

# Tá an litriú an deacair

Comhrá

Milsc



## Tá an litriú deacair go leor -- agus an fuaimniú freisin

The ministry of education in Ireland reformed the spelling of Irish to accomplish a number of goals: (1) to initiate the use of the Roman type script for letters, (2) to eliminate the many silent consonants which had come about due to the failure of the written language to keep pace with the evolution of the spoken language and (3) to establish a standardized spelling for words, making the sound-letter correspondence as regular and consistent as possible. The result is the spelling now found in dictionaries and in common use. For some, the loss of the old Gaelic type face (which was the stylized letter forms used in medieval manuscripts) and the etymological base of the spelling system has been a grievous one. For most, however, it has been a step forward. Despite this, varieties of pronunciation continue to exist and always will: the differences between the American, Australian, British, Indian, Caribbean, African varieties of English are here to stay. But increased communication, travel, radio, T.V., and movies have made the differences sound less strange. So has it been with the dialects of Irish. Radio, television, travel, schooling have made the differences in dialects less dramatic and less of a problem for the learner. The description given in this booklet follows the advice on pronunciation given in Teach Yourself Irish by Diarmuid Ó Sé and Joseph Shiels and the Foclóir Póca published by An Roinn Oideachais. The advice they give is to use the pronunciation which most consistently matches the spelling. The goal of the description which follows is to propose an acceptable pronunciation which matches as consistently as possible, the written form<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>The different phonetic studies show different totals for the number of phonemes in the language, ranging from a high of 67 in de Bhaldráithe to 64 in ÓCuiv to 57 in ÓSiadhail and 52 in the newest Foclóir Póca. The 52 in the Foclóir Póca represents the lowest common denominator, that is, the phonemes found in all dialects and used by all speakers.

An aibitir

There are 18 letters in the traditional Irish alphabet:

a b c d e f g (h) i l m n o p r s t u

The following letters are found only in words which have been borrowed from other languages:

j k q v w x y

Very often these are found in scientific or technical terms where the foreign spelling as a rule is maintained.

Only **r**, **l**, **n** may be written double. In those cases, the spelling often serves to indicate a preceding long vowel or to distinguish between the meaning of words:

<b>fear</b> man	<b>fearr</b> better
<b>geal</b> bright	<b>geall</b> promise
<b>gan</b> without	<b>gann</b> scarce

A long vowel, however, is normally indicated by the síneadh fada, a stroke ´ written over the vowel:

bá**´**d mór rú**´**na**´**í mé r**´**í

Consonants (Consain)

Irish, like Russian, has two complete sets of consonants, traditionally called "broad" (velarized) and "slender" (palatalized). What this means is that, unlike English where consonants assume more or less whatever lip positions are required for the following vowels, in Irish, each consonant has its own lip and tongue positions independent of the vowels which precede or follow.

"Slender" or palatalized consonants are pronounced with both lips and tongue in the position required for the vowel in the word *see* [i:]. Pronunciation guides often suggest preparing to make a 'y' sound

after the consonant to get the desired effect. They should be made simultaneously.

"Broad" or velarized consonants, are made with the lips and tongue in the positions required to make a 'w' sound, that is, with the tongue at the back of the mouth and the lips slightly protruding and rounded.

Many of these sounds have no counterpart in English and it may take some time before your ear becomes sensitive to the difference, but it is a crucial distinction since the singular or plural form of a noun, or the common or genitive cases may differ only in the broad / slender consonant contrast.

The following diagrams of the speech organs illustrate the differences between a 'slender' or palatalized consonant and a 'broad' or velarized one.

#### Slender

lips drawn back slightly spread, and tight.



tongue in the high front region of the mouth, tip raised toward the palate and the base low at the back.

#### Broad

lips puckered a bit & slightly rounded.



tongue in the high back region, tip lowered with the base raised toward the velum.

What follows is a list of the consonants in Irish with a brief description of the way the sound is made with examples of each type of sound and a roughly equivalent sound in English.

