

Homework for May 21

"Unravel" Type Sentences

It occurs to me that one way to get good at unraveling complex Irish sentences is to construct similar sentences ourselves.

Many of these complicated sentences are built on a series of relative clauses – you may want to review how these work before tackling the homework – and in particular, there's a tendency to insert the clause in between the two halves of a thought, as it were.

After all, we don't have trouble with a sentence like this:

Labhair mé leis an bhfear a cheannaigh an carr a bhris ar an mbóthar.
I spoke with the man who bought the car that broke (down) on the road.

But we have more trouble with:

Cheannaigh an fear ar labhair mé leis an carr ...
The man with whom I spoke bought the car ...

Your homework is to create several pairs of utterances, each one containing one straightforward sentence (or pair of sentences) and one with an embedded clause. For instance:

Feicim fear atá tinn. Tá an fear a fheicim tinn.

Tá Bríd ina suíomh. Ní maith liom an chathaoir sin.
Ní maith liom an chathaoir a bhfuil Bríd ina suíomh uirthi.

This is a mechanical drill at heart, so the learning takes place through the activity more than it does the review and correction in class.

If you need inspiration or guidance, look at some of the sentences in our last unraveling exercise and use them as models.