bread' vs. (archaic / inherited) *craobh dharaich* 'oak tree'.

The meaning of a compound can be different from the meanings of its constituent parts, at least partially, e.g.

- *taigh-beag* 'toilet' rather than 'small house'
- *tir-mòr* 'mainland' rather than 'great / big land'
- *madadh-ruadh* 'fox' rather than 'red dog'
- *bean-ghlùine* 'midwife' rather than 'knee woman'.

In certain compounds, the head element cannot act as hypernym in subsequent references to the compound word. (A hypernym is a word denoting a category of more specific words, e.g. cutlery (hyponym) vs. knife (specific type of cutlery).) For example, *taigh-beag* 'a toilet' cannot be referred to as *taigh* 'a house'. This is also true for *taigh-bidh* 'restaurant' and *taigh-seinnse* 'pub'. However, although the likes of *cèis-litreach* 'envelope' and *sgian-arain* 'bread knife' are compounds too, they can (for obvious semantic reasons) also be referred to by their hypernyms *cèis* and *sgian* respectively. Examples such as *madadh-ruadh* 'fox' fit into the first category except in dialects in which *madadh* on its own can refer to 'fox'. The hypernym substitution test is therefore only partially useful in recognising compounds.

Preposed intensifiers such as *fior* seem to modify phrases rarely whilst they occur normally with compounds.

- *fior dhuine-uasal* 'a real nobleman'
- (?) *fior bhlàs ara(i)n* 'real taste of bread'.

Many expressions are ambiguous and could be interpreted either as compounds or phrases in various contexts, e.g. *fear taighe* 'man of the house', *piuthar athar* 'paternal aunt', *craobh dharaich* 'oak tree'.

* * * * *

Generally speaking, it makes sense to hyphenate expressions that meet the above criteria for compounds, even though some might not meet all of them.

The right-branching structures discussed above can be described not as forming two clearly distinct groups of expressions, but rather as a continuum or cline, which makes the issue of hyphenation here quite challenging.

On one side, there are syntactic phrases, which function as groups of separate lexemes, both morpho-syntactically and semantically. They should be spelt as two or more separate words:

- *taigh cloiche* 'a stone house'
- *taigh mòr cloiche* 'a big stone house'
- *glainne uisge* 'a glass of water'
- *glainne mhòr uisge* 'a big glass of water'.

On the other side, there are compounds, which function as single lexemes in every respect and should be hyphenated:

- *taigh-beag* 'toilet'
- *taigh-beag glan* 'a clean toilet'.

These expressions tend to have a more weakly stressed head element, which can lead to phonetic reduction; their two parts cannot be separated by determiners and adjectives, and their meaning does not always follow from the meanings of their constituent parts, cf. *taigh-beag* ‘toilet’, lit. ‘small house’, etc. Certain words that are found in compounds are rarely used as independent lexemes, e.g. *luchd* ‘people’, as in *luchd-lagha* ‘lawyers’ (although *luchd na Gàidhlig / Beurla* is used); *seinnse* lit. ‘change’, as in *taigh-seinnse*. Many such expressions are well-established and ‘inherited’ as older formations in the language.

Certain right-branching expressions are ambiguous. They behave like phrases in that they can be divided either by (some) determiners or by adjectives, but they act as compounds in other respects or contexts:

- *bràthair d’ athar* ‘your paternal uncle’ (lit. ‘your father’s brother’)
- *bràthair-athar eile dha* ‘another paternal uncle of his’
- *am bràthair-athar eile* ‘the other uncle’ (not *the brother of another father)
- *fear an taighe* ‘the master of ceremonies, the man of the house’
- *fear-taighe òg* ‘a young master of ceremonies, a young man of the house’.

It might make sense to hyphenate expressions like these when they seem to act as compounds and write them as two separate words otherwise. Alternatively, it might be recommended that a hyphen should be used only where the meaning is different to the constituent parts, e.g. *taigh-beag* ‘toilet’, *tir-mòr* ‘mainland’.

A more radical, but also more practical solution would be to follow the Irish practice of writing all these and similar right-branching expressions as two separate words, without a hyphen. We would be very interested to receive comments, feedback and suggestions about hyphenation in Gaelic. We are keen to understand if there is appetite for change and regularisation and clearer guidance on the use of hyphens in Gaelic. Would the strictly linguistically based recommendations outlined here be acceptable?

Please email us at mail@dasg.ac.uk.

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LEACAN BLOG 3: The definite article with *ath* ‘next’, *aon* ‘one; same’, *aonamh* ‘first’, *ochdamh* ‘eighth’

Posted by Robby on 30th October, 2023

In traditional Gaelic, the definite article inflects for gender, number and case. Some of its forms trigger particular initial mutations in the following noun:

1. Lenition of non-dentals & *t*-prefixation before initial *s*
 - Nominative singular feminine: **a’ chlach** ‘the stone’, **an t-sùil** ‘the eye’
 - Genitive singular masculine: **a’ Ghàidheil** ‘of the Gael’, **an t-saoghail** ‘of the world’
 - Dative singular feminine and masculine: **anns a’ bhaile** ‘in the village’, **fon chrao(i)bh** ‘under the tree’, **anns an t-saoghal** ‘in the world’
2. *t*-prefixation before vowels
 - Nominative singular masculine: **an t-òran** ‘the song’
3. *h*-prefixation before vowels
 - Genitive singular feminine: **na h-ùine** ‘of the time’
 - Nominative / dative plural: (*air*) **na h-ùbhlán** ‘(on) the apples’, (*air*) **na h-itean** ‘(on) the feathers’.

However, the definite article does not inflect regularly before certain numerals and preposed adjectives in present-day Gaelic; in other words, the initial mutations (lenition, *t*- and *h*-) do not always affect these words as expected. The inflection of the article is also irregular before recent loanwords beginning with *f*-, *bh*- / *v*-, *s*- and *z*- / *x*-. And finally, the original dual form of the article (*an*, identical to the nominative singular form) is used before the number *dà* ‘two’ in all cases, although other (singular and plural) forms can also occur. In order to determine how widespread these phenomena are in modern Gaelic and how long they have been present in the language, corpus-based research has been conducted using *Corpas na Gàidhlig*. The focus of this research was on post-1950 texts, although earlier sources were also considered. Conservative inflected forms of nouns and adjectives, occasionally attested in the examples below, are not considered here and require further research.

The research included the following categories and words:

1. Initial vowels: *ath* ‘next’, *aon* ‘one; same’, *aonamh* ‘first’, *ochdamh* ‘eighth’
2. Initial *c*-: *ciad* / *ceud* ‘first’, *ceathramh* ‘fourth’, *còigeamh* ‘fifth’, *ceudamh* ‘hundredth’
3. Initial *f*-: *ficheadamh* ‘twentieth’
4. Initial *s*-: *siathamh* ‘sixth’, *seachdamh* ‘seventh’
5. Loanwords beginning with *f*-, *bh*- / *v*-, *s*- and *z*- / *x*-
6. *dà* ‘two’.

This blog is concerned only with the words listed in [1]. Other blogs will address [2]–[6].

* * * * *

Since they start with a vowel, the words *ath*, *aon*, *aonamh* and *ochdamh* are expected to undergo *t*-prefixation and *h*-prefixation in the relevant forms, as outlined above. However, although the adjective ***ath*** ‘next’ modifying masculine nominative singular nouns is very frequent in the corpus, no post-1950 examples exhibit *t*-prefixation in the nominative singular (where it might be expected historically). This mutation is also absent in many earlier examples, although it is common in nineteenth-century texts. This, however, does not apply to compound words whose first element is *ath*, where *t*-prefixation seems to be regular, with very few exceptions.

- Innovative: **an ath fheasgar** ‘the next evening’; **an ath latha** ‘the next day’; **an ath Dhi-haoine** ‘the next Friday’; **an ath shamhradh** ‘the next summer’; **an ath fhoghar** ‘the next autumn’; **an ath àite** ‘the next place’
- Conservative: **an t-ath latha** ‘the next day’; **an t-ath earrach** ‘the next spring’; **an t-ath àite** ‘the next place’; **an t-ath rud** ‘the next thing’ (all early 20th century)
- Compounds: **an t-ath-leasachadh** ‘the Reformation’, **an t-ath-bheothachadh** ‘the revival’ vs **an ath-nuadhachadh seo** ‘this renewal’.

Examples of *h*-prefixing forms are considerably frequent too, but this initial mutation does not occur regularly either. No genitive plural forms have been found in the corpus.

- [F.GEN.SG] Conservative: *chun na h-ath sheachdain* ‘to the next week’; (*a*) *freagairt na h-ath cheist* ‘answering the next question’ vs Innovative: *fad an ath sheachdain* ‘during the next week’
- [NOM.PL] Conservative: *na h-ath ghinealachan* ‘the next generations’ vs Innovative: **an ath fhianuisean** ‘the next witnesses’.

The other forms (involving *an* that causes no initial mutation to *ath*) are well attested.

- [F.NOM.SG] Conservative: **an ath cheist** ‘the next question’; **an ath sgìre** ‘the next parish’
- [M.DAT.SG] Conservative: *air an ath fhear* ‘on the next one’; *anns an ath shaoghal* ‘in the next world’
- [F.DAT.SG] Conservative: *air an ath dhuilleig* ‘on the next page’; *aig an ath choinneimh* ‘at the next meeting’; *anns an ath long* ‘in the next ship’
- [M.GEN.SG] Conservative: *aig deireadh an ath shamhraidh* ‘at the end of the next summer’; *clann an ath dhorais* ‘the children nextdoor’; *chun an ath fhear* ‘to the next one’; *airson an ath thuras* ‘for the next time’.

Similar patterns apply to the word **aon**, which has the following meanings when modifying a definite noun, but note that *an t-aon* in the nominative is more common than *an t-ath*:

- ‘same’: Conservative: *Carson nach dèan mi an t-aon rud ’s a rinn Coinneach Iain?* ‘Why won’t I do the same thing that Kenneth Ian did?’
- ‘very’: Conservative: *B’ e Eas-a’-choire fhéin an t-aon eas bu bhrèagha ’san dùthaich.* ‘Eas a’ choire itself was the very most beautiful waterfall in the country.’
- ‘only’: Conservative: *Cha b’ e seo an t-aon latha de ’n bhliadhna.* ‘This was not the only day of the year.’
- ‘each’: Conservative: *Gu àrd an staidhreagh rinn sinn, aon rum-cadail mor aig ceann a deas an tìghe agus rinn sinn da leth air a’ cheann eile a’ toirt rùm beag do gach nighean, an t-aon rùm mac-samhail rùm na té eile.* ‘Upstairs, we made one big bedroom at the southern end of the house and we divided the other end in two halves giving a small room to each daughter; each room a duplicate of the other one’s room.’

Although examples of the masculine nominative singular expression *an t-aon* are still frequent in recent texts, *t*-prefixation is absent from most examples, even in pre-1950 texts, e.g.

- Innovative: **an aon chànan** ‘the same language’ (although *cànain* was originally feminine); **an aon dath** ‘the same colour’; **an aon òran** ‘the same song’; **an aon rud** ‘the same thing’
- Conservative: **an t-aon ghille** ‘the same lad’; **an t-aon òran** ‘the same song’; **an t-aon rud** ‘the same thing’; **an t-aon rùm** ‘the same room’.

On the other hand, *t*-prefixation occurs regularly when *aon* is used as a noun:

- **an t-aon a b' òige** 'the youngest one'
- **an t-aon de 'n cheathrar a bha air fhàgail** 'the one of the four who was left'.

In examples of the other forms, the article tends to follow conservative patterns, although some innovative forms too have been attested:

- [F.NOM.SG] Conservative: **an aon phiuthar** 'the only sister'; **an aon chuimhne** 'the only memory'
- [M.DAT.SG] Conservative: *air an aon rathad* 'on the same road'; *anns an aon leabhar* 'in the same book'
- [F.DAT.SG] Conservative: *air an aon chreig* 'on the same rock'; *den aon chloich* 'of the same stone'
- [M.GEN.SG] Conservative: *fad an aon ama* 'during the same time'; *sgioba an aon bhàta mhóir* 'the crew of the same big boat'; *a' faighinn an aon bhiadh* 'getting the same food'
- [F.GEN.SG] Conservative: *airson na h-aon leapa* 'for the one bed'; *a' cosnadh na h-aon duaise* 'winning the same prize'; *a' pàigheadh na h-aon chis* 'paying the same tax' vs Innovative: *(a') faicinn an aon rionnag* 'seeing the same star'
- [NOM.PL] Conservative: **na h-aon chàirdean** 'the only relatives'; **na h-aon daoine / fhaclan** 'the same people / words' vs Innovative: **an aon àiteachan** 'the only places'
- [GEN.PL] Conservative: *a' dèanamh nan aon rudan* 'doing the same things'.

Examples of the ordinal number **aonamh** 'first' modifying a masculine nominative singular noun are very rare in the corpus: most examples are dative, in expressions such as (Conservative) *air an aonamh latha deug / fichead de* 'on the eleventh / twenty first day of...'. Some of the attested nominative forms are *t*-prefixed, including a feminine example which implies hypercorrection:

- [M.NOM.SG] Conservative: **an t-aonamh latha deug den Mhàrt** 'the eleventh (day) of March' vs Innovative: **an aonamh latha deug de Iulaidh** 'the eleventh (day) of July'
- [F.NOM.SG] Innovative / hypercorrect: **an t-aonamh àithne deug** 'the eleventh commandment' (where *àithne* is feminine and where we might expect conservative *an aonamh àithne deug*)
- [M.DAT.SG] Conservative: *air an aonamh latha deug dhen Fhaoilleach* 'on the 11th (day) of January'
- [M.GEN.SG] Conservative: *feasgar an aonamh latha fichead de'n Ghiblinn* 'the evening of the 21st (day) of April'.

No examples of *h*-prefixing forms have been found in the corpus with *aonamh*.

The ordinal number **ochdamh** 'eighth' (modifying only singular nouns) is well-attested in the corpus, mainly accompanied by the traditional forms of the article and the corresponding initial mutations, with few exceptions, e.g.

- [M.NOM.SG] Conservative: **an t-ochdamh latha** 'the eighth day'; *Bu mhise an t-ochdamh fear san t-sreath* 'I was the eighth in the line / row' vs Innovative: *B' e mis an ochdamh fear* 'I was the eighth.'
- [F.NOM.SG] Conservative: **an ochdamh bliadhna** 'the eighth year' vs Innovative / hypercorrect: **an t-ochdamh bliadhna** 'the eighth year'
- [F.DAT.SG] Conservative: *anns an ochdamh bliadhna* 'in the eighth year'
- [F.GEN.SG] Conservative: *a' tòiseachadh na h-ochdamh bliadhna* 'beginning the eighth year' vs Innovative: *tòiseach an ochdamh bliadhna* 'the beginning of the eighth year'.

Linn ‘century’ shows mixed usage in the nominative and genitive, no doubt reflecting its masculine gender in modern Scottish Gaelic and its original historical feminine gender:

- [M./F.NOM.SG] Conservative masculine: **an t-ochdamh linn deug** ‘the eighteenth century’ vs Conservative feminine: **an ochdamh linn** ‘the eighth century’ (a 19th-century text)
- [M.DAT.SG.] or [F.DAT.SG] **anns an ochdamh linn deug** ‘in the eighteenth century’
- [F./M.GEN.SG] Conservative feminine: **aig toiseach na h-ochdamh linn deug** ‘at the start of the eighteenth century’ vs Conservative masculine: **aig deireadh an ochdamh linn deug** ‘at the end of the eighteenth century’ (with one example of **aig deireadh an ochdamh linne deug** where *linn* unusually occurs in the genitive).

