

AG15: Agallamh le Kath NicLeòid: Neach-ionnsachaidh

Interview with Kath MacLeod: Gaelic Learner

Presenter: Seumas Dòmhnallach (James MacDonald)



SEUMAS:

Fàilte. Còmhla rinn an-diugh, tha Kath NicLeòid, a bhuineas dhan an Eilean Sgitheanach, ach a chur seachad a' chiad phàirt dhe a beatha air tìr mòr. Kath, innis dhuinn mu do chàirdeas leis a' Ghàidhlig, a' dol air ais chun an fhìor thoiseach.

KATH:

Cha robh Gàidhlig agam nuair a bha mi òg idir. Rugadh mi ann an Goillspidh, ach 's ann am Baile Chloichridh a thogadh mi. Agus bha rud beag Gàidhlig aig m' athair, ach cha robh Gàidhlig aig mo mhàthair idir, ach bha Gàidhlig aig mo sheanair agus mo sheanmhair, agus chuir sinn seachad tòrr ùine anns an Eilean Sgitheanach, far an robh iad a' fuireach. So, bha iadsan a' bruidhinn ri chèile anns a' Ghàidhlig, ach cha robh iad ga bruidhinn ruinne.

SEUMAS:

Mar sin, tha cuimhn' agad air a' Ghàidhlig, fiu 's aig an aois òg a tha sin, tha cuimhn' agad gu robh a leithid a chànan ann?

KATH:

Tha. Tha cuimhn' agam, agus bha Gàidhlig anns an eaglais, bha Gàidhlig anns a' choimhearsnachd, bha Gàidhlig anns an taigh nuair a bha nàbaidhean no seann chàirdean a-staigh, ach chaidh iad dhan Bheurla nuair a bha mo phàrantan no sinne anns an rùm, agus cha robh mi a' tuigsinn carson. Bha sin duilich, rudeigin a dhìth.

SEUMAS:

Seadh, 's tha cuimhn' agad fhathast gu robh rudeigin a dhìth a sin?

KATH:

Tha cuimhn' agam. Cha robh mi buileach cinnteach carson a robh aon cànan agad fhèin ach ... You know, bha iad a' bruidhinn an cànan eile dhòmhsa.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

Welcome. With me today is Kath MacLeod, who comes from the Isle of Skye, but who spent the first part of her life on the mainland. Kath, tell us about your relationship with Gaelic, going back to the very beginning.

KATH:

I didn't speak Gaelic at all when I was young. I was born in Golspie, but I grew up in Pitlochry. And my father spoke a little Gaelic, but my mother didn't speak any Gaelic at all, but my grandfather and my grandmother spoke Gaelic, and we spent a lot of time on the Isle of Skye, where they lived. So they spoke to each other in Gaelic, but they wouldn't speak it to us.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

So, you remember Gaelic, even from such a young age, you remember realising that there was such a language?

KATH:

Yes. Yes, I remember, and we heard Gaelic in church there was Gaelic in the community, there was Gaelic in the house when neighbours or old relatives came to visit, but they switched to English when we or my parents were in the room, and I couldn't understand why. It was sad, something missing.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

Right, so you still remember feeling there was something missing?

KATH:

Yes, I remember. I wasn't quite sure why you had one language ... You know, they spoke in another language to me.

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SEUMAS:

A bheil thu a' smaoinichadh gur e sin a thug buaidh ort, agus, an ceann iomadh bliadhna, gu dearbha, gun do thill thu dhan a' Ghàidhlig?

KATH:

'S dòcha. Tha. Tha cuimhn' agam ... Uill, nuair a bhàsaich mo sheanair agus mo sheanmhair, dh' fhàg iad an taigh aig mo theaghlach agus ghluais sinn dhan Eilean Sgitheanach nuair a bha mi còig bliadhna deug, agus chaidh mi a dh' Àrd-sgoil Phort Rìgh airson dà bhliadhna. Agus tha cuimhn' agam aon trup, bha mi a' fuireach còmhla ri mo charaid agus an teaghlach aice ann am Beàrnasdail agus bha iad a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig ri chèile. Ach thuirt màthair mo charaid, "Sguir a bhruidhinn Gàidhlig. Tha guest againn." Ach thuirt mise, "No, no, no. Cumaidh a' dol." Agus chum iad a' dol airson dà latha, agus tha cuimhn' agam an dà latha.

