Using Ceitidh

What is Ceitidh and who can use it?

Ceitidh is a Scottish Gaelic computer voice for PC, Mac and Android devices, available from CALL Scotland's Scottish Voice web site, http://www.thescottishvoice.org.uk. The voice is available free for non-commercial, non-profit personal, educational and research purposes, provided you meet one of the following criteria:

- State-run schools,
- Pupils at home,
- Scottish Colleges,
- Scottish Universities,
- Scottish Open University students,
- Scottish charities dealing with pupils and NHS patients,
- Scottish Local Authorities,
- NHS Scotland,
- Scottish government agencies and public sector in general.

If you do not meet any of the above criteria, you can purchase the voice from https://www.cereproc.com/en/storesapi?page=1 for £25.99.

On a computer, you need to use a text-to-speech program in conjunction with a computer voice to have text read out. Text-to-speech programs include *WordTalk, Orato* and *Balabolka,* all of which are free.
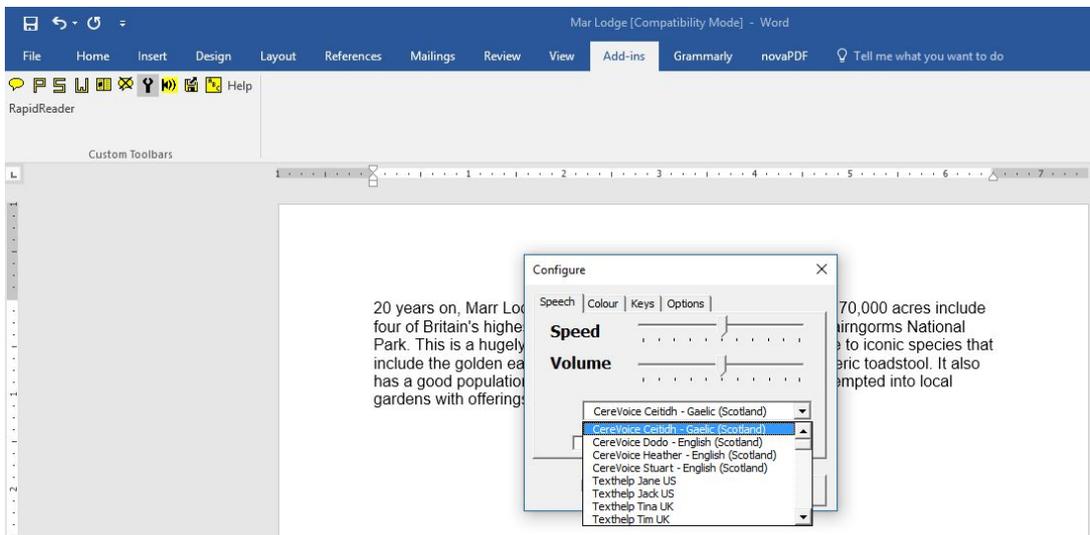
Using Ceitidh and WordTalk to read Gaelic text from a Word document on a PC.

WordTalk is a free add-on for Microsoft Word that provides text-to-speech support. It is available from http://www.wordtalk.org.uk.

Once you have installed WordTalk, click on Add-ins to see the WordTalk toolbar. The following options are available (from the left):

- Speak from cursor
- Speak Paragraph
- Speak Sentence
- Speak Word
- Speak Selection
- Stop Speaking
- Configure
- Save Sound Files
- Load Settings
- Spelling

Click on Configure and select the Ceitidh voice.

Now choose one of the 'Speak' tools to read out your Gaelic text. For example, if you want to read a particular paragraph, place your cursor anywhere in the paragraph and click on the 'Speak Paragraph' icon. WordTalk highlights individual words as they are read, making it easier to follow the text.
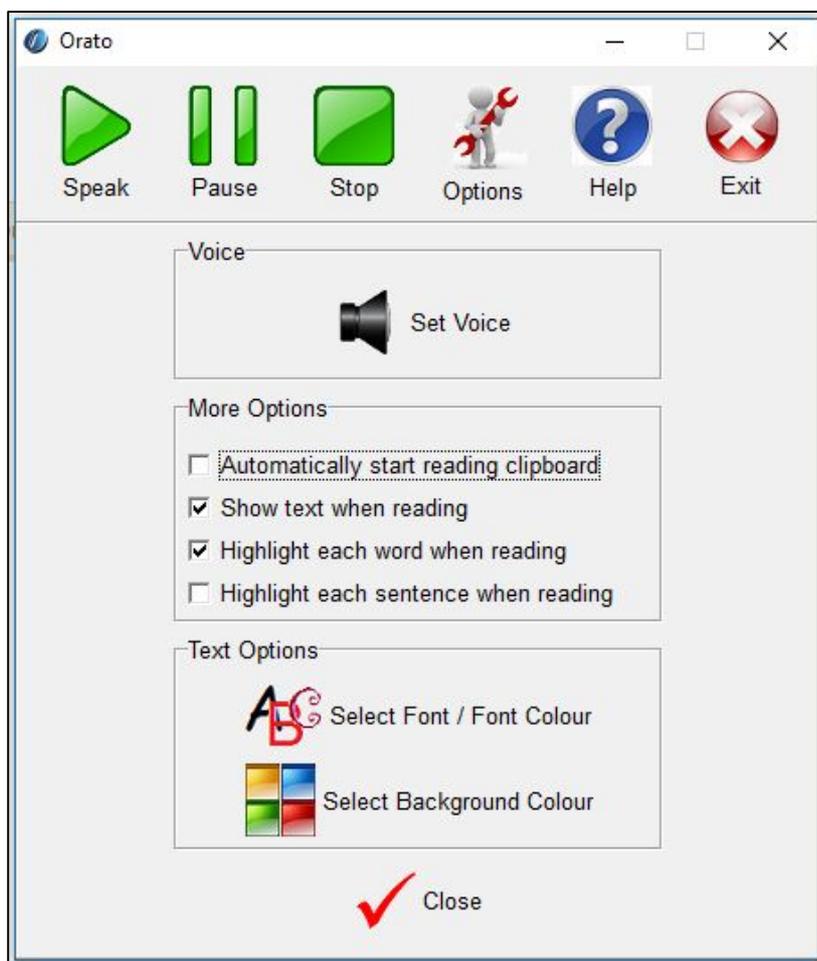
Using Ceitidh with Orato to read text from a web page.