	<u>Irish</u>	<u>English</u>
broad	B (voiced, bilabial, stop)	
	<u>Bó</u>	like the <b>b</b> in <u>boot</u> .
slender	B	
	<u>beo</u>	like the <b>b</b> in <u>beauty</u>
broad	C (voiceless, velar, stop)	
	<u>caoí</u>	like the <b>qu</b> in <u>queen</u>
slender	C	
	<u>ciall</u>	like the <b>k</b> in <u>key</u>
broad	D (voiced, dental/alveolar stop)	
	<u>dó</u>	Press your tongue against the back of your teeth while making the <b>d</b> sound
slender	D	
	<u>dia</u>	like the <b>d</b> sound in <u>duty</u> as the English say it. Some speakers make a sound almost like the <b>g</b> in <u>gee</u> .

broad	F	(bilabial, voiceless, fricative)
	<u>f</u> ú	foot
slender	F	
	<u>f</u> í	few

**Nota bene:**

The [f] sound in English is usually made with the inside of the lower lip in contact with the lower outside of the upper teeth. The [f] sound in Irish is made between the two lips with no contact between the lips and the teeth. To make the sound, prepare the lips to make a [p] but don't quite close your lips.

broad	G	(voiced, velar, stop)
	<u>g</u> úna	goon
slender	G	
	<u>g</u> earr	gules*

\* This is an unusual word in English and sound like this gyoules. To make the slender [g] in Irish, make a g followed by a y sound. The [g] in the word give is also close to the slender g sound in Irish.

broad	L	(voiced, dental/alveolar, lateral)
	<u>l</u> á	law
slender	L	
	<u>l</u> eo	lure*

\*This sound, as the British make it, sounds like **lyour**. It's the sound of the **slender l** in Irish. In standard Canadian English, there are two kinds of [l], commonly referred to as **front** and **back** [l], or as **light** and **dark** [l]. The first kind, is found when a syllable **begins** with an [l] and the second is found when a syllable **ends** with an [l]. The word **level** has both kinds of [l]. The first is made with the tip of the tongue on the alveolar ridge and the base of the tongue lowered. The second is made with the tip of the tongue pressed against the palate quite far back; the base of the tongue is raised towards the position required for a [u]. This is close to the **broad** [l] of Irish.

<b>broad</b>	M	(bilabial, nasal)	
		<u>m</u> o	mo <u>o</u> n
<b>slender</b>	M		
		<u>m</u> íog	am <u>u</u> se
<b>broad</b>	N	(alveolar/dental, nasal)	
		<u>n</u> ó	no <u>o</u> n
<b>slender</b>	N		
		<u>n</u> íos	can <u>y</u> on*

\*The **slender** [n] in Irish is close to the Spanish [ɲ]. However, unlike Spanish or English where this sound can be found only in the interior of a word, in Irish, it may be found in any position, initial, medial, final, pre or post consonant. Sometimes the slender [n] can sound like the [ŋ] in sing.

<b>broad</b>	P	(voiceless, bilabial, stop)	
		<u>p</u> áin	pa <u>u</u> n
<b>slender</b>	P		



pib

puke

A **p** sound in English, when in initial, post-junctural position, (i.e. the first sound in a word) is aspirated, that is to say, you release a puff of air when you make the sound. This is due to the fact that when you close your lips to make the [p], the vocal cords remain open and air is free to pass from the lungs into the mouth. When you open your lips to make the [p], a puff of air comes out. This is called an aspirated [p]. However, when you make a [p] sound after an s as in **spoon**, there is no puff of air. This [p] is made with the vocal cords brought together closing off the passage from the lungs, preventing air from gathering in the mouth. Irish **p**'s are usually of the first sort, made with the vocal cords open. The same is true of the voiceless stops [k] spelled c and [t] spelled t.

