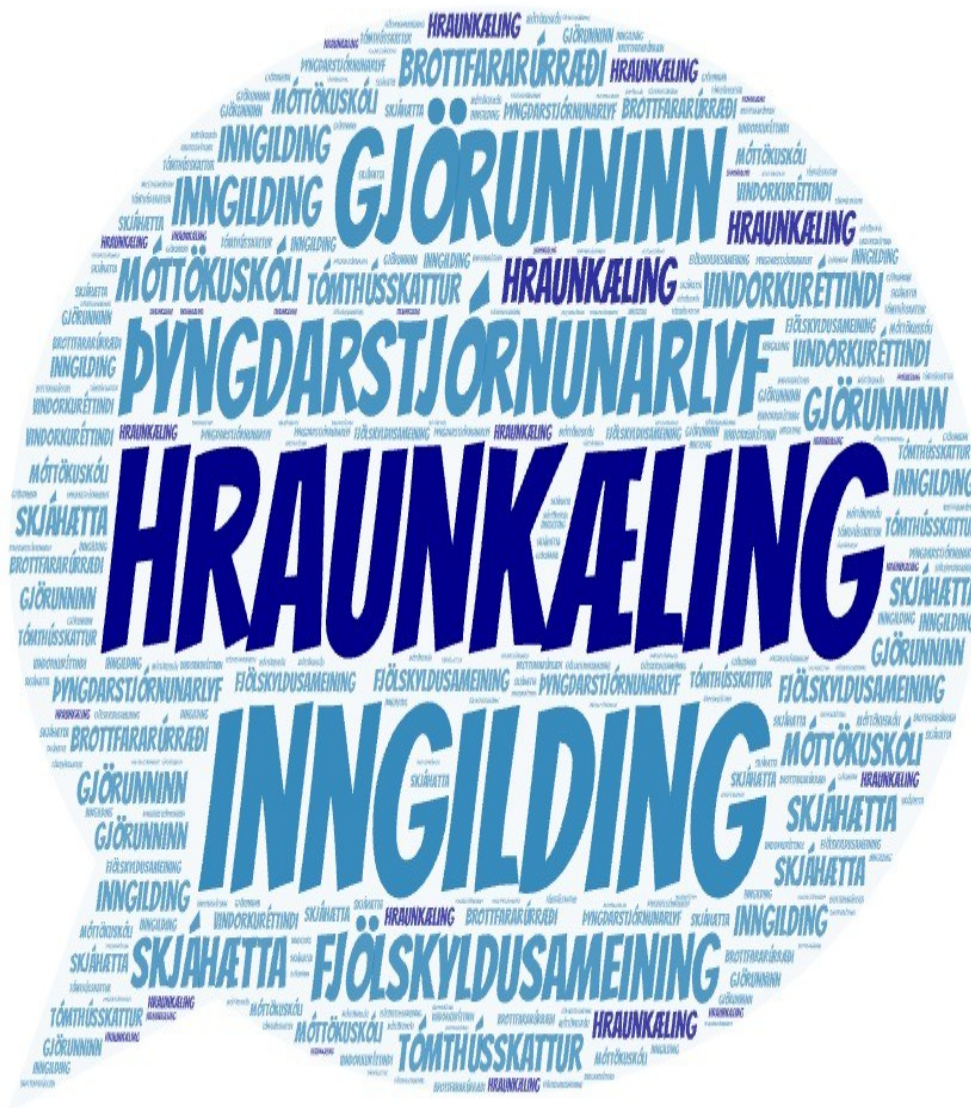


Word of the Year 2024: Hraunkæling (lava cooling operation)



Every year, the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies chooses a Word of the Year based on language data collected over the past twelve months. Using the Icelandic Gigaword Corpus, we create a word frequency list for the last five years and select ten words that have been prominent in the past year when compared to the preceding years. These words should also reflect the passing year in some way. From the list of ten nominated words, we then select the Word of the Year. The 2024 Word of the Year is *hraunkæling*, or “lava cooling operation” in English.

In Iceland, the past few years have been marked by a series of volcanic eruptions on the Reykjanes Peninsula, starting with an eruption in Geldingadalur in Fagradalsfjall on 19 March 2021. That year, three words from the domain of volcanology entered the Word of the Year shortlist. Over the following two years, volcanic activity continued without new or established geological words attracting much attention, as Icelanders got used to their new reality. Last year, however, there were a total of six volcanic eruptions in Reykjanes, with a huge push being made to secure infrastructure in the area,

including Iceland's famous Blue Lagoon. Initially, barriers were built to redirect the lava flow, but by summer 2024 it was clear that these barriers were insufficient. The idea of cooling the lava down with cold water was being thrown around as early as 2023. This method had proved useful 50 years ago, during the 1973 eruption in the Westman Islands. The method was equally successful in 2024 and helped save vital infrastructure from falling victim to the fiery lava.

Below are the ten words that made it on the shortlist:

hraunkæling: *lava cooling operation*

inngilding: *inclusion*

þyngdarstjórnunarlýf: *weight control medication*

gjörunninn: *ultra-processed*

fjölskyldusameining: *family reunification*

móttökuskóli: *reception school (for immigrants)*

brottfararúrræði: *deportation resort*

skjáhætta: a compound made of the words **skjár** (*screen*) and **áhætta** (*risk*)

tómthússkattur: *vacant home tax*