

# Gael-Talk

## Learning Gaelic Year 1 Caibideil 20

*Nas fheàrr a' Ghàidhlig bhriste n' a' Bheurla chliste!*

Better Broken Gaelic than fluent English!

A little reminder –  
We really should pay the piper  
(*mòran taing* to those who have!)



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This week we will learn ...

- Sean fhacal na seachdain
- Ath-sgrudadh: **How to say something is yours (or his or hers or ...)**
- Sgeul na Seachdaine – ***Maisy Luch a' dol na chadal***
- Òran na seachdain – ***Thoir dhomh do làmh***

*Sean fhacal na seachdain*

Tha am pòsadh coltach ris an t-seillean,



tha gath ann,

ach tha mòran mil ann cuideachd!”



- Marriage is like a bee:
- there's a sting in it,
- but there's a lot of honey in it, too!



## Gràmar na Seachdain

### Possessive pronouns



**“Tha an teadaidh agamsa!”**

There’s another way of saying that something belongs to us besides the aig + form that we’ve learned.

Tha bean agam, tha taigh agam, – I have a wife, I have a house

tha allt aig ceann an taigh agam – I have a stream at the end of the house

tha bun de shiabonn geal agam – I have a bar of white soap

‘s mo lèine salach grannda – but my shirt is dirty and horrible

De nì mi gun lèine ghlan – What shall I do without a clean shirt

gun lèine gheal, gun lèine ghlan – without a white shirt, without a clean shirt

De ni mi gun lèine ghlan – What shall I do without a clean shirt

‘s mi falbh an taigh a-màireach? – and I leaving home tomorrow?

The possession song:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmiV96Y049o>

**polysemic** = more than one meaning ...

tiodhlac = gift / funeral

And of course, not to be narcissistic about it, we have learned to expressed possession for others besides ourselves, as well.

	English equivalent	Literal translation*
Tha taigh agad	You have a house	Is a house at you
Tha taigh aige	He has a house	Is a house at him

Tha taigh aice	She has a house	Is a house at her
Tha taigh againn	We have a house	Is a house at us
Tha taigh agaibh	You have a house (pl. / form.)	Is a house at you (pl./form)
Tha taigh aca	They have a house	Is a house at them

\*Keep in mind that this 'literal' translation is given to provide you with an idea of the Gaelic syntax in a word-by-word translation. Be careful though: Because of the Gaelic verb-first structure (what linguists call VSO – verb-subject-object – structure), the Gaelic 'literal' translation might be misunderstood in English as a question, as in English, questions begin with the verb. Of course, this is not the case in Gaelic. As we have seen, a question sentence in Gaelic begins with a question marker, such as

	English equivalent	Literal translation
A bheil taigh agad?	Do you have a house?	Is a house at you?
An robh taigh aice?	Did she have a house?	Was a house at her?

Now, with that refresher, we are ready to learn the other way to express possession in Gaelic, which is to use possessive pronouns such as we have in English (but with one crucial difference, which we will also learn).

The possessive pronouns in English are

- My
- Your
- His
- Her
- Our
- Your (plural)
- Their

In Gaelic, the corresponding possessive pronouns are

mo	My	ar	our
do	Your (familiar)	Ur	Your (pl / form)
a	His	An / am	Their (according to bfmp rule*)
a	Her		

\*bowl-of-fluffy-mashed-potatoes rule 😊

There are other uses for these possessive pronouns other than what we have in English, but for now, you can think of them as functioning very much like their English counterparts ... with one important difference!

First, some usage notes:

The first three of these possessive pronouns in the list lenite the object of the possessive, that is, the word that follows, the ‘thing’ possessed.