**broad** R (alveolar, voiced, trill)

rúnaí

no equivalent\*

**slender** R

múinteoir

no equivalent\*

\*[r] in Irish, when **broad**, is a flap or a slightly trilled sound. Neither form of the Irish [r] -- broad or slender -- is found in standard English. The **broad** or single flap is similar to the sound Canadians make for the double [d] in **teddy bear** or **caddy**. The **slender** [r] sounds somewhat like the **s** in the word **pleasure**. Clearly there is no trill here, but rather a fricative, that is, a scraping sound. The **slender** [r] in Irish cannot be made in initial position where only the **broad** variety is found. This slender [r] is hard to acquire. In standard North American English, the [r] is a semi-vowel, sometimes called an **on-glide** or an **off-glide** according to its position in relation to the vowel. The word **river** contains both the **on-glide** at the beginning and the **off-glide** at the end. Neither of these sounds is found in Irish.

**broad** S (voiceless, dental/alveolar, fricative)

sú

soon

slender S

sí she

broad T (voiceless, dental/alveolar, stop)

tá thaw\*

The **broad** [t] sounds like the English [th] made while pressing tongue against the back of the upper teeth.

slender T

tinn tune\*

The **slender** [t] sounds like the [t] in tune pronounced the British way, tyoune. Some people pronounce the slender [t] somewhat like the ch in church.

Nota bene:

There is no [z] sound in Irish.

Some familiar sounds have strange spellings. The "v" sound, which in Irish is a bilabial voiced fricative like the **b** in Spanish, made by pronouncing an [m] with the lips open. It is sometimes spelled **bh** and sometimes **mh**. The sound results from a transformation known as "lenition" or séimhiú, the original sound having been either a **b** or an **m**. Likewise, the "w" sound is also spelled either **bh** or **mh**, and likewise results from lenition. The "v" is the **slender** sound while the "w" is the **broad** sound.

A number of spellings deserve further comment.

**dh** or **gh** when followed by an **i** or an **e** sound like the **y** in yard

When followed by an **a** **o** or **u**, they sound like a **g** made while yawning. It's the sound found in Spanish for an intervocalic **g** or in French for an **r** after a **g** as in **grand**. There is no equivalent for this sound in English and it will take practice.

The combinations **idh**, **igh**, may be pronounced as a long **í** (like the [i:] in **see**), or as an **-ig** as in **big**.

**th** and **sh** are pronounced like the English **h** with the two variants that naturally accompany the front vowels [i] and [e] and the back vowels [a] [o] [u]. You won't need to worry about this as you already do it instinctively in English.

**ch** represents two different sounds, broad and slender. The **broad ch** sounds like the Spanish **j** or the German **ch** in **achtung**. The **slender ch** is similar to the **h** in **he**.

**ph**, of course, is like an [f]

**fh** is mute.

Vowels (*guthaí*)

There are five vowel letters in Irish, each may represent a long or a short vowel. The long vowel is indicated by the síneadh fada, the ´, or long stroke, over the vowel.

long vowels:      í      é      á      ó      ú

short vowels:    i      e      a      o      u

In English, we also have long and short vowels but the difference is indicated by double letters or by other combinations of vowel letters or by the single or double consonants which follow.

<u>long vowels:</u>	<u>English equivalent</u>
í <u>sí</u>	sheep
é <u>sé</u>	pay
á <u>tá</u>	thaw
ó <u>nó</u>	hoe
ú <u>sú</u>	zoo
 <u>short vowels:</u>	
i <u>sin</u>	it
e <u>te</u>	bet
a <u>hata</u> *	
o <u>post</u>	son / sun
u <u>cupán</u>	book

\*For speakers of Canadian English, this sound is a bit of a problem. It's like the o in **hot** or **job** as Americans pronounce it. It's somewhere between the o in **top** and the a in **hat** but not really either.

