

LESSON 21

Relative Pronouns

For positive relative clauses the relative pronouns **who**, **which** and **that** are all expressed by the word **a**. This conjugates with the independent form of the verb:

Sin am fear **a** bha air an loch - That's the man **who** was on the loch

Seo an cat **a** bha fon chathair - This is the cat **which** was under the chair

For negative relative clauses the relative pronouns **who**, **which** and **that** are all expressed by the negative particle **nach**. The dependent form of the verb is used:

An ise a' chaileag **nach** robh anns an sgoil? - Is she the girl **who** was **not** in school?

I s mise **nach** eil ag iarraidh seinn - I t's I **who** does **not** want to sing

There is an important relative pronoun **na** which can be translated as **what** and **all that**:

Seo **na** tha agam de dh'airgead * - This is all the money that I have

(lit. This is **all that** I have of money)

* **de dh'** is the usual form before an indefinite noun beginning with a vowel

The Relative Future Form of the Verb

This is a special form of the future verb which occurs **only** after the relative pronouns **a** and **na** (**not** after the negative relative pronoun **nach**, when the root of the verb is used **†**). It is formed by adding **-eas** or **-as** (according to the spelling rule) to the root of the verb. The verb is also lenited whenever possible:

'S mise **a bhitheas** an sin a-nochd * - I t's I who will be there tonight

'S ise **a sheinneas** aig a' chèilidh - I t's she **who will sing** at the ceilidh

'S i do mhàthair **nach bi** toilichte - I t's your mother who will not be happy

* the relative future of the verb **To Be bhitheas** is usually shortened to **bhios** in unstressed situations

The Relative Prepositional Pronoun

For relative clauses introduced by a preposition the interrogative forms of the verb are used:

An esan am fear **ris an** robh thu a' bruidhinn? - Is he the man **to whom** you were talking?

'S e seo am baile **anns am** bi mi a' fuireach - This is the town **in which** I stay

'S ise a' chaileag **leis a** bheil am peann - She's the girl who owns the pen (lit. ... **to whom** the pen is)

Tha iomadh eilean ann **air** nach eil daoine a' fuireach - There's many an island **on which** no-one lives

In some dialects an alternative form somewhat analogous to the poorer grammatical form in spoken English is found. The structure is based on the relative pronouns **a** and **nach**. In this case, however, a prepositional pronoun agreeing in both gender and plurality with the subject is used. It is included here for completeness and many do not regard it as good practice:

An esan am fear **a** bha thu a' bruidhinn **ris** ? - Is he the man **whom** you were talking **to**?

'S iadsan na fir a bha mi a' bruidhinn **riutha** ? - They are the men **whom** I was talking **to**?
'S ise a' chaileag a bha thu a' bruidhinn **rithe** ? - She's the girl **whom** I was talking **to**?

NEW WORDS

Adjectives

briste - broken
òir - golden

liath - grey, greyed
purpaidh - purple

Nouns

baga (m) - bag
cliù (m) - praise, respect
fraoch (m) - heather
iomadh (m) - many a (+ singular noun)
speur (m) - sky
beinn (f) - mountain, ben
coille (f) - forest
luch (f) - mouse
rìoghachd (f) - kingdom

bàrd (m) - bard, poet
dath (m) - colour
gleann (m) - glen
Mòd (m) - Gàidhlig music and Arts festival
gainmheach (f) - sand
drochaid (f) - bridge
pòcaid (f) - pocket
 tràigh (f) - beach

Verb

coisinn, cosnadh - earn, win
falbh, falbh - leaving, (+ le - dating)

dirich, dìreadh - climb, straighten
itealaich, itealaich - fly

EXERCISE 1 Translate into English

1. An e sin an tè a tha ag obair anns a' bhanca? 'S e
2. Seo am bogsa anns am biodh sinn ga chumail
3. Is mise a shnàmhais thairis air an abhainn
4. Is iadsan na daoine ris an robh sinn a' bruidhinn
5. 'S esan am bàrd a choisinneas cliù mòr aig a' Mhòd
6. 'S e sin an loch air an robh sinn an-dè
7. 'S e an speur an rìoghachd anns am bi an iolaire ag itealaich
8. Chan eil fios agam na tha aca anns a' bhaga
9. Is e purpaidh an dath a tha air an fhraoch an-dràsta
10. 'S iad a bha toilichte leis na bha aca de dh'airgead
11. 'S ann anns a' choille sin a tha am fear ag obair
12. Siud an drochaid air am bi sinn a' coiseachd
13. 'S esan an duine a dhìricheas a' bheinn sin
14. A' chaileag air an robh am falt liath
15. 'S e sin an nighean leis a bheil e a' falbh
16. B' e sgian mhòr a bha aige na phòcaid
17. B' ann air an luch a bha an iolaire a' coimhead
18. Siud an gleann trom (tro + am) bi sinn a' coiseachd a-màireach
19. Tha an drochaid air an robh sinn a' coiseachd a-nis briste
20. 'S e gainmheach òir a tha air an tràigh sin

- LESSON 21: ANSWERS 1** (The translations are mostly literal and are not always good English. This has been done to show you the stress placed on a clause by the Assertive Verb)
1. Is that the female who works in the bank? Yes
 2. Here's the box in which we keep it
 3. It's I who can (will) swim across the river
 4. They are the men to whom we were speaking
 5. He's the poet who will earn/win great praise at the Mod
 6. That's the loch that we were on yesterday
 7. The sky is the kingdom in which the eagle flies
 8. I don't know what they have in the bag
 9. Purple is the colour of (that is on) the heather just now

10. It's they who were pleased with what money they had
11. It's in the forest that the man works
12. Yonder is the bridge on which we will be walking
13. He's the man who can (will) climb that mountain
14. The girl who had the grey hair
15. That's the girl with whom he is going out
16. It was a big knife that he had in his pocket
17. It was (on) the mouse that the eagle was watching
18. Yonder's the glen through which we shall be walking tomorrow
19. The bridge on which we were walking is now broken
20. It's golden sand that is on that beach