So,

- Mo **ch**eann – my head
- Do **sh**ròn – your nose
- A **bh**ean – his wife

It is important to note that the possessive pronoun for “her” – **a** – (which otherwise looks just like that for “his”) does not lenite. In fact, this is how we tell the difference between **his** and **her**:

- a **ch**eann – **his** head
- a ceann – **her** head
  
- a **mh**ac – **his** son
- a mac – **her** son
  
- a **bh**ean – his wife  
(and these days, you might encounter:)
- a bean – her wife

and to be even-handed about it:

- a duine – **her** husband
- a dhuine – **his** husband



### Special usage note:

Another distinction between the **a / her** and **a / his** is that they are treated differently when used in front of a noun that begins with a vowel. In short, the **a / his** disappears in this case, which the **a / her** takes on an h- in front of the noun.

For example,

- Bha **x** athair a' bruidhinn – **his** father was speaking
- Bha **x** each a' ruith – **his** horse was running (bha each aige a' ruith)

but ...

- Bha a **h**-athair a' bruidhinn. – **her** father was speaking.
- Tha òrdag goirt. – **His** thumb is sore.

but ...

- Tha a **h**-òrdag goirt. – **Her** thumb is sore.

In a like fashion, ar – our – changes a following noun/possession by adding an n- to the noun that begins with a vowel:

- **Ar n**-athair – our father
- **Ar n**-òrdagan – our thumbs

Which leaves us with ...

- **A h**-athair – **her** father
- Athair – **his** father (or could be, a father, depending on context)
- **Ar n**-athair – our father

Or

- **A h**-òrdagan – her thumbs
- òrdagan – his thumbs (or just thumbs, depending on context)
- **Ar n**-òrdagan – our thumbs

*And now for something  
totally different!*



The possessive pronouns in Gaelic are used in a way that distinguishes them from their English counterparts. In short, they are used to identify “possessions” **from which we cannot be separated**. (There are other ways to describe this usage, but this is as good as any to give you a quickie guide.) These include “possessions” (note we’re constantly using the scare-quotes around the word) such as

- Parts of the body (at least we hope you don’t try separating yourself!)
- Relatives (can’t live with ‘em, can’t shoot ‘em)
- Immutable parts of your identity – your race, your heritage, perhaps something like your birthplace, your family

So, we might say,

- Mo mhac – my son
- Ar bràthair – our brother

But not (usually)

- \*Mo chù – my dog (even though some people are closer to their pets than they are to their relatives)
- \*Ar taigh

We would say,

- Do cheann – your head
- An casan – their legs

But not (usually)

- \*Do chàr – your car (though in California, people do identify their cars almost like a body part!)
- \*A pheann – his pen

We would say,

- A gàirdean – her arm
- A chluas – his ear

But not

- \*A gàrradh – her garden
- \*Ur cupan – your cups (form, plural)

We would say,

- Ar dùthchas – our heritage

But not

- \*ar taigh – our house

\*Remember our symbol for ‘does not occur’ – or, in a word, WRONG!



These are not hard-and-fast rules. No Gaelic Grammar Nazi is going to leap out of the bushes and send you away to Gaelic Concentrate on your Possessive Pronouns Camp!





Which is not to say that we don't have rules of usage in Gaelic, for we do, but as we sometimes joke, these are sometimes more *suggestions* than hard-and-fast, do-or-die mandates.

Because of colloquial usage, or slippage, or just trying to express an idea or relationship, you might find somebody saying something like ...

- Mo chù – (We've felt that way about dogs we've owned) – my dog
- Mo chàr – (definitely, a California thing) – my car

In the same way, very often somebody might say

- An duine agam – my husband (the husband/man at me)
- A' bhean agam – my wife (the woman at me)

instead of what you might expect ...

- Mo dhuine – my husband
- A bhean – his wife

Don't be too disturbed by these variations when you encounter them (though do try to follow the guidelines).

## Eacarsaichean

Now you try it!

**Eacarsaich a h-aon (#1)**



(As a kind of two-for-one deal, you will learn some new vocabulary here, too)

Practice forming the possessive with both the prepositional pronoun / **aig +** form (agam, agad, etc) and the new **possessive pronoun** formation (**mo, do**, etc), making the distinction between which form to use according to the guidelines above.

The form of the word with the definite article (“the”) is given. If you use the possessive pronoun, you have to shift from the “the” to the possessive pronoun.