The following combinations represent long sounds:

ae	=	é
ao	=	í or é
omh	=	ó
umh	=	ú
eo	=	ó
aoi	=	í

Other vowels not marked with the síneadh fada are considered long by position:

i+á	=	íá [ee-aw]	<u>fiáin</u>
i+ó	=	íó [ee-oh]	<u>sióg</u>
u+á	=	úá [oo-aw]	<u>fuáil</u>
u+ó	=	úó [oo-oh]	<u>ruóg</u>

Any vowel written short (without the stroke) may be pronounced long before:

ll nn rr m rd

The vowel **a** is routinely pronounced as long before these clusters of consonants:

a + rd	garda
a + rl	tharla
a + rn	cearnóg
a + rr	fearr, barr

The letters **i** and **u** when followed by **a** represent a long vowel followed by a muttered vowel similar to the **a** in English about.

bia = [bee-uh]

rua = [roo-uh]

The combinations **ui** or **oi** at the beginning of a word are pronounced **i**. The **oi** may also have the sound of the **e** in **bet**.

uisce = ishkuh

oifig = if-fig or effig

The combinations **óí** and **iú** and **eo** are pronounced **í**, **ú**, and **ó** respectively.

oíche

Iúil

eolas

Short vowels combined with **-gh**, **-dh** represent an 'eye' sound:

staighre = steye-ruh

Tadhg = tieyeg

laghdú = lie-doo

The combinations **abh**, **obh**, **ogh**, are pronounced wike the **ow** in the English word **how**.

abhainn = ow-ing

cabhair = cow-air

foghlaim = fowl-limm

Unwritten vowels which sound like the **a** in **about** or the **i** in **it**, are inserted between:

r		m
l	and	b
n		bh
		g

For example: gorm = gor-im  
borb = bor-ib

balbh	=	bal-iv
leanbh	=	lan-niv
tolg	=	tol-ig
ainm	=	an-im
Alba	=	al-i-buh

A spelling rule of Irish states that a medial consonant must be flanked by harmonized vowels, that is, slender on either side, or broad on either side. E and I are the slender vowels, A, O, U are the broad vowels. The rule is stated leathan le leathan agus caol le caol. This means that on occasion vowels are inserted to indicate the pronunciation of the consonant without representing a vowel sound in themselves.

Let's look at a few examples to see how the system works.

*ceol* = kYol The 'e' after the 'c' serves to indicate that the c is slender. Only the o represents a vowel sound.

*luí* = The u indicates that the l is **broad** that is, like the second l in level. There is no u sound.

*béal* = The a here merely indicates that the l is **broad**. It does not represent a vowel sound.

*díol* = The o indicates a **broad l**.

*léine* = The i before the n is inserted to respect the spelling rule 'caol le caol'; no i is pronounced.

*fáil* = The i is inserted to indicate a **slender 'l'**.

*píosa ceoil* = Here, the o in *píosa* indicates that the s is **broad**, respecting the rule 'leathan le leathan'. The e in *ceoil* indicates a **slender c** and the i indicates a **slender l**. Only the o actually represents a vowel sound.

*buíoch* = The u indicates a **broad b** and the o indicates a

broad **ch** (like the **ch** in German *achtung*). Only the **í** indicates a vowel sound.

*múintcoir* = The two **i**'s here and the **e** merely indicate slender consonants, **n, t, r**. Only two vowels are pronounced here, the **ú** and the **o**.

*cuid* = A broad **c** and a slender **d**. The vowel pronounced is 'i'.

#### A note about nasalization:

Commentators on Irish phonetics highlight the fact that in some dialects, a vowel in conjunction with a nasal consonant, [m, n] may be very strongly nasalized, particularly among older speakers. In those cases, the **m** or **n** at the end of the syllable may disappear completely leaving only the nasal vowel. Thus the prepositional pronoun **dom** may sound like the French **d'un**. Commentators also point out that this degree of nasalization is normally absent among younger speakers.