WordTalk can only be used with Word documents. If you want to read out something from a web page, you *could* copy and paste text from the web page into WordTalk, but this can lose the context of the article. There are other free programs that you can use to read text from web pages (and from any other text, provided that you can select it with a mouse). Orato, available from http://orato.software.informer.com/, is one such program.

Orato floats as a toolbar above other programs on your computer, e.g. a web browser or a PDF reader. If you can select text with your mouse, you should be able to read it using Orato.
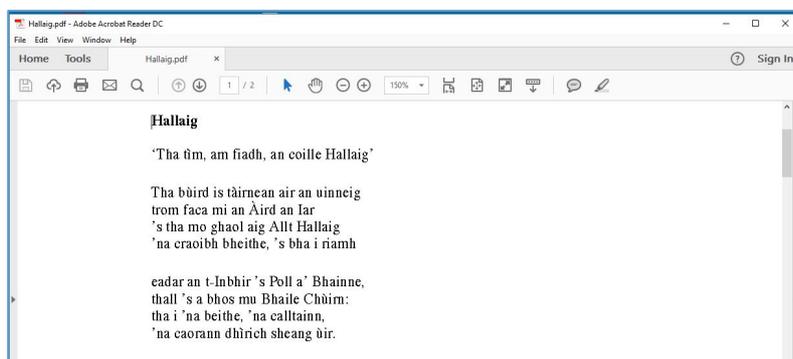
Click on Options to make sure the Ceitidh voice is selected. There are various other options that you might want to consider, e.g. to have text read as soon as it is selected.
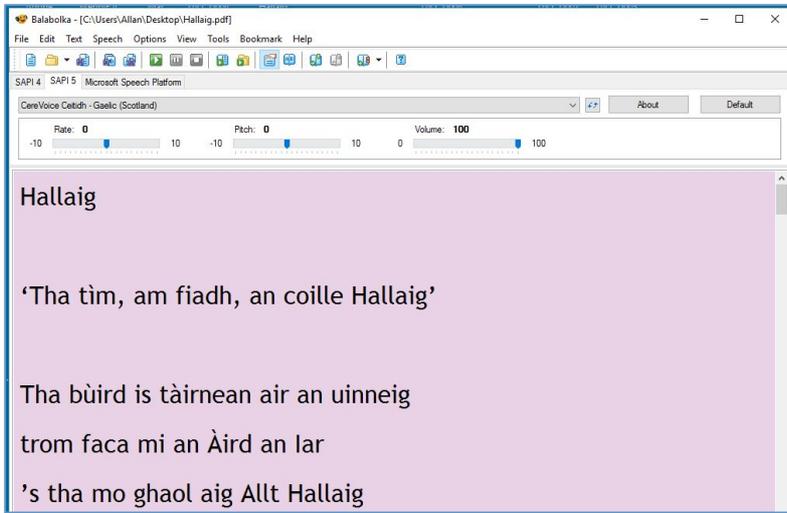

Using Ceitidh with Balabolka to read longer Gaelic texts and create MP3 sound files.
Balabolka (from http://www.cross-plus-a.com/balabolka.htm) is a very useful, free text-to-speech program, that is particularly useful for handling large documents in PDF, Word and EPub formats. It has a lot of features absent from some of the more basic text-to-speech programs, but is more complicated to use. If you are just wanting to read out a couple of lines of text from a web site, you would be better using Orato.