For example, the first item a’ bhean would be

- A’ bhean aige – his wife (the wife at him)
- A bhean – his wife (using the possessive pronoun a / his)

But if you wanted to say *your wife*, it would be

- A’ bhean agad – your wife (the wife at you)
- Do bhean – your wife (using the possessive pronoun do / your)

Or *her wife* would be

- A’ bhean aice – her wife (the wife at her)
- A bean – her wife (using the possessive pronoun a / her)

Note: the difference between

- A’ bhean – the wife
- A bhean – his wife

The definite article – “the” – takes the apostrophe

- a’

whereas, the possessive pronoun does **not**

- a

Word	English	Possessive	Gaelic
1. A’ bhean	Wife	His	A bhean
2. A’ ghàirdean	Arm	Your	Ur gàirdean
3. An càr	Car	Our	Càr againn
4. An coimpiutar	Computer	Your (formal)	Coimpiutar agaibh
5. Am fòn-làimh	Cell phone	My	Fòn-làimh agam
6. Am bràthair	Brother	Her	A bràthair
7. A’ chupa	Cup	His	Cupa aige
8. A’ chroit	Croft / Farm	Their	Croit aca
9. Am plèan	Plane	His	Plèan aige
10. A’ bheachd	Idea	My	Mo bheachd
11. An cas	Foot	His	A chas
12. A’ cheann	Head	Her	A ceann

13. An t-sròn	Nose	Your (familiar)	Do shròn / ur sròn
14. An leabhar	Book	Her	Leabhar aice
15. An clàr-ama	Schedule	Our	Clàr-ama againn
16. An t-òrd	Hammer	His	Òrd aige
17. A' chraobh	Tree	Their	Craobh aca
18. Am flùr	Flower	Her	Flùr aice
19. An eun	Bird	His	Eun aige
20. An cat	Cat	Her	Cat aice
21. na speucplanan	Glasses	My	
22. a' phiuthar	Sister	Their	
23. a' mhàthair	Mother	His	
24. an t-athair	Father	Her	
25. an seanair	Grandfather	Your (plural)	
26. an t-seanmhair	Grandmother	Our	
27. am brògan	Shoe	His	
28. an leinne	Shirt	Her	
29. an t-airgead	Money	your	
30. an t-òran	Song	My	
31. an t-aodann	Face	Her	
32. an dùthchas	Heritage	our	
33. an teaghlach	Family	their	
34. an taigh	house	His	
35. an duine	Husband	Her	
36. an cù	Dog	My	
37. am peann	Pen	Your	
38. an leinne	Shirt	Her	
39. a' bhriogais	Pants/trousers	His	
40. a' bhraicist	Breakfast	Our	
41. an caraid	Friend	My	
42. am bòrd	Table	Their	
43. a' chathair	Chair	His	
44. an rùm	Room	Our	
45. an seòmar	Room	Their	
46. an leabaidh	Bed	Her	
47. am preas	Cupboard	Their	
48. an leòmhann	Lion	His	
49. an ròin	Seal	Their	
50. an +làraidh	Truck	His	

## Ecarsaich a-dhà (#2)

Now, we'll incorporate what we've just learned into a little review practice:

In the following sentences, you will fill in the appropriate possessive. (The rest of the sentence has been written for you):

The first one has been done for you as an example:

1. I was falling and broke my arm

**Bha mi a' tuiteam agus bha mi a' bristeadh \_\_mo\_ ghàirdean \_\_.**

Now, you try it:

2. They were building their new town hall.
  - Bha iad a' togail an. talla ùr aca.
3. I was seeing his new film.
  - Bha mi a' faicinn an. fhilm ùr aige
4. We were reading her new book.
  - Bha sinn a' leaghadh an. leabhar ùr aice.
5. My family was selling their house.
  - Bha mo theaghlach a' reic an. taigh .. / an taigh aca
6. The town is wanting its new park.
  - Tha a' bhaile ag iarraidh a'. phàirce ùr aice
7. Mary was running her race.
  - Bha Màiri a' ruith an. reis aice
8. Seumas is living in his own house.
  - Tha Seumas a' fuireach anns an ... taigh aige. fhèin.
9. My friend is buying a new table at the store.
  - Tha ... charaid ... a' ceannach bòrd ùr aig a' bhùth.
10. Alasdair and Mary were buying their new car.
  - Bha Alasdair agus Màiri ag ceannach ... càr ùr ...
11. Isabel is eating her cold dinner.
  - Bha Isabel ag ithe ... dìnnear fuar ...
12. I was helping Susan with her work.
  - Bha mi a' cuideachadh Siùsaidh leis ... obair ...
13. Our dog was running away.
  - Bha ... cù ... a' ruith air falbh.
14. The ball is hitting his eye.
  - Tha am balla a' bualadh ... shùil ...
15. John was eating his breakfast.
  - Bha Iain ag ithe ... bhracaist ...
16. The bird is returning to its nest.
  - Tha an eun a' tilleadh dhan ... nead ...
17. Seonaidh is speaking to my father.
  - Tha Seonaidh a' bruidhinn ri ... Athair ...
18. They were making my dinner.
  - Bha iad a' dèanamh ... dìnneir ...
19. His mother was wanting the flowers.
  - Bha ... mhàthair ... ag iarraidh na flùraichean.
20. They were hearing my new song.
  - Bha iad a' cluinntinn ... òran ùr ...
21. I was playing my harp.
  - Bha mi a' cluich ... clàrsaich ...

22. I was walking with my dog.

- Bha mi a' coiseachd le \_\_\_\_ chù \_\_\_\_.

23. I am watching my television.

- Tha mi a' coimhead air \_\_\_\_ telebhisean \_\_\_\_.

24. She was singing her song.

- Bha i a' seinn \_\_\_\_ òrain \_\_\_\_.

25. He is writing a letter to his brother.

Tha e a' sgrìobhadh litir gu \_\_\_\_ Bhràthar \_\_\_\_.

## Answer key

1. I fell and broke my arm

Bha mi a' tuiteam agus bha mi a' bristeadh mo ghàirdean.

2. They were building their new town hall.

• Bha iad a' togail an talla ùr aca.

3. I was seeing his new film.

• Bha mi a' faicinn an fhilm ùr aige.

4. We were reading her new book.

• Bha sinn a' leaghadh an leabhar ùr aice.

5. My family was selling their house.

• Bha mo theaghlach a' reic an taighe aca.

6. The town is wanting its new park.

• Tha a' bhaile ag iarraidh a' phàirce ùr aice.

7. Mary was running her race.

• Bha Màiri a' ruith an reis aice.

8. Seumas is living in his own house.

• Tha Seumas a' fuireach anns an taigh aige fhèin.

9. My friend is buying a new table at the store.

• Tha mo charaid a' ceannach bòrd ùr aig a' bhùth.

10. Alasdair and Mary were flying to New York.

• Bha Alasdair agus Màiri ag itealachadh a New York

11. Isabel is eating her cold dinner.

• Bha Isabel ag ithe an dinnear fuar aice.

12. I was helping Susan with her work.

• Bha mi a' cuideachadh Siùsaidh leis an obair aice.

13. Our dog was running away.

• Bha ar cù a' ruith air falbh.

14. The ball is hitting his eye.

• Tha am balla a' bualadh a shùil.

15. John was eating his breakfast.

• Bha Iain ag ithe a' bhracaist aige.

16. The bird is returning to its nest.

• Tha an eun a' tilleadh dhan nead aice.

17. Seonaidh is speaking to my father.

• Tha Seonaidh a' bruidhinn ri m' athair.

18. They were making my dinner.

• Bha iad a' dèanamh an dinnear agam.