#### Phonetic transformations: *séimhiú* and *urú*

**1. Séimhiú** or lenition (aspiration) in English, is the process whereby a consonant sound is 'softened'. In phonetic terms, what it means is that a **stop** consonant becomes fricative and a **fricative** becomes an **aspirate**. In writing, this is indicated by placing an **h** after the initial consonant, or the consonant in question. In the old script, it was indicated by a dot above the letter.

This means the following transformations are made:

- b + h = bh** [pronounced **v** with **i** or **e**, **w** with **a, o, u**.]
- c + h = ch** [when **slender**, like **h** in **he**, when **broad** like German **ch** as in **achtung**]
- d + h = dh** [like **y** before **i, e**, like **g** made while yawning]



before a,o,u.]

<b>f + h =</b>	<b>fh</b> [mute/ silent]
<b>g + h =</b>	as for <b>dh</b>
<b>m + h =</b>	<b>mh</b> [as for <b>bh</b> ]
<b>p + h =</b>	<b>ph</b> [like <i>f</i> ]
<b>s + h =</b>	<b>sh</b> [like English <i>h</i> ]
<b>t + h =</b>	<b>th</b> [like English <i>h</i> ]

For example,

<b>bád</b>	becomes <b>bhád</b> [wad]
<b>bia</b>	<b>bhia</b> [vee-uh]
<b>cat</b>	<b>chat</b> [hat]
<b>dochtúir</b>	<b>dhochtúir</b> [gohtoor]*
<b>fáil</b>	<b>fháil</b> [oil]
<b>gúna</b>	<b>ghúna</b> [goo-nuh]*
<b>dia</b>	<b>dhia</b> [ye-uh]
<b>geall</b>	<b>gheall</b> [yawl]
<b>mín</b>	<b>mhín</b> [veen]
<b>maith</b>	<b>mhaith</b> [wawh]
<b>pól</b>	<b>phól</b> [foal]

seomra            sheomra [hyoemra]

teach             theach [hyach]

\*Remember that the **g** here is made while yawning.

**2. Urú** or eclipsis is the process whereby the initial consonant is replaced by another consonant. By this, voiced stops become nasal, voiceless stops become voiced, voiceless fricatives become voiced. This means the following:

b is eclipsed by m = mbord. Pronounced mord.

c is eclipsed by g = gcarr. Pronounced garr.

d is eclipsed by n = ndia. Pronounced nia.

f is eclipsed by bh = bhfuinneog. Pronounced  
winneog.

g is eclipsed by n = ngúna. Pronounced ngúna.\*

- The **n** which eclipses a **g** is pronounced like the **ng** in song.

p is eclipsed by b = bParas. Pronounced baras.

t is eclipsed by d = dteach. Pronounced deach.

n is prefixed to a word beginning with a vowel. n-úll.

From this it can be seen that certain consonants never undergo lenition (séimhiú) -- l, n, r, and others never undergo eclipsis (urú) -- l, m, n, r, s.

### **Stress**            (*An t-Aiceann*)

As a general rule, the stressed syllable is the first syllable. The Christian Brothers' New Irish Grammar describes three

patterns in word stress, each of which was originally peculiar to specific dialect regions. With the spread of these speakers to cities and other regions, with radio and T.V. broadcasts, a mixing of these patterns has occurred so that you must be prepared to recognize all three of them, or to accept combinations of them in speakers.

**Pattern 1:**

Heavy stress is placed on the **first syllable only**. All other short vowels are reduced to the 'schwa' vowels found in it and about.

**Examples of pattern 1:**

athair cuirim dúnaim gúna eolas múinteoir

**Pattern 2:**

The heavy stress is placed on the **first** syllable and a **secondary** stress is placed on any long vowel or diphthong in another syllable. This pattern is similar to English where in a word like **se**cretary, the primary stress is placed on the first syllable, **SE**cretary, while a secondary stress is placed on the next to last syllable, **SE**cretary.