* * * * *

The following conclusions can be drawn based on the corpus data presented above:

1. The definite article does not normally or regularly prefix *t-* to the words *ath* and *aon* that modify a masculine nominative singular noun in modern Gaelic: *an ath bhaile*, *an aon duine*.
2. The form *an ath* sometimes occurs instead of *na h-ath* both with singular feminine nouns in genitive contexts and with plural nouns: *fad an ath sheachdain*, *an ath fhianuisean*, although *h-*prefixed examples are not uncommon.
3. The form *na h-aon* occurs frequently in the corpus, both with singular feminine nouns in genitive contexts and with plural nouns, although *an aon* is also attested.
4. A few examples of genitive plural *nan aon* have been found in the corpus, in post-1950 texts. There are no examples of *an aon* or *(n)an ath* in this context (genitive plural).
5. No definite conclusions can be made about the inflection of the article and the initial mutations with the ordinal number *aonamh* due to the paucity of examples.
6. The article preceding the ordinal number *ochdamh* seems to inflect according to the traditional patterns. However, only singular forms occur.

Since these words are not well-attested in all grammatical contexts and because written texts tend to reflect more conservative usages than the everyday spoken language, more research on actual vernacular usage is needed.

Based on the currently available data, the following recommendations for formal and informal use can be made for *ath* and *aon* when modifying a noun:

Conservative / high register / formal

Nom. sg. m.	<i>an t-ath</i>	<i>an t-aon</i>
Nom. sg. f. Dat. sg. m./f. Gen. sg. m.	<i>an ath</i>	<i>an aon</i>
Gen. sg. f. Nom./dat. pl.	<i>na h-ath</i>	<i>na h-aon</i>
Gen. pl.	<i>nan ath</i>	<i>nan aon</i>

Innovative / informal

Nom. sg. m. Nom. sg. f. Dat. sg. m./f. Gen. sg. m.	<i>an ath</i>	<i>an aon</i>
Gen. sg. f. Nom./dat. pl.	<i>na h-ath</i> or <i>an ath</i> [?]	<i>na h-aon</i> or <i>an aon</i> [?]

Gen. pl.	<i>nan ath</i> or <i>an ath</i> [?]	<i>nan aon</i> or <i>an aon</i> [?]
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We would be very interested to receive comments, feedback and suggestions about the forms of the article and the initial mutations in the context of the words *ath*, *aon*, *aonamh* and *ochdamh*. Do the conservative forms seem acceptable? Do the innovative / informal inflections presented above correspond to the current vernacular usage or is the system even more reduced / simplified than we have suggested here? Are the traditional forms more common with the numbers *aonamh* and *ochdamh* than with *ath* and *aon*?

Please email us with your feedback and comments at mail@dasg.ac.uk.

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LEACAN BLOG 4: The definite article with *ciad* ‘first’, *ceathramh* ‘fourth’, *còigeamh* ‘fifth’, *ceudamh* ‘hundredth’, *ficheadamh* ‘twentieth’, *siathamh* ‘sixth’, *seachdamh* ‘seventh’

Posted by Robby on 9th October, 2023

In traditional Gaelic, the definite article inflects for gender, number and case. Some of its forms trigger particular initial mutations in the following noun:

1. Lenition of non-dentals & *t*-prefixation before initial *s*
 - Nominative singular feminine: **a’ chlach** ‘the stone’, **an t-sùil** ‘the eye’
 - Genitive singular masculine: **a’ Ghàidheil** ‘of the Gael’, **an t-saoghail** ‘of the world’
 - Dative singular feminine and masculine: **anns a’ bhaile** ‘in the village’, **fon chrao(i)bh** ‘under the tree’, **anns an t-saoghal** ‘in the world’
2. *t*-prefixation before vowels
 - Nominative singular masculine: **an t-òran** ‘the song’
3. *h*-prefixation before vowels
 - Genitive singular feminine: **na h-ùine** ‘of the time’
 - Nominative / dative plural: **(air) na h-ùbhlán** ‘(on) the apples’, **(air) na h-itean** ‘(on) the feathers’.

However, the definite article does not inflect regularly before certain numerals and preposed adjectives in present-day Gaelic; in other words, the initial mutations (lenition, *t*- and *h*-) do not always affect these words as expected. The inflection of the article is also irregular before recent loanwords beginning with *f*-, *bh*- / *v*-, *s*- and *z*- / *x*-. And finally, the original dual form of the article (*an*, identical to the nominative singular form) is used before the number *dà* ‘two’ in all cases, although other (singular and plural) forms can also occur. In order to determine how widespread these phenomena are in modern Gaelic and how long they have been present in the language, corpus-based research has been conducted using *Corpas na Gàidhlig*. The focus of this research was on post-1950 texts, although earlier sources were also considered. Conservative inflected forms of nouns and adjectives, occasionally attested in the examples below, are not considered here and require further research.

This is our second blog dedicated to the inflection of the definite article and the accompanying initial mutations with the following words:

1. Initial vowels: *ath* ‘next’, *aon* ‘one; same’, *aonamh* ‘first’, *ochdamh* ‘eighth’
2. Initial *c*-: *ciad* / *ceud* ‘first’, *ceathramh* ‘fourth’, *còigeamh* ‘fifth’, *ceudamh* ‘hundredth’
3. Initial *f*-: *ficheadamh* ‘twentieth’
4. Initial *s*-: *siathamh* ‘sixth’, *seachdamh* ‘seventh’
5. Loanwords beginning with *f*-, *bh*- / *v*-, *s*- and *z*- / *x*-
6. *dà* ‘two’.

Our previous blog addressed the words listed in [1] and the present blog is dedicated to those in [2]–[4].

* * * * *

The words in [2] and [3] begin with *c*- and *f*- respectively, and are expected to be lenited by the article in the feminine nominative singular and in the dative singular (both masculine and feminine). The words in [4], starting with *s*-, are expected to undergo *t*-prefixation in the same contexts.

Ciad (sometimes **ceud**) ‘first’ is always lenited with feminine nominative singular nouns, e.g. **a’ chiad oidhche** ‘the first night’. However, it is normally lenited when modifying a masculine nominative singular noun too, e.g. **a’ chiad fhear** ‘the first one’. The other forms usually follow the traditional inflexion and initial mutation patterns, with a few exceptions (occurring especially in the most recent texts).

- [M.NOM.SG] Conservative: **an ciad ainm** ‘the first name’ vs Innovative: **a’ chiad rud** ‘the first thing’
- [M.DAT.SG] Conservative: **air a’ chiad latha** ‘on the first day’
- [F.DAT.SG] Conservative: **air a’ chiad oidhche** ‘on the first night’; **air a’ chiad luing / long** ‘on the first ship’
- [m.gen.sg] Conservative: **mullach a’ chiad chnuic** ‘the top of the first hill’; **airson a’ chiad turas** ‘for the first time’; (**a’**) **toirt a’ chiad iomradh** ‘giving the first account’
- [F.GEN.SG] Conservative: **a thoirt na ciad bhuille** ‘to give the first blow’; **airson na ciad uaire** ‘for the first time’ vs Innovative: **a’ cosnadh a’ chiad duais** ‘winning the first prize’
- [NOM.PL] Conservative: **na ciad bhuidheannan** ‘the first groups’ vs Innovative: **a’ cheud fhianuisean** ‘the first witnesses’
- [GEN.PL] Conservative: **freagairtean nan ciad ochd ceistean** ‘the answers to the first eight questions’ vs Innovative: **mu dheidhinn a’ chiad daoine** ‘about the first people’; **airson a’ chiad seachd clasaichean** ‘for the first seven classes’; **airson a’ chiad trì là** ‘for the first three days’.

Apart from the masculine nominative singular, the most common exception in the corpus is the expression **airson a’ chiad uair** ‘for the first time’, with the nominative form occurring instead of the genitive after the preposition **airson** ‘for’, which takes the genitive case. This expression, which might be a calque from English, is also attested with the genitive: **airson na ciad uair(e) / uarach**, especially in pre-1950 texts. Other similar expressions of time too tend to contain the nominative instead of the genitive case: note the nominative singular (!) **airson a’ chiad trì là** ‘for the first three days’ instead of the genitive plural ***airson nan ciad trì làithean**. Cf. similar examples with other ordinal numbers below.

Unlike **ciad**, the ordinal numbers **ceathramh** ‘fourth’ and **còigeamh** ‘fifth’ are almost never lenited in the nominative, not even when modifying feminine nouns. The other forms, however, are often conservative. This also seems to apply to the number **ceudamh** ‘one hundredth’, which is not well-attested in the corpus.

- [M.NOM.SG] Conservative: **an ceathramh fear-cuideachaidh** ‘the fourth helper’; **an còigeamh òran** ‘the fifth song’
- [F.NOM.SG] Conservative: **a’ cheathramh té** ‘the fourth one’ vs Innovative: **an ceathramh pàirt / àithne / uair** ‘the fourth part / commandment / time’; **an còigeamh oidhche** ‘the fifth night’; **an ceudamh caora** ‘the one hundredth sheep’
- [M.DAT.SG] Conservative: **anns a’ cheathramh leabhar** ‘in the fourth book’; **anns a’ chòigeamh àite** ‘in the fifth place’
- [F.DAT.SG] Conservative: **air a’ cheathramh té** ‘on the fourth one’; **air a’ chòigeamh oidhche** ‘on the fifth night’
- [M.GEN.SG] Conservative: **air feasgar a’ cheathramh latha fichead de’n Dùbhlachd** ‘on the evening of the 24th (day) of December’; **air crìoch a’ chòigeamh latha** ‘at the end of the fifth day’ vs Innovative: **airson an còigeamh turas** ‘for the fifth time’
- [F.GEN.SG] Conservative: **toiseach na còigeamh bliadhna** ‘the beginning of the fifth year’; **a’ comharrachadh na ceudamh bliadhna** ‘celebrating the 100th anniversary’; **airson na ceathramh uair** ‘for the fourth time’ vs Innovative: **airson a’ cheudamh uair** ‘for the one hundredth time’.

The ordinal number *ficheadamh* ‘twentieth’ occurs predominantly in dative examples with regular lenition. Other forms are very few and most examples are conservative.

- [M.NOM.SG] Conservative: *am ficheadamh triath* ‘the 20th lord’ vs Innovative: *an Fhicheadamh Leasan* ‘the 20th lesson’
- [F.NOM.SG] Conservative: *an fhicheadamh cuid* ‘the 20th part’ vs Innovative: *am ficheadamh cuid* ‘the 20th part’ (from 19th century)
- [F.GEN.SG] Conservative: *uabhasan na ficheadamh linne* ‘the horrors of the 20th century’
- [DAT.SG] Conservative: *anns an fhicheadamh linn* ‘in the 20th century’.

The ordinal numbers in [4], which begin with s-, are expected to undergo t-prefixation in the feminine nominative singular and in the dative singular. A great majority of examples found in the corpus are dative singular forms occurring in expressions of time, such as: *air an t-siathamh là deug den Mhàrt* ‘on the 16th (day) of March’; *anns an t-seachdamh linn deug* ‘in the 17th century’. Other forms too usually follow the conservative patterns, with a few exceptions, chiefly in the nominative singular.

- [M.NOM.SG] Conservative: *an siathamh leabhar* ‘the sixth book’ vs Innovative: *an t-siathamh latha* ‘the sixth day’
- [F.NOM.SG] Conservative: *an t-siathamh bliadhna* ‘the sixth year’ vs Innovative: *an siathamh cuid* ‘the sixth part’
- [M.DAT.SG] Conservative: *air an t-siathamh latha* ‘on the sixth day’
- [F.DAT.SG] Conservative: *air an t-siathamh bliadhna* ‘in the sixth year’
- [M.GEN.SG] Conservative: *gu linn an t-siathamh Sheumais* ‘to the time of James VI’; *aghaidh an t-siathamh fear* ‘the face of the sixth one’
- [F.GEN.SG] Conservative: *ann an dara leth na siathamh linne* ‘in the second half of the 6th century’; *bho thoiseach na siathamh linn* ‘from the beginning of the 6th century’ vs Innovative: *a’ còmhdach an t-siathamh cuid* ‘covering the sixth part’.

Cf. *Seumas an Seachdamh* ‘James VII’, perhaps based on English, instead of more traditional *an seachdamh (Rìgh) Seumas*.

* * * * *

The following conclusions can be drawn based on the corpus data presented above:

1. The ordinal number *ciad* ‘first’ modifying a masculine nominative singular noun is usually lenited. The other forms appear to follow the traditional pattern, with some exceptions.
2. Conversely, the ordinal numbers *ceathramh* ‘fourth’, *còigeamh* ‘fifth’ and *ceudamh* ‘one hundredth’ are often not lenited when modifying a feminine nominative singular noun. The other forms, however, mainly follow the traditional patterns.
3. The article preceding the ordinal numbers *siathamh* ‘sixth’, *seachdamh* ‘seventh’ and *ficheadamh* ‘twentieth’ seems to inflect according to the traditional patterns, although there are exceptions with *siathamh* and *seachdamh*, especially in the nominative singular. These numbers (especially *ficheadamh*) are attested mainly in dative singular contexts.
4. Plural forms are attested only with *ciad*.
5. Since not all of these words are well-attested in all grammatical contexts and because written texts tend to reflect more conservative usages than everyday spoken language, more research on actual vernacular usage is needed.

Based on the currently available data, the following recommendations can be made:

Conservative / high register / formal

Nom. sg. m.	<i>a' chiad</i> <i>an ceathramh</i> <i>an còigeamh</i> <i>an ceudamh</i>	<i>am ficheadamh</i>	<i>an siathamh</i> <i>an seachdamh</i>
Nom. sg. f. Dat. sg. m./f. Gen. sg. m.	<i>a' chiad</i> <i>a' cheathramh</i> <i>a' chòigeamh</i> <i>a' cheudamh</i>	<i>an fhicheadamh</i>	<i>an t-siathamh</i> <i>an t-seachdamh</i>
Gen. sg. f.	<i>na ciad</i> <i>na ceathramh</i> <i>na còigeamh</i> <i>na ceudamh</i>	<i>na ficheadamh</i>	<i>na siathamh</i> <i>na seachdamh</i>
Nom./dat. pl.	<i>na ciad</i>		
Gen. pl.	<i>nan ciad</i>		

Innovative / informal

Nom. sg. m.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>an ceathramh</i> <i>an còigeamh</i> <i>an ceudamh</i>
Nom. sg. f.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>a' cheathramh</i> or <i>an ceathramh</i> [?] <i>a' chòigeamh</i> or <i>an còigeamh</i> [?] <i>a' cheudamh</i> or <i>an ceudamh</i> [?]
Dat. sg. m./f. Gen. sg. m.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>a' cheathramh</i> <i>a' chòigeamh</i> <i>a' cheudamh</i>
Gen. sg. f.	<i>na ciad</i> or <i>a' chiad</i> [?]	<i>na ceathramh</i> or <i>a' cheathramh</i> [?] <i>na còigeamh</i> or <i>a' chòigeamh</i> [?] <i>na ceudamh</i> or <i>a' cheudamh</i> [?]
Nom./dat. pl.	<i>na ciad</i> or <i>a' chiad</i> [?]	
Gen. pl.	<i>nan ciad</i> or <i>a' chiad</i> [?]	

We would be very interested to receive comments, feedback and suggestions about the forms of the article and the initial mutations in the context of the numbers *ciad*, *ceathramh*, *còigeamh*, *siathamh*, *seachdamh* and *ficheadamh*. Do the conservative forms seem acceptable? Do the innovative / informal inflections presented above correspond to the current vernacular usage or is the system even more reduced / simplified than we have suggested here? Are the traditional forms more common with *ficheadamh* than with the other numbers?

Please email us with your feedback and comments at mail@dasg.ac.uk.

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LEACAN BLOG 5: The definite article with loanwords beginning with *f-*, *v-* / *bh-*, *y-*, *w-*, *s-*, *z-* / *x-* and *j-*

Posted by Robby on 10th October, 2023

In traditional Gaelic, the definite article inflects for gender, number and case. Some of its forms trigger particular initial mutations in the following noun:

1. Lenition of non-dentals & *t*-prefixation before initial *s*
 - Nominative singular feminine: **a' chlach** 'the stone', **an t-sùil** 'the eye'
 - Genitive singular masculine: **a' Ghàidheil** 'of the Gael', **an t-saoghail** 'of the world'
 - Dative singular feminine and masculine: **anns a' bhaile** 'in the village', **fon chrao(i)bh** 'under the tree', **anns an t-saoghal** 'in the world'
2. *t*-prefixation before vowels
 - Nominative singular masculine: **an t-òran** 'the song'
3. *h*-prefixation before vowels
 - Genitive singular feminine: **na h-ùine** 'of the time'
 - Nominative / dative plural: (*air*) **na h-ùbhlán** '(on) the apples', (*air*) **na h-itean** '(on) the feathers'.