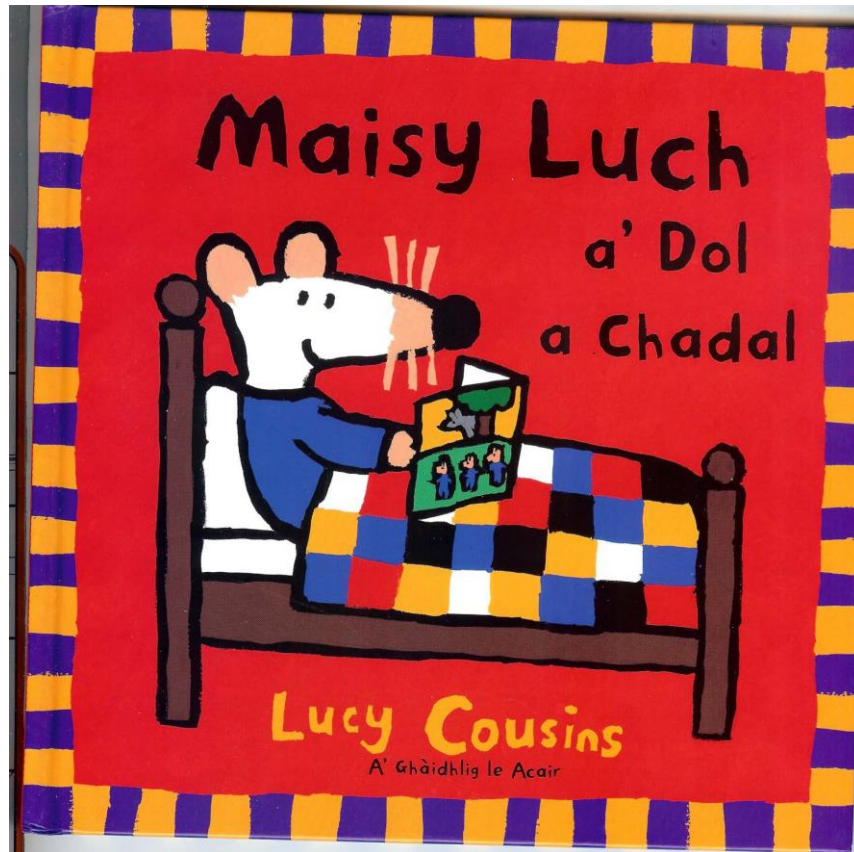
19. His mother was wanting the flowers.

• Bha a mhàthair ag iarraidh na flùraichean.

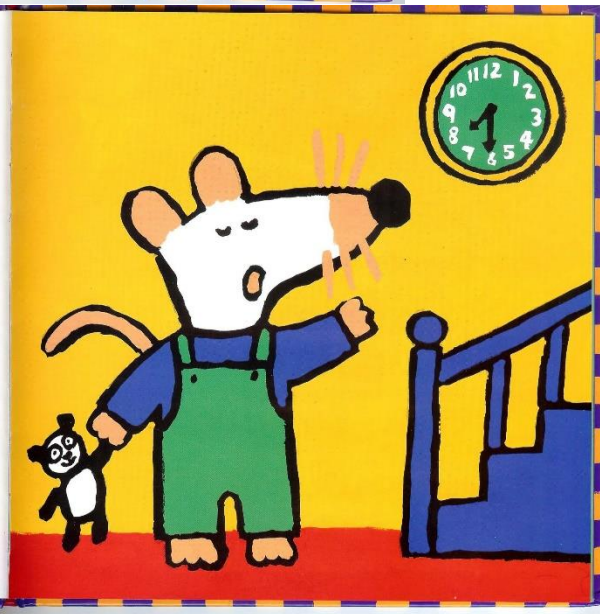
20. They were hearing my new song.

- Bha iad a' cluinntinn an òran ùr agam.
21. I was playing my harp.
- Bha mi a' cluich a' clàrsaich agam.
22. I was walking with my dog.
- Bha mi a' coiseachd le mo chù.
23. I am watching my television.
- Tha mi a' coimhead air an telebhisean agam.
24. She was singing her song.
- Bha i a' seinn an òrain aice.
25. He is writing a letter to his brother.
- Tha e a' sgrìobhadh litir gu a bhràthar.