SEUMAS:

Nuair a thuirt màthair do charaid ann am Beàrnasdail, "Bruidhnibh Beurla; tha cuideigin a' tadhal oirnn a-seo," ciamar a dh' fhairich thu fhèin mu dheidhinn sin?

KATH:

Uill, bha mise a' smaoinichadh, "B' fheàrr leam Gàidhlig a chluinntinn," air sgàth 's bha daoine an-còmhnaidh ag ràdh an aon rud nuair a bha mi òg: "Sguir a bhruidhinn Gàidhlig. Tha duine eile le Beurla a-staigh," agus cha robh mi ga iarraidh idir, idir.

SEUMAS:

Dh' fhalbh thu às an àrd sgoil. Chaidh thu gu fòghlam, ach cha robh ceangal sam bith aige ri Gàidhlig.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

Do you think that had an effect on you, and, indeed, many years later, you came back to Gaelic?

KATH:

Perhaps. Yes. I remember ... Well, when my grandfather and grandmother died, they left the house to my family and we moved to the Isle of Skye when I was fifteen, and I went to Portree High School for two years. And I remember one time, I was visiting my friend and her family in Bernisdale, and they were speaking to each other in Gaelic. But my friend's mother said, "Stop speaking Gaelic. We have a guest." But I said, "No, no, no. Keep going." And they kept going for two days, and I remember those two days.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

When your friend in Bernisdale's mother said, "Speak English; we have a guest here," how did you feel about that?

KATH:

Well, I thought, "I'd rather hear Gaelic," because people were always saying the same thing when I was young: "Stop speaking Gaelic. There's an English speaker in here," and I didn't want that at all, at all.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

You left high school You continued your education, but not in any way related to Gaelic.

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KATH:

Thill mi air ais gu taigh mo phàrantan às dèidh dhomh ceumnachadh. Dh' fhalbh mi dhan Cholaiste Ealain ann an Dùn Èideann, agus thòisich mi aig clas oidhche Gàidhlig tron gheamhraidh. Bha mi aig an taigh airson mìos no dhà, so thòisich mi an clas. Agus thòisich mi a' bruidhinn rud beag Gàidhlig còmhla ri m' athair aig an taigh agus bha sin snog. Bha sin a' faireachdainn ceart, agus bha barrachd Gàidhlig aig m' athair.

SEUMAS:

Cò ris a bha e coltach a bhith a' tòiseachadh às ùr air a bhith a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig ri d' athair nuair a bha thu eòlach bho thoiseach a bhith a' bruidhinn Beurla ris?

KATH:

Dh' ionnsaich sinn a bhith moiteil às cò às a tha sinn. Agus bha ... Bha m' athair gu math ... Bha e gu math brosnachail. Bha e gu math moiteil air cànan, air Gàidhlig. Seadh.

SEUMAS:

Am faod mi do thoirt air ais beagan, chun an àm a bha thu anns an t-Àth Leathann agus chuir thu romhad a dhol gu clasaichean oidhche sa Ghàidhlig? Carson?

KATH:

Uill, bha mi a' smaoinichadh, "Uill, chan eil tòrr Gàidhlig agam, "so feumaidh mi rud beag ionnsachadh," so thòisich mi an clas Ghàidhlig.

SEUMAS:

An e gu robh Gàidhlig aig do sheanair agus do sheanmhair 's dòcha, 's tu fhèin air tilleadh dhan àite dham buineadh dhaibhsan?

KATH:

I returned to my parents' home after graduation. I went to the Art College in Edinburgh and I took a night class in Gaelic throughout the winter. I was at home for a few months, so I took the class. And I began to speak a little Gaelic with my father at home, and that was nice. It felt right, and my father had more Gaelic.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

How did it feel to start speaking to your father anew in Gaelic when you had been used to speaking to him only in English?

KATH:

We learnt to be proud of where we came from. And ... My father was very ... He was very encouraging. He was so proud of the language, of Gaelic.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

Right. Can I take you back a little, to when you were in Broadford, and you decided to go to a Gaelic night class? Why?

KATH:

Well, I thought, "I don't know much Gaelic, "so I have to learn a little," so I enrolled in the Gaelic class.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

Was it perhaps because your grandfather and grandmother spoke Gaelic, and you had returned to its heartland?