However, the definite article does not inflect regularly before certain numerals and preposed adjectives in present-day Gaelic; in other words, the initial mutations (lenition, *t*- and *h*-) do not always affect these words as expected. The inflection of the article is also irregular before recent loanwords beginning with *f-*, *v-* / *bh-*, *y-*, *w-*, *s-*, *z-* / *x-* and *j-*. And finally, the original dual form of the article (*an*, identical to the nominative singular form) is used before the number *dà* 'two' in all cases, although other (singular and plural) forms can also occur. In order to determine how widespread these phenomena are in modern Gaelic and how long they have been present in the language, corpus-based research has been conducted using *Corpas na Gàidhlig*. The focus of this research was on post-1950 texts, although earlier sources were also considered.

This is our third blog dedicated to the inflection of the definite article and the accompanying initial mutations with the following words:

1. Initial vowels: *ath* 'next', *aon* 'one; same', *aonamh* 'first', *ochdamh* 'eighth'
2. Initial *c-*: *ciad* / *ceud* 'first', *ceathramh* 'fourth', *còigeamh* 'fifth', *ceudamh* 'hundredth'
3. Initial *f-*: *ficheadamh* 'twentieth'
4. Initial *s-*: *siathamh* 'sixth', *seachdamh* 'seventh'
5. Loanwords beginning with *f-*, *v-* / *bh-*, *y-*, *w-*, *s-*, *z-* / *x-* and *j-*
6. *dà* 'two'.

Our previous blog addressed the words listed in [2]–[4] and the present one is dedicated to those in [5].

* * * * *

Recent loanwords beginning with *f-* and *s-* appear to normally resist initial mutations and those that start with *v-* / *bh-*, *y-*, *w-*, *z-* / *x-* and *j-* do not fit into the Gaelic system of mutations. This seems to affect the forms of the definite article modifying such loanwords: resulting in non-standard inflection, or at least spelling, of the article.

Nouns starting with *f*-

Lenition of initial *f* is avoided in recent loanwords and the inflection of the article that modifies them is partially irregular. The forms *am* and (non-leniting) *a'* have been recorded in the nominative and dative singular of the same nouns. The form *an* occurs in the dative when *f*- is lenited, which is rare. The forms *a'* and (when *f*- is lenited) *an* occur in the genitive, which may point to the masculine gender. However, feminine *na* is common in the genitive too, with the same nouns. There are very few examples of plural forms of these loanwords in the corpus: the form of the article is *na* in all plural cases and no examples of genitive plural *nan/nam* have been attested.

- [NOM.SG] **am flat** / **a' flat** 'the flat'; **am fòn** / **a' fòn** 'the phone'; **am film** 'the film'; **a' film star** 'the film star'
- [DAT.SG] *anns* **am flat** / **sa flat** 'in the flat'; *ás* **a' flat** 'from the flat'; *dhan* **flat** 'in the flat'; *anns* **am frids** / *anns* **a' frids** 'in the fridge'; *san* **film** / **sa film** 'in the film'; *air* **am fòn** / *air* **a' fòn** 'on the phone' vs *ás* **an fhilm** 'from the film'; *air* **an fhòn** 'on the phone'; *bho'n* **fhón** 'from the phone'
- [M.GEN.SG] *mu dheidhinn* **a' film** 'about the film'; *gliong* **a' fòn** 'ringing of the phone'; *àireamh* **a' fòn** 'the phone number' vs *cuspair* **an fhilm** 'the topic of the film'; *a fhreagairt* **an fhón** 'to answer the phone'
- [F.GEN.SG] *son* **na film** 'for the film', *a' freagairt* **na fòn** 'answering the phone'; *àireamh* **na fòn** 'the phone number'; *doras* **na flat aice** 'the door of her flat'.
- [NOM.PL] **na filmichean** 'the films'
- [DAT.PL] *leis* **na filmichean** 'with the films'; *de* **na fònan** 'of the phones'
- [GEN.PL] *a measg* **na filmichean-mìneachaidh** 'among the documentaries'.

The noun *fòn* especially is well-attested in the genitive and dative in the corpus, with very few lenited examples. There are no examples of lenited *fhlat* and *fhrids*, which implies that lenition of preconsonantal *f*- is avoided even more rigorously in recent loanwords.

Initial *f* normally remains unlenited in other leniting contexts too, e.g.

- *aon flat* 'one flat'; *dà flat* 'two saucers'
- *rudeigin mar frids* 'something like a fridge'
- *mar film* 'like a film'; *ainm a film* 'the name of the/his(?) film'; *a' sealltainn filmichean* 'watching films'.

But note: *ris an aon fhón* 'to the only phone'; *dà fhilm goirid* 'two short films' (Note unlenited *g*-!); *corra fhilm* 'a few films'.

Nouns starting with *v*- / *bh*-

Partially irregular inflection of the definite article has also been recorded with borrowed nouns that begin with *v*- (often spelt *bh*- in Gaelic), a consonant that does not occur word-initially in native Gaelic words (and in early loanwords) in non-leniting contexts. Note the forms of the article: masculine nominative singular *am* / *an* / *a'*, masculine dative and genitive singular *am* (alongside other forms) and genitive plural *nam* / *na*.

- [M.NOM.SG] **am vacuum** 'the vacuum'; **an vest** 'the vest'; **an virus** 'the virus'; **a' vet** / **bheat** 'the vet'
- [F.NOM.SG] **a' bhan dhearg** 'the red van'; **a' bhòidse** 'the voyage'
- [M.DAT.SG] *leis* **am vacuum** 'with the vacuum'; *do* **'n bheat** 'to the vet'; *air* **a' vet** / **bheat** 'on the vet'

- [F.DAT.SG] *anns a' bhan bheag Fiat* 'in the small Fiat van'; *air a' bhana* 'on the van'; *air a' bhòidse* 'on the voyage'
- [M.GEN.SG] *plug am vacuum* 'the plug of the vacuum'; *mu dhéidhinn a' bheat* 'about the vet'
- [F.GEN.SG] *an cùl na vana* 'in the back of the van'; *'m broinn na bhana* 'inside the van'; *uisge na Vistula* 'the river Vistula'; *airson na bhòidse* 'for the voyage' vs *an cul a' bhan* 'in the back of the van'
- [NOM.PL] *na viorasan / bhiorasan* 'the viruses'; *na bhanaichean* 'the vans'; *na Víkingar* 'the Vikings'; *na bhòtairean* 'the voters'
- [DAT.PL] *aig na viorasan* 'at the viruses'; *ris na bhiorasan* 'to the viruses'; *anns na bhanaichean* 'in the vans'; *bho na Víkingar* 'from the Vikings'; *leis na bhòtairean* 'with the voters'; *de na bhòidsichean* 'of the voyages'
- [GEN.PL] *àireamh nam bhiorasan* 'the number of viruses'; *am measg nan càraichean 's nam bhanaichean* 'among the cars and the vans'; *luach nam vòtaichean* 'the value of the votes'; *an àm nam Víkingar* 'in the time of the Vikings'; *éifeachd nam Vitamin* 'the effect of the vitamins' vs *do luchd na bhanaichean* 'to the van people'; *bho àm na Víkingar* 'from the time of the Vikings'; *bho theachd na Vikings* 'from the arrival of the Vikings'.

Nouns starting with y-

With loanwords starting with y- (sometimes spelt gh- in Gaelic), the nominative singular form of the article attested in the corpus is *a'*. The same form also occurs in the dative singular (except where the article is merged with a preposition, e.g. *dhan*). The forms *a'* and *na* have been attested in the genitive singular and *na* also occurs in all plural cases.

- [NOM.SG] *a' yacht* 'the yacht'; *a' yard* 'the yard'
- [DAT.SG] *air a' yacht* 'on the yacht'; *dhan yard* 'to the yard'
- [GEN.SG] *timcheall a' yacht* 'around the yacht'; *leagail a' yard chiùraigidh* 'demolition of the curing yard' vs *mu chall na gheat (lolaire)* 'about the loss of the yacht (lolaire)'; *airson na yat* 'for the yacht'
- [NOM.PL] *na Yanks* 'the Yanks'; *na Yankaich* 'the Yanks'
- [DAT.PL] *air na yachtaichean* 'on the yachts' (also spelt: *gheataichean*); *às na yards* 'from the yards'; *air na Yanks* 'on the Yanks'; *aig na Yankaich* 'at the Yanks'
- [GEN.PL] *chun na Yanks* 'to the Yanks'; *maor-airm na Yanks* 'army officer of the Yanks'.

Nouns starting with w-

Few loanwords that begin with w- (sometimes spelt u- in Gaelic) have been found in the corpus. The attested forms of the article are the same as those that occur before y-.

- [NOM.SG] *a' uèir* 'the wire'
- [DAT.SG] *air a' wire* 'on the wire'; *air a' watch* 'on the watch'
- [GEN.SG] *deireadh na watch* 'the end of the watch'.

Historically, w- used to be replaced by b- in loanwords, cf. *buidseach* ('witch'), *bathar* ('ware').

Nouns starting with z- / x- and s-

There are few examples of recently borrowed nouns that begin with z- / x- in the corpus. Even when their spelling is adapted to the Gaelic orthography and the initial consonant is spelt s-

these nouns normally do not undergo *t*-prefixation where it would be expected. Apart from that, the forms of the article are mainly conservative. (The following examples include some non-Gaelic proper nouns or names.)

- [NOM.SG] **an** *siop* ‘the zip’; **an** *xylem* ‘the xylem’
- [DAT.SG] *anns* **an** *Sutha* ‘in the zoo’; *de’n* **xylem** ‘of the xylem’; *leis* **a’** *zip* ‘with the zip’; *anns* **an** *Zeitschrift fur Celtische Philologie* ‘in the Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie’ [academic journal]; *faisg air* **an** *Zambesi* ‘near Zambezi’
- [GEN.SG] *a’ cuairteachadh* **an** *xylem* ‘surrounding the xylem’ vs *fior mhullach* **an t-** *Zugspitze* ‘the very summit of the Zugspitze’
- [GEN.PL] *cogadh* **nan** “*Zulus*” ‘the Zulu war’ vs *ag actadh* **na** *Zùlùs* ‘pretending to be Zulus’.

Lenition is also absent in leniting contexts:

- *dà* **slide** ‘two slides’; *dà* **zero** *air fichead* ‘22 zeros’
- *baile* **Zurich** ‘the city of Zurich’
- *turas a* **Zimbabwe** ‘a journey to Zimbabwe’.

On the other hand, *t*-prefixation has been recorded in some nouns that begin with *s*- in English: [DAT.SG] *aig* **an t-sinc** ‘at the sink’; *anns* **an t-seata chùil** ‘in the back seat’; [GEN.SG] *a* **lionadh an t-sinc** ‘of filling the sink’; *chun* **an t-sinc** ‘to the sink’.

Nouns starting with *j*-

There are a few examples of English loanwords beginning with *j*- in the corpus, all modified by conservative forms of the article.

- [NOM.SG] **an** *jeep* ‘the jeep’, **an** *jetlag* ‘the jetlag’
- [DAT.SG] **san** *jeep* ‘in the jeep’, *dhe’n* **jam** ‘of the jam’
- [M.GEN.SG] *airson* **an** *joba* ‘for the job’
- [F.GEN.SG] *cuibheall* **na** *jeep* ‘the wheel of the jeep’
- [DAT.PL] *dha* **na** *jokes agad* ‘of your jokes’.

Historically, *j*- used to be replaced by slender *s*- in loanwords in Gaelic. Such words are adapted to the Gaelic phonology and grammar, and undergo *t*-prefixation where applicable, e.g. [DAT.SG] *fon* **an t-siompair** ‘under the jumper’, *air* **an t-seacaid** ‘on the jacket’.

Initial *j* is sometimes replaced by *i*- in loanwords. A few examples containing the definite article have been found in the corpus. Initial *i*- might represent a consonant sound for some speakers, and *t*-prefixation and *h*-prefixation are not consistent.

- [NOM.SG] **an t-lapanach** ‘the Japanese man’ vs **an** *lapanach* ‘the Japanese man’
- [GEN.SG] *á gréim* **an** *lapanach* ‘from the Japanese man’s grip’
- [NOM.PL] **na h-lapanach** ‘the Japanese’ vs **na** *lapanach* ‘the Japanese’
- [DAT.PL] *leis* / *o* **na** *lapanach* ‘with / from the Japanese’
- [GEN.PL] *kamakaze* **nan** *lapanach* ‘Japanese kamikaze’ vs *an aghaidh* **na** *lapanach* ‘against the Japanese’.

* * * * *

The following conclusions can be drawn based on the corpus data presented above:

- Recently borrowed nouns beginning with *f*- and, especially, *s*- normally resist mutation.

- Nouns beginning with *v-* / *bh-*, *y-*, *w-*, *z-* / *x-* and *j-* do not fit into the Gaelic system of initial mutations.
- The spelling of the definite article is inconsistent in the nominative and dative singular with nouns that start with a labial consonant (*f-*, *v-* / *bh-*), which may either reflect the pronunciation of the article or the gender of the noun, or be purely orthographical.
- The nominative and dative singular form of the article is *a'* with nouns that start with *y-* and *w-*.
- The nominative and dative singular form of the article is *an* with nouns that start with *s-*, *z-* / *x-* and *j-*.
- The genitive singular form of the article can be either identical to its nominative form or it is *na* (i.e. feminine).
- The general plural form of the article is *na*, although genitive forms *nan* and *nam* have also been attested before *z-* and *v-* / *bh-* respectively. Plural forms of all these nouns are rare in the corpus.
- Examples of borrowed nouns that start with *i-* (from English *j-*) are few. The singular form of the article is *an* and the plural form is *na*, alongside *nan* in the genitive plural. *T*-prefixation and *h*-prefixation have been recorded in some examples, but they are inconsistent.

Since such loanwords are not particularly well-attested in the corpus, more research on vernacular usage is needed.

Partially based on the available data, the following inflection patterns can be recommended:

Nom. sg.	<i>am film</i> / <i>a' film</i> [?]	<i>a' bhana</i>	<i>an sutha</i>
Dat. sg.	<i>a' film</i> / <i>an fhilm</i>	<i>a' bhana</i>	<i>an sutha</i>
Gen. sg.	<i>a' film</i> / <i>na film</i>	<i>a' bhana</i> / <i>na bhana</i>	<i>an sutha</i> / <i>na sutha</i>
Nom. pl.	<i>na filmichean</i>	<i>na bhanaichean</i>	<i>na suthan</i>
Gen. pl.	<i>nam filmichean</i>	<i>nam bhanaichean</i>	<i>nan suthan</i>

The inflection of the definite article before *y-* and *w-* is as in *a' bhana*, and before *j-* it is as in *an sutha*.

We would be interested to receive comments, feedback and suggestions about the forms of the definite article modifying these and other similar loanwords, and about the accompanying initial mutations. How widespread is lenition of *f-* in leniting contexts (dative and genitive singular) in words such as *film* or *frids*? What is the gender of these nouns in Gaelic, e.g. *film fada* or *film fhada* 'a long film', genitive: *toiseach am film* / *a' film* / *an fhilm* or *na film* 'the beginning of the film'? Is *bh-* ever replaced by *b-* in non-leniting contexts in modern loanwords such as *bheat* 'vet', *bhana* 'van' or *bhioras* 'virus'? What is the realisation of English *z-* (and *x-*) in loanwords like *zip* (cf. *siop*) in traditional Gaelic? Is it the same as Gaelic *s-*? Does *t*-prefixation ever occur in the dative singular in words like *sutha* 'zoo', e.g. *anns an t-sutha* 'in the zoo', and how common is it?