## Dualchas na seachdain



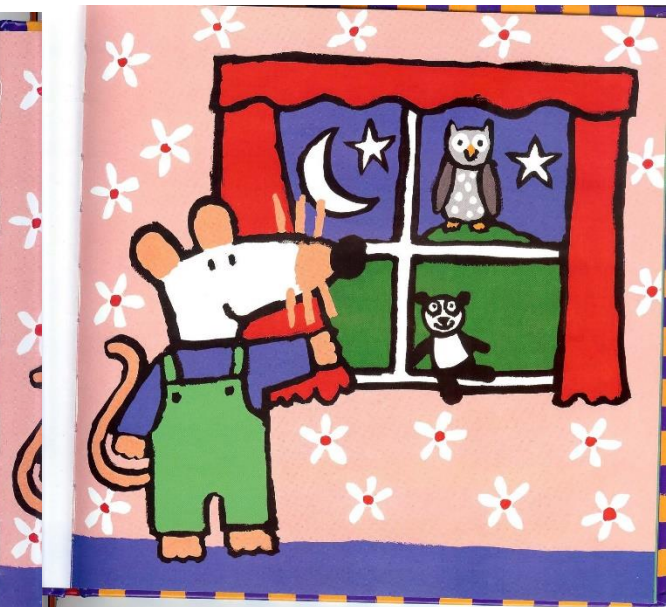
Tha a' thid aig  
Maisy agus Panda  
a dhol a chadal.





Tha Maisy  
a' dùnadh  
nan cùirtearan.

Tu-ù, tu-ù,  
ars a' chailleach-  
oidhche.



Tha Maisy ga  
nighe fhèin agus  
a' bruisigeadh  
a fiaclan.



Tha Maisy a' cur  
oirre a  
deise-oidhche.



Tha i a' dol  
dhan leabaidh  
agus a' leughadh  
stòraidh.

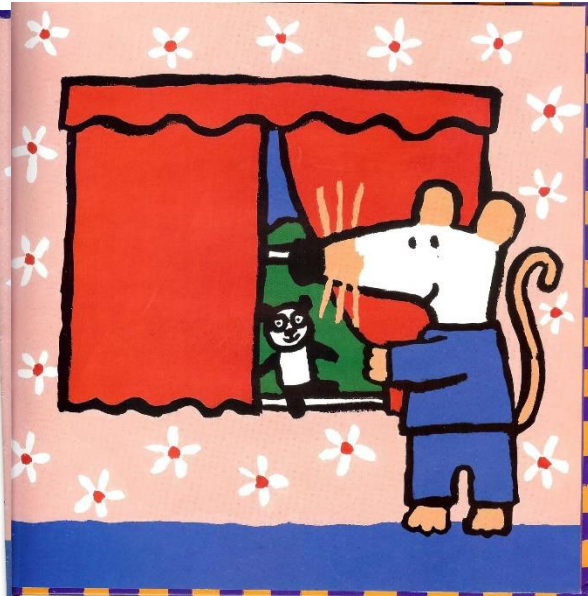
Ach càit  
a bheil Panda?



A bheil e ann  
am bogsa nan  
dèideagan?



O, siud e!





Tha Maisy a' cur  
dheth an t-solais.

Ach cha tèid  
aice air cadal.



Tha Maisy a' cur  
feum air an  
taigh-bheag!

Tha agus Panda.



Tha Maisy gu math  
cadalach a-nis.

Oidhche mhath,  
a Mhaisy.

Oidhche mhath,  
a Phanda.