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KATH:

Tha. Tha. Agus bha sinn ann an taigh mo sheanar agus mo sheanmhar. Bha mi anns a' bhaile. Bha mi anns an eilean far an robh iad, agus bha e cudromach.

SEUMAS:

Cha robh sin ach clas oidhche. Cha do mhair e ach beagan mhìosan fad a' gheamhraidh. Dè a thachair an dèidh sin?

KATH:

Uill, cha do thachair ... Cha do thachair mòran. Dh' fhalbh mi a-rithist dhan bhaile mhòr, ach cha robh e air falbh. Cha robh. Tha cuimhn' agam cuideachd, bha bùth aig mo phàrantan ann an Armadal airson bliadhna no dhà, agus bha sinn ag obair a-staigh an sin, agus bha tòrr dhaoine a-tighinn bho an sgìre, bho Shlèite, seann chàirdean agus dìreach daoine bhon choimhearsnachd, agus bha iad a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig ri m' athair, so bha mi a' cluinntinn, "So, tha Gàidhlig aig m' athair." So, thòisich sinn bhon an t-àm sin a' bruidhinn rud beag Gàidhlig. Agus 's dòcha às dèidh deich bliadhna, bha mi air ais anns an eilean pòsta, bha dithis chloinne againn, agus duine eile air an t-slighe agus bha Gàidhlig aig an duine agam agus bha sinn a' feuchainn ri bruidhinn Gàidhlig aig an taigh. Dh' fheuch mise a chumail a' dol a h-uile latha anns a' Ghàidhlig aig an taigh. So, beag air bheag, bha Gàidhlig a' tighinn.

SEUMAS:

Uill, tha thu fhèin a' fuireach anns a' choimhearsnachd a-nise. Tha thu a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig anns an dachaidh, thuirt thu. A bheil Gàidhlig na d' àite-obrach? Ciamar a tha sin?

KATH:

Yes. Yes. And we were living in my grandfather and grandmother's house. I was in the village. I was on the island they came from and it was important.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

That was only a night class. It only lasted for a few months over the winter. What happened after that?

KATH:

Well, not much ... Not much happened. I returned to the city, but it didn't go away. It didn't. I remember also, my parents had a shop in Armadale for a couple of years, and we worked in there, and lots of people from the district came in, from Sleat, old relatives and just people from the community, and they spoke Gaelic to my father, so I used to hear, "So, my father does speak Gaelic." So, from then on, we began speaking a little Gaelic. And perhaps after ten years, I was back on the island, married, with two children, and another on the way and my husband spoke Gaelic and we tried to speak Gaelic at home. I tried to keep at it every day, using Gaelic at home. So, little by little, my Gaelic improved.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

Well, you live in the community now. You say you speak Gaelic at home. Is your workplace Gaelic-speaking? How is that?

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KATH:

Tha sin mìorbhaileach. Bidh mi a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig a h-uile latha a-nis. Bidh mi ag obair tron Ghàidhlig, bidh mi a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig a h-uile latha, bidh mi a' sgrìobhadh Gàidhlig a h-uile latha. Tha sin doirbh, ach tha mi a' cumail a' dol, agus tha mi an dòchas gum bi a' Ghàidhlig agam a' fàs beag air bheag, beag air bheag.

SEUMAS:

Tha thu ann an suidheachadh a-nist ma-thà far a bheil thu fhèin gu math nas cofhurtail a-thaobh do chàirdeas ris a' Ghàidhlig.

KATH:

Tha sin ceart. Tha sin uabhasach math, a bhith a' bruidhinn ri seann chàirdean agus an teaghlach air fad anns a' Ghàidhlig.

SEUMAS:

Tapadh leats' an dràsta.

KATH:

Tapadh leibhse.

KATH:

It's fantastic. I speak Gaelic every day now. I work in Gaelic, I speak Gaelic every day, I write Gaelic every day. That's difficult, but I keep at it, and I hope that my Gaelic will improve little by little, little by little.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

You're in a situation now where you're more comfortable with your relationship with Gaelic.

KATH:

That's right. It's great to speak to older relatives and to the whole family in Gaelic.

SEUMAS (JAMES):

Thank you for now.

KATH:

Thank you.