Please email us with your feedback and comments at mail@dasg.ac.uk.

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LEACAN BLOG 6: The definite article with the number *dà* ‘two’

Posted by Robby on 15th November, 2023

In traditional Gaelic, the definite article inflects for gender, number and case. Some of its forms trigger particular initial mutations in the following noun:

1. Lenition of non-dentals & *t*-prefixation before initial *s*
 - Nominative singular feminine: **a’ chlach** ‘the stone’, **an t-sùil** ‘the eye’
 - Genitive singular masculine: **a’ Ghàidheil** ‘of the Gael’, **an t-saoghail** ‘of the world’
 - Dative singular feminine and masculine: **anns a’ bhaile** ‘in the village’, **fon chrao(i)bh** ‘under the tree’, **anns an t-saoghal** ‘in the world’
2. *t*-prefixation before vowels
 - Nominative singular masculine: **an t-òran** ‘the song’
3. *h*-prefixation before vowels
 - Genitive singular feminine: **na h-ùine** ‘of the time’
 - Nominative / dative plural: (*air*) **na h-ùbhlán** ‘(on) the apples’, (*air*) **na h-itean** ‘(on) the feathers’.

However, the definite article does not inflect regularly before certain numerals and preposed adjectives in present-day Gaelic; in other words, the initial mutations (lenition, *t*- and *h*-) do not always affect these words as expected. The inflection of the article is also irregular before recent loanwords beginning with *f*-, *v*- / *bh*-, *y*-, *w*-, *s*-, *z*- / *x*- and *j*-. And finally, the original dual form of the article (*an*, identical to the nominative singular form) is used before the number *dà* ‘two’ in all cases, although other (singular and plural) forms can also occur. In order to determine how widespread these phenomena are in modern Gaelic and how long they have been present in the language, corpus-based research has been conducted using *Corpas na Gàidhlig*. The focus of this research was on post-1950 texts, although earlier sources were also considered.

Conservative inflected forms of nouns, occasionally attested in the examples below, are not considered here and require further research.

This is our fourth blog dedicated to the inflection of the definite article and the accompanying initial mutations with the following words:

1. Initial vowels: *ath* ‘next’, *aon* ‘one; same’, *aonamh* ‘first’, *ochdamh* ‘eighth’
2. Initial *c*-: *ciad* / *ceud* ‘first’, *ceathramh* ‘fourth’, *còigeamh* ‘fifth’, *ceudamh* ‘hundredth’
3. Initial *f*-: *ficheadamh* ‘twentieth’
4. Initial *s*-: *siathamh* ‘sixth’, *seachdamh* ‘seventh’
5. Loanwords beginning with *f*-, *v*- / *bh*-, *y*-, *w*-, *s*-, *z*- / *x*- and *j*-
6. *dà* ‘two’.

Our previous blog addressed topic [5] above and the present one is dedicated to the number *dà* ‘two’.

* * * * *

The cardinal number *dà* ‘two’ governs the dual number, which has largely fallen together with the singular even in traditional Gaelic. In fact, only some feminine nouns and the adjectives that modify them use special nominative / dative dual forms with slenderisation, identical to their dative singular forms. The dual form of the definite article for all cases is the singular form

an, which is well-attested in the corpus. The genitive forms *na* (feminine singular) and *nan* (plural), however, have also been recorded in a few examples.

- [M.NOM] Conservative: **an** *dà bhaile* ‘the two villages’, **an** *dà shaoghal* ‘the two worlds’
- [F.NOM] Conservative: **an** *dà roghainn* ‘the two choices’; **an** *dà chaillich* ‘the two old women’; **an** *dà uinneag bheag* ‘the two small windows’
- [M.DAT] Conservative: *anns an* *dà leabhar* ‘in the two books’, *air an* *dà thaobh* ‘on the two sides’
- [F.DAT] Conservative: *do’n* *dà dhùthaich* ‘to the two countries’; *anns an* *dà bhuidhinn* ‘in the two groups’; *leis an* *dà chrùbag* ‘with the two crabs’
- [M.GEN] Conservative: *croitearan an* *dà bhaile* ‘the crofters of the two villages’; *cànanan an* *dà shluaigh seo* ‘the languages of these two peoples’; *a thaobh an* *dà leabhar* [sic!] ‘as for the two books’ vs Innovative: *a’ tarraing nan* *dà lion* ‘pulling the two nets’
- [F.GEN] Conservative: *ro cheann an* *dà bhliadhna* ‘before the end of the two years’; *barall an* *dà bhròig* ‘the laces of the two shoes’ vs Innovative: *ré na* *dà bhliadhna a chaidh* ‘during the past two years’; *air mullaich na* *dà chreig* ‘on the tops of the two rocks’ vs *fad nan* *dà bhliadhna dheug* ‘during the twelve years’.

However, the expression **na dhà** ‘the two; both’ acts as an independent noun phrase which can be modified by (plural) adjectives, demonstratives or relative clauses, e.g.

- *aon de na dhà* ‘one of the two’
- **na dhà mhòra** ‘the big two’
- **na dhà eile** ‘the other two’
- **na dhà sin** ‘those two’
- **na dhà ùra seo** ‘these two new ones’
- **na dhà a dh’ainmich mi** ‘the two that I mentioned’
- **na dhà dhiubh** ‘the two of them; both of them’
- *tha na dhà ri ’m faotainn...* ‘both can be found’
- *bu chòir àite a bhith ann do na dhà* ‘there should be room for both’.

Note the same form in the genitive: *os cionn na dhà sin* ‘above those two’; *a’ togail na dhà eile* ‘lifting the other two’.

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The following conclusions can be drawn based on the corpus data presented above:

1. The old dual form of the definite article is used with the number *dà* ‘two’ in all cases.
2. The genitive forms *na* (with feminine nouns) and *nan* have also been attested, in a few examples.
3. The expression *na dhà* ‘the two; both’ acts as an independent noun phrase, which can be modified by (plural) adjectives, demonstratives and relative clauses.

Based on the corpus examples, some of which are presented above, the following preliminary guidance may be recommended on the inflection of the definite article with *dà* ‘two’.

	Masculine	Feminine	‘both; the two’
Nom. sg.	<i>an dà bhaile</i>	<i>an dà bhliadhna</i>	<i>na dhà</i>
Dat. sg.	<i>an dà bhaile</i>	<i>an dà bhliadhna</i>	<i>na dhà</i>
Gen. sg.	<i>an dà bhaile</i>	<i>an dà bhliadhna</i>	<i>na dhà</i>

We would be interested to receive comments, feedback and suggestions about the forms of the definite article modifying the number *dà* in different grammatical contexts. Does the situation described above correspond to modern vernacular usage and does this guidance seem correct? Are genitive forms of the article such as *rè na dà sheachdain*, *rè nan dà sheachdain* used and, if they are, how common are they and are they characteristic of certain registers, dialects or age groups?

Please email us with your feedback and comments at mail@dasg.ac.uk.

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LEACAN BLOG 7: Lenition of names in the genitive

Posted by Robby on 20th November, 2023

Based on their composition, names can be divided into two groups:

- simple names – composed of a single noun, e.g. *Dòmhnall*, *Mòrag*
- compound names – composed of two or more words, e.g. *Gillebrìde*.

Most compound names are composed of a generic element and a specific element. The generic element normally refers to the type, class or category of the entity described by the name. The specific element adds more information to the name. Note that the specific element itself can be a compound expression and is sometimes a name in its own right.

Based on their grammatical behaviour, names can be divided vaguely into the following two groups:

- personal and geographical names
- other names.

Male personal names and most geographical names (both simple and compound) are lenited in genitive contexts. Female personal names are lenited only in certain dialects. Personal names and simple geographical names can inflect for case.

Other names, which are predominantly compound phrases, are usually not lenited in genitive contexts although speakers from certain areas may prefer to lenite this category too. Most of these do not inflect for case either.

Male personal names

The genitive forms of traditional Gaelic male first names are both lenited and palatalised if possible:

- *Dòmhnall* 'Donald' > *athair Dhòmhnail* 'Donald's father'
- *Seumas* 'James' > *làmhán Sheumais* 'James' hands'
- *Pàdraig* 'Patrick' > *a rèir Phàdraig* 'according to Patrick'.

The second element of compound names can also be lenited:

- *Gillebrìde* 'Gilbert' (lit. 'St Brigid's servant') > *guth Ghilleb(h)ride* 'Gilbert's voice'.

Cf. also the vocative: *'Illebhride!* 'Gilbert!'

Lenition is blocked in some fixed expressions due to homorganic delenition, such as:

- *Clann Dòmhnail* 'Clan Donald'
- *MacCoinnich* 'Mackenzie' (i.e. son of Kenneth).

This, however, does not seem to happen in productive phrases:

- *clann Dhòmhnail* 'Donald's children'
- *mac Choinnich* 'Kenneth's son'.

Non-Gaelic male names – including anglicised Gaelic names – normally remain unchanged:

- *màthair Bob* 'Bob's mother'
- *guth Murdo* 'Murdo's voice'.

But note that lenition can sometimes occur, e.g. *Katie Mhurdo* 'Katie (daughter) of Murdo'.

Female personal names

The genitive forms of traditional Gaelic female names are palatalised if possible, but lenition is limited to certain dialects:

- *Seonag* 'Joan' > *athair S(h)eonaig* 'Joan's father'
- *Mòrag* 'Morag' > *guth M(h)òraig* 'Morag's voice'
- *Màiri* 'Mary' > *sùilean M(h)àiri* 'Mary's eyes'.

Conservative suffixed genitive forms are found in literature, e.g. *gaol Mòraige* 'Morag's love'. Non-Gaelic female names – including anglicised Gaelic names – normally remain unchanged:

- *Peigi* 'Peggy' > *màthair Peigi* 'Peggy's mother'
- *Bessie* > *a thaobh Bessie* 'as for Bessie'
- *Dolina* > *piuthar Dolina* 'Dolina's sister'.

Clan names

Traditional clan names are lenited in the genitive:

- *oighreachd Chlann Dòmhnail* 'the estate of Clan Donald'
- *triath Chlann Dòmhnail Shlèibhte* 'the chief of Clan Donald of Sleat'.

The word *clann* can inflect for the genitive (the 'truncated' form *chloinn*) in this context:

- *fir Chloinn Dòmhnail* 'the men of Clan Donald'
- *taobh Chloinn Mhic Coinnich de'n teaghlach* 'the Clan Mackenzie side of the family'.

Geographical names

These include names of human settlements, regions, islands, hills, etc. They are either simple or, perhaps more often, compound.

Simple geographical names are normally lenited in the genitive:

- *Glaschu* 'Glasgow' > *sràidean Ghlaschu* 'the streets of Glasgow'
- *Barraigh* 'Barra' > *Gàidhlig Bharraigh* 'Barra Gaelic'
- *Cataibh* 'Sutherland' > *beanntan Chataibh* 'the mountains of Sutherland'.

Masculine geographical names are also palatalised, if possible:

- *Cnòideart* 'Knoydart' > *bailtean Chnòideirt* 'villages of Knoydart'
- *Leòdhas* 'Lewis' > *Eilean Leòdhais* 'the Isle of Lewis'.

Compound geographical names too are lenited in the genitive, but their first (generic) element does not inflect for case:

- *Bàigh a' Chaisteil* 'Castlebay' > *laimrig Bhàigh a' Chaisteil* 'the harbour of Castlebay'
- *Baile a' Chaolais* 'Ballachulish' > *sluagh Bhaile a' Chaolais* 'the people of Ballachulish'
- *Beinn na Fadhl* 'Benbecula' > *tràighean Bheinn na Fadhl* 'the beaches of Benbecula'
- *Ceann a' Bhàigh* 'Bayhead' > *muinntir Cheann a' Bhàigh* 'the population of Bayhead'

- *Ceann Loch Mùideart* ‘Kinlochmoidart’ > *tuath Cheann Loch Mùideart* ‘the tenantry of Kinlochmoidart’
- *Cinn Tìre* ‘Kintyre’ > *feadh Chinn Tìre* ‘all over Kintyre’
- *Cnoc Iòrdain* ‘Jordanhill’ > *Colaisde Chnoc Iòrdain* ‘Jordanhill College’
- *Dùn Èideann* ‘Edinburgh’ > *priosan Dhùn Èideann* ‘the Edinburgh prison’
- *Port Rìgh* ‘Portree’ > *os cionn Phort Rìgh* ‘above Portree’
- *Srath Nabhair* ‘Strathnaver’ > *fuadaichean Shrath Nabhair* ‘the clearances of Strathnaver’.

On the other hand, the noun *gleann* ‘glen’ is inflected for the genitive in certain established expressions, besides being lenited, e.g.

- *Fear Ghlinne Garaidh* ‘the laird of Glengarry’
- *Mac Iain Ghlinne Comhann* ‘Maclan of Glencoe’
- *Mort Ghlinne Comhann* ‘the Glencoe Massacre’.

But compare the following where *gleann* is not inflected:

- *sluagh Ghleann Comhann* ‘the people of Glencoe’
- *Caimbeulaich Ghleann Urchaidh* ‘Campbells of Glenorchy’.

However, lenition is sometimes absent, which can perhaps be explained by assuming that the expression is not really perceived as a name:

- *beul Bàgh / bàgh Steòrnabhaigh* ‘the mouth of the Bay of Stornoway’.

Similarly, lenition seems often to be absent in names whose generic elements are the nouns *beinn* ‘mountain’ and *cnoc* ‘hill’, e.g.

- *mullach B(h)einn Nibheis* ‘the top of Ben Nevis’
- *mullach C(h)noc nan Loch* ‘the top of Cnoc nan Loch’.

Names of rivers too tend to lack lenition in genitive contexts, e.g.

- *uisge Tatha* ‘the Tay water’
- *bheul Tatha* ‘from the mouth of the Tay’
- *abhainn Foirthe* ‘the river Forth’
- *linne Foirthe* ‘the Firth of Forth’.

But usually: *abhainn Chluaidh* ‘the river Clyde’, *bruachan Chluaidh* ‘the banks of the Clyde’, *Srath Chluaidh* ‘Strathclyde’, *Linne Chluaidh* ‘Firth of Clyde’.

Note that names of rivers are normally unlenited in compound names with the generic elements *gleann* and *loch* (which were originally neuter in gender), e.g. *Gleann Comhann* ‘Glencoe’, *Gleann Garaidh* ‘Glengarry’, *Gleann Seile* ‘Glenshiel’; *Loch Carrann* ‘Loch Carron’, *Loch Seile* ‘Loch Sheil’, etc.

Other names

Most other names are compound phrases composed of a generic element and a specific element. Such names are perceived as phrases and the vast majority of speakers do not lenite them. As with compound geographical names, the generic element does not inflect for case.

1. Names of administrative units

- *sràidean* **Baile Ghlaschu** ‘the streets of the City of Glasgow’
- *comhairle* **Siorrachd Pheairt** ‘Perthshire Council’
- *aig crìch* **Paraiste Hogh Mòir** ‘at the border of the Parish of Howmore’
- *sluagh* **Poblachd na h-Èireann** ‘the population of the Republic of Ireland’.

2. Names of administrative bodies, organisations, institutions

- *oifis* **Banca na h-Alba** ‘the office of the Bank of Scotland’
- *a rèir* **Bòrd na Slàinte** ‘according to the Health Board’
- *oifis* **Coimisean nan Croitearan** ‘the office of the Crofters Commission’
- *togalach* **Colaiste Mhoireibh** ‘the building of the Moray College’
- *obair* **Comhairle nan Eilean Siar** ‘the work of the Council of the Western Isles’
- *leabhraichean* **Comann Gàidhlig (Inbhir Nis)** ‘the books of the Gaelic Society (of Inverness)’
- *a thaobh* **Pàrlamaid na h-Alba** ‘as for the Scottish Parliament’
- *rùnaire* **Sabhal Mòr Ostaig** ‘the secretary of *Sabhal Mòr Ostaig*’.