# Òran na seachdain

Teann a-nall 's thoir dhomh do làmh

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38MgxvVSTXk>

**cianalas** = home sickness, nostalgia

<p>Sèist</p> <p>Teann a-nall 's thoir dhomh do làmh, Teann a-nall 's thoir dhomh do làmh, Teann a-nall 's thoir dhomh do làmh, Is bheir mi sgrìob do dh'Uibhist leat.</p> <p>Come close – teann a-nall = in my direction bheir = future / take sgrìob = trip, walk,</p> <p>Tha am feasgar ciùin 's na siantan blàth, Tha ghrian san iar mar mheall den òr, Tha an cuan mar sgàthan gorm gun sgleò, 'S bu mhòr mo mhiann bhith 'n Uibhist leat.</p> <p>Sèist /</p> <p>Tha sìth air aghaidh beinn is raon, Tha fàileadh cùbhraidh thar an fhraoich, 'S tha neòinean bhòidheach fàs gach taobh, 'S bu mhòr mo mhiann bhith 'n Uibhist leat.</p> <p>Sèist /</p> <p>Na h-eòin a' seinn air bhàrr nan geug 'S an seillean tional mil dha fhèin Na h-uain a' mireag - ruith 's a leum 'S bu mhòr mo mhiann bhith 'n Uibhist leat.</p> <p>Sèist /</p> <p>Tha 'n iarmailt gorm gun lorg air neul An sruthan torgnan nuas bhon t-sliabh A' chuthag ghlas 's gùg-gùg na beul 'S bu mhòr mo mhiann bhith 'n Uibhist leat.</p> <p>Sèist /</p> <p>Tha 'n crodh a' geumnaich anns a' chrò A' bhanarach 's a cuach na dòrn</p>	<p><i>Chorus:</i></p> <p><i>Come, and give to me your hand, Come, and give to me your hand, Come, and give to me your hand, And I will take a trip to Uist with you</i></p> <p><i>The evening's calm, the weather warm, The western sun is an orb of gold, The sea is like a mirror, blue without a cloud, Great is my wish to be in Uist with you</i></p> <p><i>Chorus</i></p> <p><i>A peace is on the face of the mountain and pasture And sweet fragrance on the heather Beautiful flowers grow on each side, Great is my wish to be in Uist with you</i></p> <p><i>Chorus</i></p> <p><i>The birds are singing on the tops of the branches And the bees gathering honey for themselves The sheep are playing – running and jumping Great is my wish to be in Uist with you</i></p> <p><i>Chorus</i></p> <p><i>The sky is blue without a trace of cloud The streams murmuring down from the mountains The grey cuckoo sings coo-koo And great my wish to be in Uist with you</i></p> <p><i>Chorus</i></p> <p><i>The cattle are lowing in the pen The dairymaid with her bucket in hand</i></p>
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A' seinn a duan 's i bleoghann bhò  
'S bu mhòr mo mhiann bhith 'n Uibhist leat.

Sèist /

Bu mhòr mo mhiann bhith 'n siud san àm,  
Is m' inntinn fad' bho thìr nan Gall,  
Ag èisteachd sgeulachd, òran 's rann,  
'S bu mhòr mo mhiann bhith an Uibhist leat.

Sèist /

Tha pòr na machrach làn de bhiadh  
Tha breac air linne 's lach air sgiath  
Tha iasg am pailteas sa Chuan Shiar  
'S bu mhòr mo mhiann bhith an Uibhist leat.

**An cuan siar = the western sea**

Sèist /

Is dìomhain dhuinne bhith cho faoin  
A' siubhal saoghail ruith gach maoin,  
Tha beatha is slàinte an tìr mo ghaoil,  
'S gun tèid mi thàmh do dh'Uibhist leat.

**Tàmh = home / peace-rest**

Sèist /

*Is singing her song and milking cows.  
And great my wish to be in Uist with you*

*Chorus*

*Great my wish to be there right now  
And my mind far from the land of the Gall  
Hearing stories, songs, and poems  
Great my wish to be in Uist with you*

*Chorus*

*The harvest of the machair is full of food  
Salmon in ponds and ducks on the wing  
Fish plenty in the Western Sea  
Great my wish to be in Uist with you*

*Chorus*

*It's silly of people to be so foolish  
To roam the world in search of wealth.  
There's health and wealth in the land I love  
And I shall go home to Uist with you*