Like Orato, Balabolka can change text size and colour, and background colour, but it can also change line spacing, making text easier to read. A Gaelic poem in basic PDF format and an equivalent version in Balabolka are shown below.
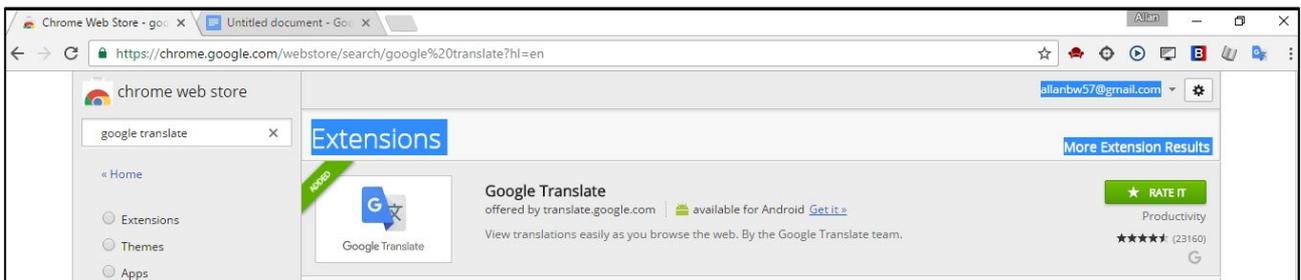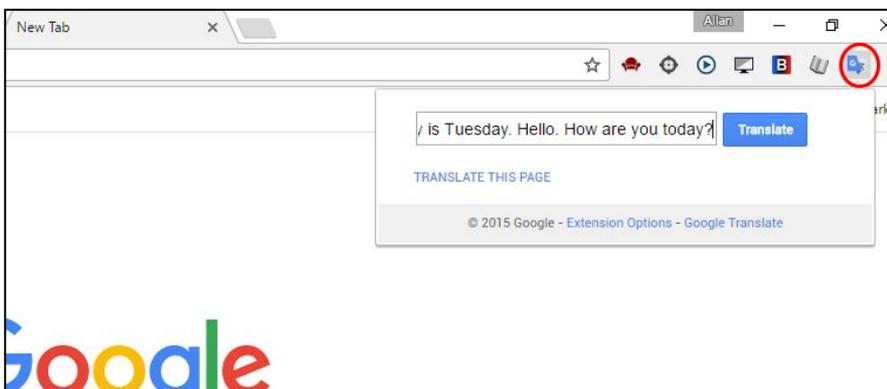
Some of the other useful features in Balabolka include a facility to change the pitch of the voice, and a facility for creating audio files that can be played back on a smart phone, or similar device. To create an audio file from a document, click on File, then Save Audio File. You will be given different formats to choose, but we suggest using MP3. For a long document, e.g. a book, you can break the audio file down into 'chapters' by clicking on File, then Split and Convert to Audio Files.

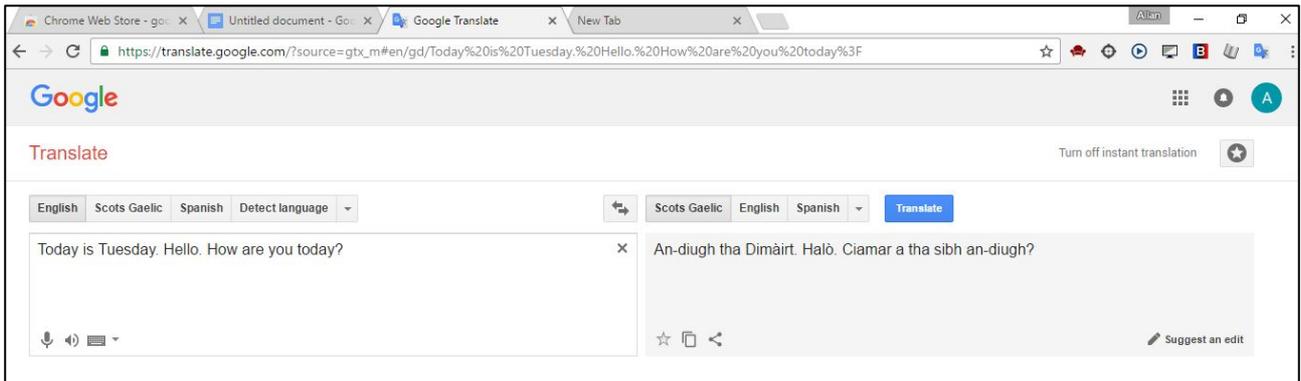## Using Ceitidh with Orato and Google Translate to translate and read text.

Google Translate is an extension that can be added to the Google Chrome web browser to provide automatic text translation. Over 100 languages are available, including Scots Gaelic. Google Translate is available free from the Chrome web store, https://chrome.google.com/webstore. Note that Google Translate is not always 100% accurate!

If you are wanting to translate a short piece of text, open your Chrome Browser and select the Google Translate extension (circled in red, below). A box should appear with a small box into which you can either type, or paste text for translation.

Now click on the blue 'Translate' button. You should see a box with your text repeated twice. At the bottom of this box, there is an option to 'OPEN IN GOOGLE TRANSLATE'. Click on this and you'll get a screen like the one below. Select English for the left box and Scots Gaelic for the right box. If Scots Gaelic isn't in the original list, click on the down arrow beside the language options to get a full list of available languages, then select Scots Gaelic.

You should now be able to select the Gaelic text with Orato and have it read out loud.

There is more information about different text-to-speech programs on the CALL Scotland web site at http://www.callscotland.org.uk/information/text-to-speech/.