3. Titles of documents

- *cudromachd* **Bun-reachd Bhreatainn** ‘the importance of the British Constitution’
- *bliadhna* **Co-chòrdadh Pheairt** ‘the year of the Treaty of Pearth’.

4. Names of events and similar

- *aig toiseach* **Blàr Chùil Lodair** ‘at the beginning of the Battle of Culloden’
- *an dèidh* **Bliadhna Theàrlaich** ‘after the Jacobite Rising of 1745’ (lit. ‘after the year of [Prince] Charles [Edward Stuart]’).

5. Titles of creative works

- *ùghdar* **Cumha Sheathain** ‘the author of *Cumha Sheathain*’
- *ùghdar* **Dàin do Eimhir** ‘the author of *Dàin do Eimhir*’
- *a’ gabhail* **Duan na Callainn** ‘singing *Duan na Callainn*’
- *a’ seinn* **Moladh Mòraig** ‘singing *Moladh Mòraig*’.

Note: *cumha* ‘lament’, *dàn* ‘song’, *duan* ‘lay, ode’, *moladh* ‘praise’.

Cf. also:

- *ùghdar* **Crodh Chailein** ‘the author of *Crodh Chailein*’ (lit. ‘Colin’s Cattle’)
- *ùghdar* **Càth anns a’ Ghaoith** ‘the author of *Càth anns a’ Ghaoith*’ (lit. ‘Chaff in the Wind’).

When the title is a noun specified by a definite article, it can inflect for case:

- *An t-Eileanach* (lit. ‘the Islander’) > *ùghdar* **An Eileanaich** ‘the author of *An t-Eileanach*’.

But note: *ùghdar* **An Nighean air an Aiseag** ‘the author of *An Nighean air an Aiseag*’ (‘The Girl on the Ferry’) (not **Na Nighinn / Na h-Ìghne*).

6. Titles of newspapers, journals, magazines

- *neach-deasachaidh* **Gairm** ‘the editor of *Gairm*’ (lit. ‘Crowing / Call’)

- *duilleagan Soillse* ‘the pages of *Soillse*’ (lit. ‘Light’)
- *luchd-leughaidh Mac-Talla* ‘the readers of *Mac-Talla*’ (lit. ‘Echo’).

These simple names are, in fact, indefinite common nouns and so they are neither lenited nor inflected in genitive contexts.

* * * * *

Preliminary conclusions for names in genitive position:

1. Male personal names are lenited and inflect for the genitive.
2. Female personal names are lenited only in certain dialects, but they inflect for the genitive where possible.
3. Non-Gaelic and anglicised personal names tend to lack lenition and do not inflect.
4. Clan names are lenited and occasionally inflect for the genitive in literature.
5. Most simple geographical names are lenited and (if possible) they inflect for the genitive.
6. Most compound geographical names are lenited, but they do not inflect for the genitive.
7. Certain river names tend to lack lenition.
8. *Beinn*- and *cnoc*-names tend to lack lenition.
9. Other names, many of which are compound phrases, are normally not lenited.
10. In some dialects, all types of names can be lenited, but lenition is more consistent in male names and in most geographical names.

We would be interested to receive comments, feedback and suggestions about lenition in names in genitive position. Does the situation described above correspond to modern vernacular usage? Are feminine personal names lenited in your dialect? What about the names of hills / mountains, rivers, and names that are neither personal nor geographical? Does lenition occur only optionally in any types of name?

Please email us with your feedback and comments at mail@dasg.ac.uk.

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LEACAN BLOG 8: ‘Ever’ and ‘never’

Posted by Robby on 21st November, 2023

Scottish Gaelic does not use different words to convey the meanings of English ‘ever’ and ‘never’. Both meanings may be expressed by each of the following adverbs:

- *riamh* (or *a-riamh*)
- *chaoidh* (or *a-chaoidh*)
- *gu bràth*.

The distribution of these adverbs, however, depends on the time that they refer to relative to the point of reference, i.e. whether that time precedes, coincides or follows the point of reference. Consequently, their use often depends on the tense of the verb that they modify, as described below.

Depending on context, *riamh* can also mean ‘always’ and *chaoidh* and *gu bràth* ‘forever’. (How exactly these expressions translate in particular contexts, however, is a question of English grammar, rather than Gaelic.)

All three expressions can be intensified, primarily by the word *tuilleadh*, as shown below.

Riamh

This adverb refers to the relative past, i.e. to the period that precedes the point of reference. It is almost invariably used with the past tense, which usually corresponds either to the English present perfect or past perfect, depending on whether the reference time is the moment of speaking or is itself located in the past.

Riamh normally means ‘always’ in affirmative clauses (AFF), ‘never’ in negative clauses (NEG), and ‘ever’ in questions (interrogative clauses) (INT), in *if*-clauses, and in some other contexts.

- [AFF] *Sin mar a bha riamh...* ‘That is how it has always been...’
- [NEG] *Chan fhaca mi duine riamh coltach rium fhìn.* ‘I have never seen anyone like me.’
- [INT] *’N cuala tu siud a-riamh, a Ghoraidh...?’* ‘Have you ever heard that, Godfrey?’
Robh e riamh san Spàinn? Bha dùil acasan a dhol ann as t-samhradh. ‘Had he ever been to Spain? They hoped to go there in summer.’
- [*if*-clause] *Ma thoill duine riamh an tiodal “maor-sithe”, thoill Seòras e.* ‘If anyone has ever deserved the title “constable”, George (definitely) has.’

Examples of the past perfect occur in the corpus too, but they are few.

- *Cha robh e riamh air am faicinn.* ‘He had never seen them.’

Riamh often occurs in (affirmative) relative clauses accompanying equative, comparative and superlative expressions, where it corresponds to English ‘ever’.

- [EQU] *Bha i cho fallainn ’s a bha i riamh.* ‘She was as healthy as ever.’ (lit. ‘as she had ever / always been’)
- [COMP] *Mar sin tha na fulmairean a’ fàs nas pailte na bha iad riamh.* ‘So the fulmars are getting more numerous than ever. (lit. ‘than they have ever been’)

- [SUP] *Bha e nuas an rathad ugainn a' marcachd air an each òg bu ghrinne chunna' mi riamh.* 'He was (coming) down the road towards us riding the most beautiful young horse that I had ever seen.'

The expression *riamh roimhe* corresponds to English '(n)ever before', as in:

- [AFF] *Gun teagamh, is ann a rinn am batal sin iad na bu chàirdeile na bha iad riamh roimhe.* 'That battle certainly made them more friendly than they had ever been before.'
- [NEG] *Cha robh riamh roimhe a leithid againn.* 'We have never had anything like that before.'
- [INT] *Na thuit seòladair a-mach à long a-riamh roimhe?* 'Had a sailor ever fallen out of a ship before?'

The expression *riamh tuilleadh* corresponds either to English 'ever after' or '(n)ever again'. The beginning of the period that it refers to is defined by the situation described in the sentence, so *riamh tuilleadh* refers to relative future. In this context, the Gaelic past tense corresponds to the English past tense.

- [AFF] *Nuair a dh'éibh mise Maighstir Ciss air thubhairt esan, "T-Seon." Is b' e t-Seon a bha air riamh tuilleadh.* 'When I shouted Mr Ciss to him, he said "T-Seon". And he was called t-Seon ever after.'
- [NEG] *Cha do dh'fhan piuthar mo mhàthar air Gleann Dail oidhche riamh tuilleadh.* 'And my aunt never stayed at Glendale overnight again.'

Although it is normally used with the past tense, *riamh* may also occur with conditional forms that describe hypothetical past processes, e.g.

- *Lean na smaointean seo Eilidh fad na maidne 's i a' gabhail a h-àite san teaghlach mar nach biodh i air falbh riamh.* 'These thoughts followed Eilidh all morning while she was taking her place in the family as if she had never been away.'

It can also accompany conditional forms that describe past habitual processes, in which case it does not necessarily refer to a period that extends to the point of reference, e.g.

- *Chan innseadh sgiobachan nam bàtaichean eile riamh dé na fhuair iad, ach bha a' chùiltearachd sin an còmhnaidh 'na dhearbhadh dhuinn nach d'fhuair iad uiread ruinne.* 'The crews of the other boats would never say how much they caught, but this skulking / secrecy was a proof for us that they did not catch as much as we did.'
- *Ach an là-sa a bha muinntir a' bhaile ast[aj]igh aice, rinn bean a' mhinisteir barrachd bruidhinn ris a' chuilean na rinn i riutha-san, is bhiodh iad a riamh a' còmhradh mu dheighinn sin.* 'But that day that she had the village people in the house, the minister's wife talked more to the puppy than she did to them, and they always used to talk about that.'

Chaidh / gu bràth

These adverbs refer to the relative future, i.e. to the period that follows the point of reference. They are normally used either with the future tense (if the reference time is the moment of speaking) or with the conditional that acts as the future-in-the-past (if the reference time is in the past). However, other verb forms have also been attested in this context.

Both *chaidh* and *gu bràth* normally mean 'forever' in affirmative clauses, 'never' in negative clauses, and 'ever' in questions, *if*-clauses, and various other contexts.

Examples that contain the future tense:

- [AFF] *Bidh i beò a chaoidh.* 'She will live forever.' (lit. 'she will be alive forever'); *Bithidh e gàireachdaich gu bràth oirbh.* 'He will laugh at you forever.'
- [NEG] *Chan fhàg mi a chaoidh thu.* 'I will never leave you.'; *Chan eil thusa a' tuigsinn idir 's cha tuig gu bràth.* 'You don't understand at all and you never will.'
- [INT] *An till mise chaoidh?* 'Will I ever return?'; *Saoil an cluinnear a leithid sin gu bràth air bilean an t-sluaigh?* 'Will anything like these ever be heard on the lips of the people?'
- [if-clause] *Ma chuirear buidheann a chaoidh air chois...* 'If an organisation is ever established...'; *Ma thachras e gu bràth...* 'If it ever happens...'

Similarly, the two adverbs may occur in imperative and elliptical optative expressions, which refer to future time:

- [IMPV] *A chaoidh na sgar bhuaht sinn.* 'Do not ever separate us from you.'; *Na dèan a leithid gu bràth.* 'Do not ever do anything like that.'
- [OPT] *Mo shoraidh slàn gu bràth leis.* 'My farewell to him forever.'

They can also accompany verbal nouns acting as infinitives that refer to future time (even if the main verb is in the past tense), e.g.

- *Ach chaidh a' chùmhnannt a bhristeadh nuair a dhrùidh e air nach robh math dha pòsadh a chaoidh.* 'But his vow was broken when he realised that there was no point in him ever getting married'; *An toiseach, nach bu chòir dhuinn gu bràth sgar a dh'umuigh...* 'First, that we should never stop praying...'

The conditional, functioning as the future-in-the-past, usually occurs in subordinate clauses. The adverbs translate as 'never' if the verb in the same clause is negative, and as 'ever' in other contexts (even if the main clause is negative), e.g.

- [AFF+NEG] *Bha an saoghal a bha sin cho ùr dhomh (...) agus shaoilinn nach fhaighinn mo leòr dheth a chaoidh.* 'That world was so new for me (...) and I thought that I would never get my fill of it'; *Bha dùil agam nach tigeadh e gu bràth.* 'I expected that he would never return.'
- [AFF-AFF] *Thug i dùil gu 'n tilleadh Iain gu bràth.* 'She gave up hope that Iain would ever return.'
- [NEG+AFF] *Cha robh dùil agamsa gum pòsainn a chaoidh.* 'I did not expect that I would ever get married.'
- [if-clause] (...) *mhionnaich e gun cuireadh e às dhomh na faigheadh e chaoidh ma sgaoil.* '(...) he swore that he would eliminate me if he ever got free.'

In some cases, the conditional has a more hypothetical meaning and the meaning of *chaoidh* is akin to 'under no condition', e.g.

- *Ch[a] dèanadh Calum a leithid a chaoidh.* 'Calum would never do anything like that.'

With the verb *bi* 'to be', the (hypothetical) conditional can be replaced by the past tense *bha / robh*, which adds certainty. The adverb refers to the relative future. Note the (innovative) perfect conditional in the following example:

- *Mura biodh e fhèin air bruidhinn, cha robh sinne air aithneachadh a chaoidh.* 'If he had not spoken, we would never have recognised him.'

The adverb *gu bràth*, meaning ‘forever’, may occur in affirmative expressions that contain other tenses, including the past tense, e.g.

- [PRES] *Tha sinne às a geasan gu bràth.* ‘We are free of her spell forever’; *Tha ’n saoghal ud air falbh gu bràth.* ‘That world is gone forever.’
- [PST] *O sin suas gus an d’ fhàg e Alba gu bràth, bha am Prionnsa air cùram Chlùnaidh.* ‘From then on until he left Scotland forever, the Prince was in Cluny’s care.’

Similarly, both *gu bràth* and *chaoidh* have been attested with negative past tense verbs, also referring to the relative future. The Gaelic past tense corresponds to English past tense in this context (cf. *riamh tuilleadh* above):

- [PST] *Chan fhaca mi a chaoidh e an dèidh sin.* ‘I never saw him after that.’
- [PST] *Ann an dealachadh ris na chàirdean dileas a dh’fhàgte ’na dhéidh, is dòcha, co-dhiùbh, gu robh e-fhéin an dùil r’a thilleadh (...) Ach cha do thill e gu bràth.* ‘Parting from his loyal friends who would be left behind him, he himself may have hoped to return (...) But he never returned.’

A few examples of *chaoidh* with negative past habitual verbs occur in the corpus (cf. a similar use of *riamh* above):

- *Nuair a thiginn-sa dhachaigh air cuairt á tirean-céine no air fòrladh às an t-saighdeireachd chan fhaighnicheadh mo mhàthair a-chaoidh dhomh...* ‘When I would come home from distant countries to visit or on holiday from the army, my mother would never ask me...’

Finally, both *chaoidh* and *gu bràth* can be modified by the noun *tuilleadh*, whereby the resulting expression means ‘(n)ever again’, e.g.

- [FUT] *Chuala mi ceòl ’na mo latha nach cluinnear a chaoidh tuilleadh.* ‘I heard music in my day that will never be heard again.’
- [FUT] *Cha bhi ar leithid-ne ann gu bràth tuilleadh.* ‘There won’t be anyone like us ever again.’
- [PST] *Seo a’ mhadainn a bha dealbht’ a-chaoidh tuilleadh air clàr inntinn.* ‘This is the morning that was etched on his mind forever and ever.’

There do not seem to be any examples involving equative, comparative or superlative adjective constructions, comparable to those with *riamh*.

* * * * *

The following conclusions can be drawn based on the data presented above:

- *Riamh* translates into English as ‘always’ in affirmative sentences, as ‘never’ in negative sentences and as ‘ever’ in questions, *if*-clauses and various types of relative clauses.
- *Riamh* normally refers to the relative past and is used mainly with the past tense. In this context, the Gaelic past tense corresponds to the English present perfect and past perfect.
- *Riamh* can also be used with the conditional expressing hypothetical past events (cf. English *as if...*).
- *Riamh roimhe* (used in similar contexts as just *riamh*) means ‘(n)ever before’.
- *Riamh tuilleadh* ‘(n)ever again’ is used with the past tense and refers to relative future.

- *Chaoidh* and *gu bràth* both translate into English as ‘forever’ in affirmative sentences, as ‘never’ in negative sentences and as ‘ever’ in questions, *if*-clauses and some types of relative clauses.
- *Chaoidh* and *gu bràth* normally refer to the relative future and are used mainly with the future tense or with the ‘future-in-the-past’ conditional, depending on the reference time.
- Both can also occur with other verb forms (the present and past tenses, hypothetical conditional, imperative, verbal noun), always referring to (relative) future time.
- *Chaoidh tuilleadh* and *gu bràth tuilleadh* translate as ‘(n)ever again’. *Chaoidh tuilleadh*, referring to relative future time, has also been attested with the past tense (cf. *riamh tuilleadh*).
- All three adverbs, meaning ‘always’, ‘(n)ever’, can be used with the habitual conditional, in which case they refer to the past generally (and not just relative past).

We would be interested to receive comments, feedback and suggestions about the use of the adverbs *riamh*, *chaoidh* and *gu bràth* with different verb forms in various contexts. Does the situation described above correspond to modern vernacular usage? Are there any other contexts in which these adverbs are used?

Please email us with your feedback and comments at mail@dasg.ac.uk.

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Appendix C: Analysis of traditional speaker feedback on blogs 3, 4, 6, 7, 8

The feedback received from four traditional native speakers (S1, S2, S3, S4) on Blogs 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 is summarised and analysed here. This feedback relates to

- inflection of the definite article (Blogs 3, 4 and 6)
- lenition in names in the genitive (Blog 7)
- ‘ever’ and ‘never’ (Blog 8).

Each section contains a set of conclusions on usage. The section on the article also includes a set of preliminary recommendations (Table 4).

The definite article with *ath*, *aon*, *aonamh*, *ochdamh*; *ciad*, *ceudamh*, *ceathramh*, *còigeamh*, *ficheadamh*, *siathamh*, *seachdamh*; *dà*

1. Nominative singular

S1 follows the conservative inflection of the article in the nominative singular, except with *ath*, *aon* and *ciad*, where S1 uses the original feminine forms even before masculine nouns:

- [M] innovative:⁷ *Cha do leugh mi an ath leabhar a sgrìobh iad.* ‘I didn’t read the next book they wrote.’ *Chunnaic mi an aon duine a-rithist.* ‘I saw the same man again.’⁸ *Is fheàrr leinn a’ chiad bhòrd.* ‘We prefer the first table.’⁹
- [M] conservative: *Chòisich an t-aonamh oileanach fichead a-steach dhan rùm.* ‘The 21st student walked into the room.’ *Bha an t-ochdamh leabhar a sgrìobh e glè fhada.* ‘The eighth book he wrote was very long.’ *Chaidh an seachdamh taigh a reic an-dè.* ‘The seventh house was sold yesterday.’ *Leugh mi am ficheadamh leabhar a sgrìobh e.* ‘I read the twentieth book that he wrote.’ *Reic iad an ceathramh taigh.* ‘They sold the fourth house.’ *Chaidh an ceudamh leabhar fhoillseachadh an-dè.* ‘The one hundredth book was published yesterday.’
- [F] conservative: *Tha an ath bhliadhna a’ tòiseachadh a-màireach.* ‘The next year is starting tomorrow.’ *Thàinig an aon nighean an seo a-rithist.* ‘The same girl came here again.’ *Chunnaic mi an aonamh craobh deug cuideachd.* ‘I saw the eleventh tree too.’ *Thòisich an ochdamh bliadhna an-dè.* ‘The eighth year started yesterday.’ *Tha an t-siathamh bliadhna air tòiseachadh.* ‘The sixth year has started.’ *Sin an fhicheadamh caora a chunnaic mi an seo.* ‘That is the twentieth sheep that I saw here.’ *Tha a’*

⁷ The labels ‘conservative’ and ‘innovative’ refer only to the forms of the definite article in this report. The inflection of nouns and adjectives has not been considered and is a topic for a future research project. M refers to masculine gender of nouns and F to feminine gender of nouns.

⁸ S1 notes that the *t*-prefixed variant would be thought correct, as in *an t-aon Dia beò agus fìor*. Obviously, that is a feature of formal language.

⁹ S1 notes that *an ciad bhòrd* is regarded as more correct. This, however, is a feature of very formal language.

chòigeamh bliadhna air tòiseachadh. 'The fifth year has started.' **Chaidh a' cheudamh caora** air chall. 'The one hundredth sheep got lost.'

S2, S3 and S4 are more innovative, using the same nominative singular form of the definite article (including the initial mutations) with all these words regardless of the gender of the following noun. There is a degree of variation amongst these speakers with regard to which form of the article (i.e. masculine or feminine) is preferred.

Like with S1, the form *an* does not prefix *t-* to *ath* and *aon* before masculine nouns.

- [M] innovative: *Cha do leugh mi **an ath leabhar** a sgrìobh iad.* 'I didn't read the next book they wrote.' (S2, S3, S4); *Chunnaic mi **an aon duine** a-rithist.* 'I saw the same man again.' (S2, S4); ...**an aon dhuine** (S3);
- [F] conservative: *Tha **an ath bhliadhna** a' tòiseachadh a-màireach.* 'The next year is starting tomorrow.' (S2, S3, S4); *Thàinig **an aon nighean** an seo a-rithist.* 'The same girl came here again.' (S2, S3, S4).

However, while S4 avoids *t-*prefixation with *aonamh* and *ochdamh*, S2 and S3 prefix *t-* to these words even before feminine nouns.

- [M] conservative: *Choisich **an t-aonamh oileanach fichead** a-steach dhan rùm.* 'The 21st student walked into the room.' (S2, S3); *Bha **an t-ochdamh leabhar** a sgrìobh e glè fhada.* 'The eighth book he wrote was very long.' (S2, S3);
- [M] innovative: **an aonamh oileanach fichead** (S4); **an ochdamh leabhar** (S4);
- [F] conservative: *Chunnaic mi **an aonamh craobh deug** cuideachd.* 'I saw the eleventh tree too.' (S4); *Thòisich **an ochdamh bliadhna** an-dè.* 'The eighth year started yesterday.' (S4);
- [F] innovative: **an t-aonamh craobh deug** (S2, S3); **an t-ochdamh bliadhna** (S2, S3).

S2, S3 and S4 avoid *t-*prefixation with *siathamh* and *seachdamh* before feminine nouns (where it occurs in traditional Gaelic) although S2 considers it acceptable.

- [M] conservative: *Chaidh **an seachdamh taigh** a reic an-dè.* 'The seventh house was sold yesterday.' (S2, S3, S4);
- [F] conservative: *Tha **an t-siathamh bliadhna** air tòiseachadh.* 'The sixth year has started.' (accepted by S2);
- [F] innovative: **an siathamh bliadhna** (S2, S3, S4).

The non-leniting form *am* is used before *ficheadamh* by S2, S3 and S4 even with feminine nouns.

- [M] conservative: *Leugh mi **am ficheadamh leabhar** a sgrìobh e.* 'I read the twentieth book that he wrote.' (S2, S3, S4);
- [F] innovative: **am ficheadamh caora** (S2, S3, S4).

Similarly, the non-leniting form *an* is used before *ceathramh* and *còigeamh* by S2, S3 and S4.

- [M] conservative: *Reic iad **an ceathramh taigh**.* 'They sold the fourth house.' (S2, S3, S4);
- [F] innovative: **an còigeamh bliadhna** (S2, S3, S4).

However, S3 uses the leniting form *a'* with *ceudamh* even before masculine nouns, which might be due to the influence of *a' chiad*. S4 prefers non-leniting *an* with both genders.

- [M] conservative: *Chaidh an ceudamh leabhar fhoillseachadh an-dè.* ‘The one hundredth book was published yesterday.’ (S2, S4);
- [M] innovative: *a’ cheudamh leabhar* (S3);
- [F] conservative: *Chaidh a’ cheudamh caora air chall.* ‘The one hundredth sheep got lost.’ (S2, S3);
- [F] innovative: *an ceudamh caora* (S4, also accepted by S2).

The leniting form *a’* is used consistently before *ciad* even with masculine nouns by all speakers.

- [M] innovative: *Is fheàrr leinn a’ chiad bhòrd.* ‘We prefer the first table.’ (S2, S3, S4).

2. Genitive singular

Conservative genitive singular forms of the definite article are used consistently by S1.

- [M] *Ruith e a dh’ionnsaigh an ath thaigh.* ‘He ran towards the next house.’ *Tha sinn a’ fuireach ri taobh an aon uillt.* ‘We live by the side of the same burn.’¹⁰ *Thachair sin aig toiseach an ochdamh latha.* ‘That happened at the beginning of the eighth day.’ *Bha iad a’ fosgladh an ochdamh doras nuair a thàinig mi.* ‘They were opening the eighth door when I arrived.’ *Bruidhnidh iad mu dheidhinn an t-seachdamh leabhar a dh’fhoillsich iad.* ‘They will speak about the seventh book that they published.’ *Sgrìobh i mu dheidhinn an fhicheadamh latha dhen Fhaoilleach.* ‘She wrote about the twentieth day of January.’ *Dh’fhalbh iad aig toiseach a’ cheathramh latha.* ‘They left at the start of the fourth day.’
- [F] *Tillidh e aig toiseach na h-ath bhliadhna.* ‘He will return at the beginning of the next year.’ *Tha sinn a’ fuireach aig ceann na h-aon sràid* ‘We live at the end of the same street.’ *Dh’fhalbh iad aig deireadh na h-aonamh bliadhna fichead.* ‘They left at the end of the 21st year.’ *Dè thachair aig deireadh na h-ochdamh bliadhna?* ‘What happened at the end of the eighth year?’ *Bha iad a’ fosgladh na h-ochdamh uinneig / uinneag nuair a thàinig mi.* ‘They were opening the eighth window when I arrived.’ *Thill iad aig deireadh na siathamh bliadhna.* ‘They returned at the end of the sixth year.’ *Ruith iad a dh’ionnsaigh na seachdamh craoibh(e).* ‘They ran towards the seventh tree.’ *Sgrìobh i mu dheidhinn na ficheadamh bliadhna dhe beatha.* ‘She wrote about the twentieth year of her life.’ *Thill iad aig deireadh na còigeamh bliadhna.* ‘They returned at the end of the fifth year.’ *Choisich iad gu mullach na còigeamh beinne(adh).* ‘They walked to the top of the fifth mountain.’ *Thachair sin aig deireadh na ciad bhliadhna.* ‘That happened at the end of the first year.’

The distinction between the two genders has become unstable in this context for S2 and S3, and especially for S4, with the original masculine genitive singular forms *a’* and *an (t-)* often occurring with feminine nouns too instead of *na (h-)*. The fact that the masculine genitive singular forms of the article are identical to its feminine nominative singular forms, and to its dative singular forms (for both genders), might have played a role in this development.

Word-initial vowel:

- [M] conservative: *Ruith e a dh’ionnsaigh an ath thaigh.* ‘He ran towards the next house.’ (S2, S3, S4); also *chon an ath t(h)aigh* (S2); *Tha sinn a’ fuireach ri taobh an aon uillt.* ‘We live by the side of the same burn.’ (S2); *ri taobh an aon allt* (S3, S4); *Thachair sin aig toiseach an ochdamh latha.* ‘That happened at the beginning of the eighth day.’ (S2, S3, S4); *Bha iad a’ fosgladh an ochdamh dorais nuair a thàinig mi.* ‘They were opening the eighth door when I arrived.’ (S2); *a’ fosgladh an ochdamh doras* (S3, S4);

¹⁰ S1 notes that *ri taobh an aon allt* is common too.

- [F] conservative: *Tillidh e aig toiseach na h-ath bliadhna*. 'He will return at the beginning of the next year.' (S2, S3); *Tha sinn a' fuireach aig ceann na h-aon shràid*. 'We live at the end of the same street.' (S3); *Dh'fhalbh iad aig deireadh na h-aonamh bliadhna fichead*. 'They left at the end of the 21st year.' (S2, S3); *Dè thachair aig deireadh na h-ochdamh bliadhna?* 'What happened at the end of the eighth year?' (S2, S3);
- [F] innovative: *aig toiseach an ath bliadhna* (S2, S4); *aig ceann an aon t-sràid* (S2); *aig ceann an aon sràid(e)* (S4); *aig deireadh an aonamh bliadhna fichead* (S4, also accepted by S2); *aig deireadh an ochdamh bliadhna* (S4); *a' fosgladh an ochdamh uinneig* (S2); *a' fosgladh an ochdamh uinneag* (S3, S4).

Word-initial s-

- [M] conservative: *Bruidhnidh iad mu dheidhinn an t-seachdamh leabha(i)r a dh'fhoillsich iad*. 'They will speak about the seventh book that they published.' (S3, S4); *mu dheidhinn an t-seachdamh leabhar* (S2);
- [F] conservative: *Thill iad aig deireadh na siathamh bliadhna*. 'They returned at the end of the sixth year.' (S2); *Ruith iad chon na seachdamh craoibh*. 'They ran towards the seventh tree.' (S2);
- [F] innovative: *aig deireadh an t-siathamh bliadhna* (S3, S4, also accepted by S2); *a dh'ionnsaigh an t-seachdamh craobh* (S3, S4).

Word-initial f-

- [M] conservative: *Sgrìobh i mu dheidhinn an fhicheadamh latha dhen Fhaoilleach*. 'She wrote about the twentieth day of January.' (S2, S3, S4);
- [F] innovative: *Sgrìobh i mu dheidhinn an fhicheadamh bliadhna dhe beatha*. 'She wrote about the twentieth year of her life.' (S2, S3, S4).

Word-initial c-

- [M] conservative: *Dh'fhalbh iad aig toiseach a' cheathramh latha*. 'They left at the start of the fourth day.' (S2, S3, S4);
- [F] conservative: *Thill iad aig deireadh na còigeamh bliadhna*. 'They returned at the end of the fifth year.' (S2); *Choisich iad gu mullach na còigeamh beinne* 'They walked to the top of the fifth mountain.' (S2);¹¹
- [F] innovative: *aig deireadh a' chòigeamh bliadhna* (S3, S4, also accepted by S2); *gu mullach a' chòigeamh beinn* (S3, S4, also accepted by S2); *Thachair sin aig deireadh a' chiad bliadhna*. 'That happened at the end of the first year.' (S2, S3, S4).

3. Dative singular

Traditional dative singular forms are still commonly used.

- [F] conservative: *Choisich sinn bhon t-seachdamh sràid*. 'We walked from the seventh street.' (S1, S2, S3, S4);
- [M/F ?] conservative: *Thachair e anns an fhicheadamh linn*. 'It happened in the twentieth century.' (S1, S2, S3, S4).

¹¹ S2 notes that the form *beinne* is always used following (the genitive feminine singular form) *na*.

4. Nominative plural

Only *ath*, *aon* and *ciad* are commonly used with plural nouns. Conservative nominative plural forms are used consistently by S1 and S2.

- Cò **na h-ath àiteachan** air an do thadhail sibh? 'What are the next places you visited?' (S1); Dè **na h-ath àitichean** (S2); Leughadh iad **na h-aon dàin** a h-uile seachdain. 'They would read the same poems every week.' (S1, S2); Chaidh **na ciad thaighean** a thogail ann an 1500. 'The first houses were built in 1500.' (S1, S2).

The nominative plural form of the article *na* (*h-*) is sometimes replaced with *an* / *a*' by S3 and S4, especially with *ciad*.

- conservative: Cò / Dè **na h-ath (h-)àitichean** / **(h-)àiteachan** air an do thadhail sibh? 'What are the next places you visited?' (S4); Leughadh iad **na h-aon dàin** a h-uile seachdain. 'They would read the same poems every week.' (S4); **na h-aon dhàin** (S3);
- innovative: **an ath àitichean** (S3); **a' chiad taighean** (S3, S4).

5. Genitive plural

The traditional form *nan* is used consistently by S1.

- Nì sinn e rè **nan ath làithean**. 'We'll do it during the following days.'¹² Bha iad ag obair ann rè **nan ath cheithir bliadhna**. 'They worked there during the next four years.' Chuir e e chun **nan aon daoine** a-rithist. 'He sent it to the same people again.' Bhruidhinn iad mu dheidhinn **nan ciad leabhraichean** a bh' aca. 'They spoke about the first books they had.' Bhruidhinn iad mu dheidhinn **nan ciad chòig leabhraichean** a leugh iad. 'They spoke about the first five books they read.' Dh'fhuirich iad ann fad **nan ciad trì bliadhna**. 'They stayed there throughout the first three years.'

S2 and S3 often replace the form *nan* either with nominative plural *na* (*h-*) or (especially with *ciad*) with nominative singular *an* or *a*'. S4 accepts only the innovative forms.

- conservative: Nì sinn e rè **nan ath làithean**. 'We'll do it during the following days.' (S3); Bha iad ag obair ann rè **nan ath cheithir bliadhna**. 'They worked there during the next four years.' (S3); Chuir e e chun **nan aon daoine** a-rithist. 'He sent it to the same people again.' (S3); Chuir e chun **nan aon daoine** a-rithist e. (S2); Bhruidhinn iad mu dheidhinn **nan ciad leabhraichean** a bh' aca. 'They spoke about the first books they had.' (S2); Dh'fhuirich iad ann fad **nan ciad trì bliadhna**. 'They stayed there throughout the first three years.' (S3);
- innovative: rè **na h-ath làithean** (S4); ré **na h-ath cheithir bliadhna** (S2); chun **na h-aon daoine** (S2, S4); chun **na h-aon dhaoine** (S3, preferred);
- innovative: rè **an ath cheithir bliadhna** (S4); mu dheidhinn **a' chiad leabhraichean** (S3, S4, also accepted by S2); mu dheidhinn **a' chiad chòig leabhraichean** (S2, S3, S4); fad **a' chiad trì bliadhna** (S2, S4).

Cf. also (note, however, that *dithis* is a singular feminine noun, and so is *clann*):

- Bhruidhinn iad mu dheidhinn **a' chiad dithis chloinne** a chunnaic iad. 'They spoke about the first two children they saw.' (S1, S2, S3, S4).

6. Dual

The definite article does not normally inflect for the genitive with *dà*. The original dual form *an* is used in genitive contexts, although plural *nan* too has been recorded with S2.

¹² S1 notes that 'the following days' would probably be expressed as *na làithean a tha romhainn*.

- [M] conservative: *Choisich iad chun **an dà chnoc**.* ‘They walked to the two hills.’ (S1, S2, S3, S4);
- [F] conservative: *Bha mullaichean **an dà bheinn** air an còmhdachadh le sneachd.* ‘The tops of the two mountains were covered in snow.’ (S1, S3, S4);
- [F] innovative: *Bha mullaichean **nan dà bheinn** air an còmhdach le sneachd.* (S2);

Cf. also:

- conservative: *Bha iad a’ fuireach anns an taigh sin fad **an dà fhichead bliadhna**.* ‘They lived in that house for the duration of the forty years.’ (S1, S3, S4); *Bha iad a’ dol a reic **an dà cheud caora a bh’ aca**.* ‘They were going to sell the two hundred sheep they had.’ (S1, S2, S3, S4);
- innovative: *fad **nan dà fhichead bliadhna*** (S2).

Conclusions

The following table presents the forms of the definite article and the associated initial mutations attested in this research, along with the information on the origin of variant forms.

Table 1: Forms of the definite article before *ath*, *aon*, *aonamh*, *ochdamh*; *ciad*, *ceudamh*, *ceathramh*, *còigeamh*, *ficheadamh*, *siathamh*, *seachdamh* and *dà*.¹³

	Masculine		Feminine	
	Conservative	Innovative	Conservative	Innovative
Nom. sg.	<i>an ceudamh</i> ^{1A}	<i>a' chiad</i> <i>a' cheudamh</i> ^{1B}	<i>a' chiad</i> <i>a' cheudamh</i> ^{2A}	<i>an ceudamh</i> ^{2B}
	<i>an ceathramh</i> [<i>an còigeamh</i>] [<i>an siathamh</i>] <i>an seachdamh</i> <i>am ficheadamh</i>		[<i>a' cheathramh</i>] <i>a' chòigeamh</i> ^{3A} <i>an t-siathamh</i> ^{3B} [<i>an t-seachdamh</i>] <i>an fhicheadamh</i> ^{3A}	[<i>an ceathramh</i>] <i>an còigeamh</i> ^{3C} <i>an siathamh</i> ^{3C} [<i>an seachdamh</i>] <i>am ficheadamh</i> ^{3C}
	<i>an t-aonamh</i> ^{2A} <i>an t-ochdamh</i> ^{2A}	<i>an ath / aon</i> <i>an aonamh</i> ^{2B} <i>an ochdamh</i> ^{2B}	<i>an ath / aon</i> <i>an aonamh</i> ^{5A} <i>an ochdamh</i> ^{5A}	<i>an t-aonamh</i> ^{6B} <i>an t-ochdamh</i> ^{6B}
Dat. sg.	= Gen. sg. m.		= Gen. sg. m.	
Gen. sg.	[<i>a' chiad</i>] [<i>a' cheudamh</i>] <i>a' cheathramh</i> [<i>a' chòigeamh</i>]		<i>na ciad</i> ^{6A} [<i>na ceudamh</i>] [<i>na ceathramh</i>] <i>na còigeamh</i> ^{4A}	<i>a' chiad</i> ^{6C} <i>a' chòigeamh</i> ^{4C}
	<i>an t-siathamh</i> <i>an t-seachdamh</i>		<i>na siathamh</i> ^{4A} <i>na seachdamh</i> ^{4A}	<i>an t-siathamh</i> ^{4C} <i>an t-seachdamh</i> ^{4B}
	<i>an fhicheadamh</i>		<i>na ficheadamh</i> ^{3A}	<i>an fhicheadamh</i> ^{3C}
	<i>an ath</i> <i>an aon</i> [<i>an aonamh</i>] <i>an ochdamh</i>		<i>na h-ath</i> ^{2A} <i>na h-aon</i> ^{5A} <i>na h-aonamh</i> ^{2A} <i>na h-ochdamh</i> ^{2A}	<i>an ath</i> ^{2C} <i>an aon</i> ^{5B} <i>an aonamh</i> ^{2C} <i>an ochdamh</i> ^{2D}
	Masc. / fem.			
Nom. pl.	<i>na ciad</i> ^{4A} <i>na h-ath</i> ^{1A} <i>na h-aon</i>	<i>a' chiad</i> ^{4B} <i>an ath</i> ^{1B}		
Gen. pl.	<i>nan ciad</i> ^{2A} <i>nan ath</i> ^{5A} <i>nan aon</i> ^{2A}	<i>a' chiad</i> ^{6C} <i>na h-ath</i> ^{5B} / <i>an ath</i> ^{2B} <i>na h-aon</i> ^{3C}		
Gen. du.	<i>an dà</i>	<i>nan dà</i> ⁷		

^{1A} Conservative forms used by all except S3.

^{1B} Innovative forms used only by S3.

^{2A} Conservative forms used by all except S4.

^{2B} Innovative forms used only by S4.

^{2C} Innovative forms used by S4 and occasionally by S2.

^{2D} Innovative forms used by S4 and occasionally by S2 and S3.

^{3A} Conservative forms used only by S1.

^{3B} Conservative forms used by S1 and accepted as alternative forms by S2.

^{3C} Innovative forms used by all except S1.

^{4A} Conservative forms used only by S1 and S2.

^{4B} Innovative forms used only by S3 and S4.

^{4C} Innovative forms used by S3 and S4, and accepted as alternative forms by S2.

^{5A} Conservative forms used only by S1 and S3.

^{5B} Innovative forms used only by S2 and S4.

¹³ Square brackets indicate forms not attested in this research, which have been inferred on the basis of other similar forms.

^{6A} Conservative forms used only by S1 and S4.

^{6B} Innovative forms used only by S2 and S3.

⁷ Innovative forms used inconsistently by S2.

Based on the data presented above, the following conclusions can be drawn about the inflection of the definite article:

1. The evidence reveals a good deal of variation amongst native speakers.
2. S1 and, to a lesser degree, S2 and S3 tend to use more conservative forms of the definite article and the associated initial mutations. This may be a feature of their respective dialects, but might also (although not necessarily) reflect a preference for older forms, perceived as 'more correct'. S4 prefers innovative forms generally.
3. Conservative inflected forms of the definite article might be more common in more usual expressions, cf. *aig deireadh **na h**-ochdamh bliadhna vs a' fosgladh **an** ochdamh uinneag*, or *fad **nan** ciad trì bliadhna vs mu dheidhinn a' chiad chòig leabhraichean*.
4. In the nominative singular, the originally feminine forms of the article are used with *ath*, *aon* and *ciad*, with nouns of both genders, by all speakers.
5. With *aonamh*, *ochdamh*, *siathamh*, *seachdamh*, *ceathramh*, *còigeamh*, *ceudamh* and *ficheadamh*, S1 follows the traditional inflection patterns of the definite article in the nominative singular. The other speakers, however, use the same form of the article for both genders. S2 uses *t*-prefixing **an** with *aonamh* and *ochdamh*, and **an** (or **am** before *f*-) that causes no mutations with the other words. S3 differs from S2 in using leniting **a'** with *ceudamh* (as with *ciad*). S4 uses the form **an** (**am** before *f*-) without any initial mutations with all these words.
6. Traditional dative singular forms of the definite article, identical to masculine genitive singular forms, seem still to be common.
7. Traditional masculine genitive singular forms of the definite article are used consistently by all four speakers.
8. S1 uses the traditional feminine genitive singular form of the article: *h*-prefixing **na**. S2 too uses this form, but inconsistently – often preferring or at least accepting as alternative the innovative leniting form **a'** in this context. S3 tends to use (*h*-prefixing) **na** before words that begin with a vowel: *ath*, *aon*, *aonamh*, *ochdamh*. Otherwise, S3 prefers forms identical to the masculine genitive singular forms. S4 uses the latter forms consistently with all words discussed here.
9. Again, S1 prefers the traditional plural forms of the article: nom. **na** and gen. **nan**. The others use the innovative leniting form **a'** with *ciad*, although S2 and (more rarely) S3 also use the traditional forms. The originally nominative *h*-prefixing form **na** is common with *ath* and *aon* in both the nominative and genitive with S2, S3 and S4, although S2 and S3 also use the genitive form **nan** here. S3 and S4 sometimes use the singular form **an** with *ath*.
10. The traditional dual form **an** is used with *dà* in the genitive, although S2 occasionally uses genitive plural **nan** in this context.
11. Although noun inflection was not addressed in this research, it can be inferred from the available data that S1 and S2 tend to be more conservative than S3 and S4 as far as genitive inflection is concerned. See Table 2.

Table 2: Forms of singular nouns in genitive contexts.¹⁴

Conservative article forms	
Conservative noun forms	Innovative noun forms
<i>ri taobh an aon uillt</i> (S1, S2) <i>a' fosgladh an ochdamh dorais</i> (S2)	<i>ri taobh an aon allt</i> (S3, S4, accepted by S1) <i>a' fosgladh an ochdamh doras</i> (S1, S3, S4) <i>mu dheidhinn an t-seachdamh leabhar</i> (S1, S2) <i>a dh'ionnsaigh an ath thaigh</i> (S1, S2, S3, S4) <i>chon an ath thaigh</i> (S2)
<i>a' fosgladh na h-ochdamh uinneig</i> (S1) <i>chon na seachdamh craoibh</i> (S2) <i>gu mullach na còigeamh beinne</i> (S2) <i>gu mullach na còigeamh beinne(adh)</i> (S1)	<i>aig ceann na h-aon sràid</i> (S1) <i>aig ceann na h-aon shràid</i> (S3) <i>a' fosgladh na h-ochdamh uinneag</i> (accepted by S1)
	<i>chun an dà chnoc</i> (S1, S2, S3, S4) <i>mullaichean an dà bheinn</i> (S1, S3, S4)
Innovative article forms	
Conservative noun forms	Innovative noun forms
<i>a' fosgladh an ochdamh uinneig</i> (S2)	<i>a' fosgladh an ochdamh uinneag</i> (S3, S4) <i>a dh'ionnsaigh an t-seachdamh craobh</i> (S3, S4) <i>gu mullach a' chòigeamh beinn</i> (S3, S4) <i>aig ceann an aon t-sràid</i> (S2)
	<i>mullaichean nan dà bheinn</i> (S2)

¹⁴ Not all examples have been included in the table since the preferred form of the noun is occasionally not indicated in the questionnaire responses.

Table 3: A summary of forms of the definite article.

	ciad	ceudamh	ceathramh (& còigeamh)	ficheadamh	siathamh (& seachdamh)	aonamh (& ochdamh)	ath (& aon)
Nom.sg. m.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>an ceudamh</i> (a' cheudamh)	<i>an ceathramh</i>	<i>am ficheadamh</i>	<i>an siathamh</i>	<i>an t-aonamh</i> (an aonamh)	an ath
Nom.sg. f.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>a' cheudamh</i> (an ceudamh)	<i>(a' cheathramh)</i> an ceathramh	<i>(an fhicheadamh)</i> am ficheadamh	<i>(an t-siathamh)</i> an siathamh	<i>an aonamh</i> an t-aonamh	<i>an ath</i>
Dat.sg. m./f.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>a' cheudamh</i>	<i>a' cheathramh</i>	<i>an fhicheadamh</i>	<i>an t-siathamh</i>	<i>an aonamh</i>	<i>an ath</i>
Gen.sg. m.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>a' cheudamh</i>	<i>a' cheathramh</i>	<i>an fhicheadamh</i>	<i>an t-siathamh</i>	<i>an aonamh</i>	<i>an ath</i>
Gen.sg. f.	<i>(na ciad)</i> a' chiad	<i>na ceudamh</i> (lit.) a' cheudamh (lit.)	<i>na ceathramh</i> a' cheathramh	<i>(na ficheadamh)</i> an fhicheadamh	<i>na siathamh</i> an t-siathamh	<i>na h-aonamh</i> [an aonamh]	<i>na h-ath</i> [an ath]
Nom./dat.pl.	<i>na ciad</i> a' chiad	---	---	---	---	---	<i>na h-ath</i> (an ath)
Gen.pl.	<i>nan ciad</i> a' chiad	---	---	---	---	---	<i>nan ath</i> na h-ath (an ath)

- Non-traditional, innovative forms are written in bold typeface.
- The innovative (bold) forms enclosed in round brackets are used by only one speaker: usually either S3 or S4.
- The conservative (not bold) forms enclosed in round brackets are preferred by only one speaker: usually S1.
- The innovative forms enclosed in square brackets are used regularly only by one speaker (usually S4) and accepted by one or two others (usually S3 and/or S2).
- If neither of the two variants (where there are two) is enclosed in brackets, both are used by an equal number of speakers.
- The forms indicated as *lit(erary)* have not been obtained from native speakers, but they occur in *Corpas na Gàidhlig*.

The variation exhibited in the responses of traditional speakers suggests that further research with a broader range of traditional speakers is needed. Nevertheless, it is possible to make some preliminary recommendations based on some of the most conservative traditional forms. These are presented in Table 4, where the innovative nominative singular masculine forms ***a' chiad***, ***an ath*** and ***an aon*** are given in bold. These recommendations would need to be tested by engagement with a wider group of traditional speakers and discussed further with Buidheann-obrach air Acadamaidh Ghàidhlig / Gaelic Academy Working Group (BOAG) and modified accordingly as relevant.

Table 4: Recommended forms of the definite article.

	ciad	ceudamh	ceathramh & còigeamh	ficheadamh	siathamh & seachdamh	aonamh & ochdamh	ath & aon
Nom.sg. m.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>an ceudamh</i>	<i>an ceathramh</i> <i>an còigeamh</i>	<i>am ficheadamh</i>	<i>an siathamh</i> <i>an seachdamh</i>	<i>an t-aonamh</i> <i>an t-ochdamh</i>	<i>an ath</i> <i>an aon</i>
Nom.sg. f.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>a' cheudamh</i>	<i>a' cheathramh</i> <i>a' chòigeamh</i>	<i>an fhicheadamh</i>	<i>an t-siathamh</i> <i>an t-seachdamh</i>	<i>an aonamh</i> <i>an ochdamh</i>	<i>an ath</i> <i>an aon</i>
Dat.sg. m./f.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>a' cheudamh</i>	<i>a' cheathramh</i> <i>a' chòigeamh</i>	<i>an fhicheadamh</i>	<i>an t-siathamh</i> <i>an t-siathamh</i>	<i>an aonamh</i> <i>an ochdamh</i>	<i>an ath</i> <i>an aon</i>
Gen.sg. m.	<i>a' chiad</i>	<i>a' cheudamh</i>	<i>a' cheathramh</i> <i>a' chòigeamh</i>	<i>an fhicheadamh</i>	<i>an t-siathamh</i> <i>an t-seachdamh</i>	<i>an aonamh</i> <i>an ochdamh</i>	<i>an ath</i> <i>an aon</i>
Gen.sg. f.	<i>na ciad</i>	<i>na ceudamh</i>	<i>na ceathramh</i> <i>na còigeamh</i>	<i>na ficheadamh</i>	<i>na siathamh</i> <i>na seachdamh</i>	<i>na h-aonamh</i> <i>na h-ochdamh</i>	<i>na h-ath</i> <i>na h-aon</i>
Nom./dat.pl.	<i>na ciad</i>	---	---	---	---	---	<i>na h-ath</i> <i>na h-aon</i>
Gen.pl.	<i>nan ciad</i>	---	---	---	---	---	<i>nan ath</i> <i>nan aon</i>

Lenition of names in the genitive

Female names are lenited in the genitive only in some dialects, e.g.

- *màthair Mhàiri* (S3) / *màthair Màiri* (S1, S2, S4)
- *piuthar Shìne* (S3) / *piuthar Sìne* (S1, S2, S4)¹⁵

According to S1, non-Gaelic male personal names are often lenited, but lenition also depends on the name. S4 claims that lenition is avoided with non-Gaelic names (e.g. *Bob*), but certain anglicised names of Gaelic origin (e.g. *Murdo*) may be lenited. Note that lenition of female names also varies across dialects.

- *piuthar Bob* (S3, S4) / *piuthar Mhurdo* (S4)
- *piuthar Dholina* (S3) / *piuthar Mhurdina* (S3)
- *piuthar Dolina* (S4) / *piuthar Murdina* (S4)

It is unclear whether lenition depends on the gender of the preceding name in any dialect, since the replies to that question were inconclusive. This topic requires further research.

- *Iain Murdo* vs *Katie Mhurdo* (S3, S4)
- *Iain Mhurdo* vs *Katie Mhurdo* (S2)
- *Iain Murdina* vs *Katie Mhurdina* (S3)
- *Iain Mhurdinag* vs *Katie Murdinag* (S4)

S1 lenites only male names, regardless of the gender of the preceding name, e.g. *Flòraidh Sheonaidh* vs *Flòraidh Ciorstaidh*, *Dòmhnall Beileig* and *Dòmhnall Màiri*.

Lenition and non-lenition of female names does not seem to depend on the gender or number of the (common) noun that they modify in any of the dialects studied here.

- *athair Màiri* vs *màthair Màiri* (S2, S4)
- *mac Seonaig* vs *mic Seonaig* (S2, S4)
- *làmhnan Sìne* vs *balaich Sìne* (S2, S4)

S3 accepts the forms *màthair Mhàiri*, *mic Sheonaig* and *balaich Shìne*. Some of S3's other replies imply that female personal names are lenited after singular masculine nouns too in S3's dialect, e.g. *athair Mhàiri Sheonaig*. S1 generally does not lenite feminine personal names in genitive contexts.

In double-barrelled male names, both parts are lenited and inflected in the genitive. In female names, both parts are either lenited or not, depending on the dialect.

- *Dòmhnall Seumas* > *athair Dhòmhnail Sheumais* (S3, S4)
- *Màiri Seonag* > *athair Mhàiri Sheonaig* (S3) / *athair Màiri Seonaig* (S4)

However, S1 reports that the second name can keep its nominative form, i.e. *athair Dhòmhnail Sheumais* / *Seumas* and *athair Màiri Seonaig* / *Seonag*.

¹⁵ S1, S2 and S4 claim that they have heard lenited female names in genitive contexts in other dialects.

Place-names that do not have a traditional Gaelic form are lenited in the genitive, although that is not consistent with all speakers.

- *sluagh Mhadrid, Chairò, Bheijing, Ghreenland, Shyria, Khazakhstan, Mhongolia, Mhexico, Bhoston, Chardiff, Phlymouth, Charlisle, Shuffolk, Dhorset* (S2, S3; according to S1, lenition is consistent here without much variation; but according to S4, it is inconsistent)
- *sluagh/muinntir Chanada* (S3) / *sluagh Chanada* (S1, S2, S4)
- *gainmheach na Sahara* (S1) / *gainmheach Sahara* (S2) / *gainmheach an t-Sahara* (S3) / *gainmheach an Sahara* (S4)

River names are lenited in the genitive, but there are exceptions.

- *bruach Thatha* (S3, S4) / *bruach Tatha* (S2)
- *bruach Fhoirthe* (S2, S3, S4)
- *bruachan Charrann* (S2, S3, S4)
- *bruachan Gharaidh* (S2, S3, S4)
- *bruach Chluaidh* (S2, S3, S4)

S1 accepts *Abhainn Chluaidh* and *Bruach Chluaidh*, and has heard *Taobh Tatha* but *Abhainn Fhoirthe* on the radio.

Compound names of mountains and hills are not lenited (S2, S3), except in certain dialects (S4). They are lenited but with exceptions in S1's dialect.

- *mullach Cnoc nan Gobhar* (S3)
- *mullach Beinn Nibheis* (S3)
- *mullach Beinn a' Chlachain* (S3)
- *mullach Meall an t-Suidhe* (S3)
- *mullach Buachaille Èite Mòr* (S3) / *Buachaille Èite Mhòir* [sic] / *Mòr* (S1)
- *mullach Sith Chailleann* (S3)

Compound names that are neither personal nor geographical are not lenited in the genitive.

- *rùnaire Colaiste na Gàidhlig* (S2, S3, S4)
- *rùnaire Sabhal Mòr Ostaig* (S2, S3, S4)
- *comhairle Siorrachd Pheairt* (S2, S3, S4)
- *oifis Banca na h-Alba* (S2, S3, S4)

According to S1, however, although lenition is often absent both usages occur. This might depend on individual words: *comhairle* seems to attract lenition, as in *oifis Chomhairle nan Eilean*, but *banca* seems not to.

Lenition occurs in compound nicknames such as the following only in certain dialects.

- *athair Caraid nan Gàidheal* (i.e. the person Norman MacLeod) (S2, S3, S4) / *Charaid nan Gàidheal* (S1)
- *duilleagan Caraid nan Gàidheal* (the book) (S2, S3) / *Charaid nan Gàidheal* (S1, S4)

Similar general expressions (which are not names) such as the following are not lenited in the genitive.

- *dath mullach an taighe sin* (S1, S2, S3, S4)

- *meud ceann Sheumais* (S1, S2, S3, S4)

Notes on inflection

Female names are palatalised at the end in the genitive (where applicable), although not in all dialects (S4). The traditional genitive suffix *-e* is not common.

- *màthair Mhòraig* (S3) / *màthair Móraig* (S2)
- *màthair Bheathaig* (S3)
- *màthair Sheonaig* (S3)
- *màthair Shileis* (S3)
- but *màthair Mhairead* (S3)

According to S1, female names are palatalised in the genitive although there is a tendency to not always mark a genitive, e.g. *taigh Mòrag*.

Genitive inflection of surnames is still common in present-day Gaelic, although, according to S1, it is not impossible to hear the other variants listed below.

- *beatha Sheumais MhicLeòid* / *'icLeòid* (S1, S2, S3, S4)
- *beatha Sheumais MacLeòid*
- *beatha Seumas MacLeòid*
- *beatha Sheumais Dhòmhnallaich* (S1, S2, S3, S4)
- *beatha Sheumais Dòmhnallach*
- *beatha Seumas Dòmhnallach*

The inflection of the noun *clann* in clan names is still common, at least in certain dialects.

- *fearann Chlann MhicCoinnich* (S3, S4)
- *fearann Chloinn MhicCoinnich* (S2, S3)

According to S1, *chlann* is more common, as in *Smeòrach Chlann Dòmhnail*.

Compound place-names with initial definite article are still inflected, but not by all speakers.

- *mullach na Beinne Mòire* (S1, S2, S3)¹⁶
- *mullach a' Bheinn Mhòr* (S4)

Compound titles of publications with initial definite article are not inflected by all speakers, i.e. some generally prefer not to inflect titles.

- *luchd-leughaidh "An Teachdaire Ghàidhealaich"* (S1, S2)
- *luchd-leughaidh "An Teachdaire Gàidhealach"* (S2, S4, also accepted by S2)

Cf. however, *ùghdar An Eileanaich* accepted by S2, S3 and S4 in previous research.

Titles that consist of an indefinite common noun are not inflected for the genitive.

- *luchd-leughaidh "Steall"* (the publication) (S1, S2, S3, S4)
- **luchd-leughaidh "Stèill" / "Still"*.

¹⁶ Some speakers note that they lived near *a' Bheinn Mhòr* and so they were accustomed to inflecting it.

Conclusions

- Female personal names are lenited in the genitive only in certain dialects.
- Non-Gaelic male personal names are often not lenited in the genitive. However, certain anglicised names of Gaelic origin (e.g. *Murdo*) are lenited by some speakers and the same applies to similar female names (e.g. *Murdina*) in the dialects that lenite female names.
- In double-barrelled names, both parts follow the genitive lenition and inflection rules although the second part may remain unlenited and uninflected.
- The gender or number of the modified noun does not seem to affect the lenition rule in the personal name that modifies it (e.g. *athair/màthair / mac/mic M àiri*, or *Mh àiri* where female names are lenited).
- Non-Gaelic place-names can be lenited, but some speakers do that inconsistently.
- River names are lenited in the genitive, with some exceptions, e.g. *bruach T(h)atha*. This requires further research.
- Unlike compound names of human settlements, compound names of hills and mountains are not lenited, except in certain dialects.
- Other compound names are not lenited either (with some exceptions: *oifis Chomhairle nan Eilean*, at least with certain speakers).
- Female personal names are slenderised in the genitive (with some exceptions: *Mairead*, at least with certain speakers).
- Gaelic surnames are usually inflected in the genitive, if possible.
- The word *clann* in clan names can be inflected (> *chloinn*) optionally.
- Place-names (including names of hills) starting with the definite article are inflected for the genitive, if possible.
- Titles of literary works that start with the definite article are inflected by some speakers. This might be limited to familiar or shorter titles.
- Titles consisting of an indefinite common noun do not inflect.
- Generally, noun inflection is more often avoided by younger traditional speakers, which might also depend on their dialect.

‘Ever’ and ‘never’

According to corpus data, the expressions *gu bràth* / *a-chaidh (tuilleadh)* / *riamh tuilleadh* can be used to express the meaning ‘forever’ even when the reference point is in the past, as in:

- *Chaidh e a Chanada agus dh’fhuirich e ann gu bràth.*
- *Chaidh e a Chanada agus dh’fhuirich e ann a-chaidh (tuilleadh).*
- *Chaidh e a Chanada agus dh’fhuirich e ann riamh tuilleadh.*

The use of these expressions in this context seems to vary across dialects.

S1 prefers *riamh tuilleadh* and accepts *gu bràth tuilleadh* and *a-chaidh tuilleadh* in this context. According to S1, *gu bràth* and *a-chaidh* (without *tuilleadh*) are not acceptable here.

S2 considers *gu bràth* and *riamh tuilleadh* to be acceptable in this context.

S3 is not entirely comfortable with any of the three examples. According to S3, it is enough to say: *Chaidh e a Chanada agus dh’fhuirich e ann*. The fact that the subject did not return can be emphasised by *...agus cha do thill e*. S3 provides the following examples for the use of these and similar adverbial expressions: *Alba gu bràth!* ‘Scotland forever!’ *Cha dìochuimhnich mi sin gu bràth*. ‘I will never forget that.’ *Cha tachair sin a-chaidh*. ‘That will never happen.’ *Cha bhruidhinn mi ris a-chaidh gu bràth tuilleadh*. ‘I’ll never speak to him ever again.’ *Saoil an till mi chaidh do na glinn san robh mi òg?* ‘I wonder if I’ll ever return to the glens of my youth?’ (quote from a song) *Air do bheatha bhuan na dèan sin a-chaidh tuilleadh*. ‘If you value your life don’t ever do that again.’ *Air do bheatha bhuan na dèan sin a-chaidh gu bràth tuilleadh*. (more emphatic). Note that all these refer to future time with the reference point at the time of speaking, and almost all are either negative or interrogative.

S4 accepts the first example. According to S4, *a-chaidh (tuilleadh)* should be used with negative verbs: *Cha tàinig e air ais a-chaidh tuilleadh*. *Cha dèan mi sin a-chaidh tuilleadh*. Note that *a-chaidh tuilleadh* refers to future time in both examples, but the reference point is in the past in the first one. *Riamh tuilleadh* is not used locally where S4 comes from.

According to corpus data, the expressions *gu bràth* / *a-chaidh (tuilleadh)* / *riamh tuilleadh* can be used to express the meaning ‘never’ when the reference point is in the past, as in:

- *Dh’fhalbh e agus chan fhaca sinn e gu bràth.*
- *Dh’fhalbh e agus chan fhaca sinn e a chaidh (tuilleadh).*
- *Dh’fhalbh e agus chan fhaca sinn e riamh tuilleadh.*

S1 prefers *riamh tuilleadh* and seems to have the same opinion on the other two expressions in this context as with the previous three examples (*Chaidh e a Chanada...*).

S2 would say: *...chan fhaca sinn a-chaidh (tuilleadh) e* / *...chan fhaca sinn riamh tuilleadh e*. S2 would not use *gu bràth* in this context.

S3 would say: *...chan fhaca sinn e a-chaidh (gu bràth) tuilleadh* / *...chan fhaca sinn e gu bràth tuilleadh*. S3 would not use *riamh tuilleadh* or solely *gu bràth* in this context.

S4 considers *a-chaidh tuilleadh* to be most natural in this context. The expressions *gu bràth (tuilleadh)* and *riamh tuilleadh* are also acceptable, according to S4.

According to certain corpus data, the expressions *a-chaidh* and *riamh* can express the meaning ‘never’ with past habitual verbs, as in:

- *Nuair a thigeadh e dhachaidh cha bhruidhneadh e a-chaidh mun chogadh.*
- *Nuair a thigeadh e dhachaidh cha bhruidhneadh e riamh mun chogadh.*

S1 considers both examples to be acceptable although probably not the best way to express these meanings. S1 would use a phrase such as *uair sam bith*.

S2 too would use *uair sam bith* to say ‘never’ in this context.

S3 would use *uair sam bith* in this context. S3 provides a different example, in which *riamh* is used with a simple past tense verb: *An dèidh dha tilleadh dhachaidh cha do bhruidhinn e riamh mun chogadh.* ‘After returning home he never spoke about the war.’

S4, however, accepts both expressions and notes that there is no difference in meaning between them.

Conclusions

- The expressions *gu bràth tuilleadh* / *a-chaidh tuilleadh* / *riamh tuilleadh*, or just *gu bràth*, are used in affirmative past tense sentences to mean ‘forever’, although none of the four speakers accepts all of them.
- The expressions *a-chaidh tuilleadh* / *a-chaidh gu bràth tuilleadh* / *gu bràth tuilleadh* / *riamh tuilleadh* may be used in negative past tense sentences to mean ‘never’ (referring to relative future time!). Not all speakers use all these expressions, but *a-chaidh tuilleadh* is accepted by all.
- The adverbs *riamh* and *a-chaidh* are used in past habitual sentences to express the meaning ‘never’ by some speakers, but the majority prefer *uair sam bith* in habitual contexts.

Guidance and recommendations

Finally, there was general agreement from traditional speakers with the recommendations made in the blogs though there were differences in some of the minor details. A mechanism is needed in order to gain a broader consensus on recommended guidance and usage. This could be achieved via a body such as *Comataidh Comhairleachaidh Cànan* (CCC).

Appendix D: Aspects of Gaelic Grammar (separate file)