**Examples of pattern 2:** (the main stress is in bold print)

bachlóg bádóirí caisleán fuinneog scríbhneoirí

**Pattern 3:**

Equal stress is given to the first syllable and any other syllable with a long vowel or diphthong.

**Examples of pattern 3:**

These words may be pronounced with equal stress on all long

syllables as well as the first one, but don't be surprised if any one of the long syllables is given prominence. This may vary from region to region, person to person.

bachlóg bádóirí caisleán fuinneog

The following list of words given in the Christian Brothers Grammar on page 3 are routinely stressed on the second syllable:

abhaile abhus aduaidh amach amárach amháin  
 amuigh amú anall aneas aniar anocht anoir  
 anois anonn anseo ansin ansiúd araon aréir arís  
 atá atáim atáimid atáthar cathain cibé iníon  
 inné inniu isteach istigh laistear laistiar laistigh  
 lasbhus lasmuigh lastall monuar trathnóna  
 pianó tobac

#### Nota bene:

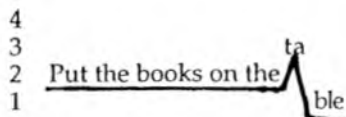
Stress patterns will pose a problem for English speakers since in English, long vowels can never be found in an unstressed syllable or a secondary stressed position. You will be tempted to stress the long vowels where they should not be stressed or you will reduce the vowel to a short one in an unstressed syllable. Likewise, the temptation is there to lengthen a short vowel in a stressed syllable.

#### Rhythm and intonation

In O'Cuiv's study of the Irish of West Muskerry County Cork and in de Bhaldraithe's Gaeilge Chois Fhairrge, the basic rhythm

described is quite different from that used in English. In English, the basic pattern of sentences is described by the following chart. Speakers begin at level two, hold the tone more or less steady throughout the breath group, rise to level three on the last stressed syllable and then drop in the next syllable to level one.

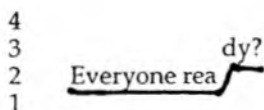
E.g.



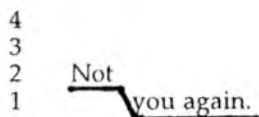
This is the normal pattern of English, for statements and for questions phrased with question words or inversions. Emphasis or excitement or exclamations are indicated by rising to level 4 before descending to level 1.

Questions not marked by question words use a pattern in which the speaker raises the tone to level three and remains there:

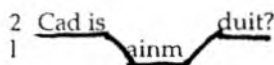
E.G.



Finally, a pattern which indicates exhaustion or boredom. The speaker drops from level two to level one without the rise to level three.



The rhythm of spoken Irish lacks this dramatic rising and falling found in English. There are basically two levels of tone, levels 2 and 1. The rhythm of Irish is a falling intonation followed by a rise, that is to say, the diagram would be reversed giving something like this:



Since questions in Irish are regularly indicated by the presence of an interrogative particle or word of some sort, the contrast found in English between marked and unmarked questions is lacking in the intonation. The rhythm Irish speakers give English reflects the different intonation pattern of Irish. You should be careful to avoid the dramatic rise and fall typical of a sentence ending in English.

### Elision

In the normal flow of speech, the following things happen as a matter of course: vowels are merged, words run together. This is especially true when the same vowel occurs twice or three times in a row, or when a long vowel ending a word precedes a short vowel beginning the next word.

E.g.    tá a fhios    =    tá-íos  
          tá áthas    =    táthas  
          tá a athair =    tá athair

Unstressed words are often muttered; the definite article 'an' or the interrogative particle 'an' are usually reduced to a grunted 'a', as is the particle 'ag' or the word 'agus' which is often reduced to a mere 's' sound.

E.g.    Tá sé ag an doras.    =    ag a'doras  
          Tá sé ag dul abhaile =    a'dul  
          Triocho is seacht    =    the is is merged with seacht

Often, the unstressed vowel at the end of a word is muttered, even dropped. As well, written consonants sometimes disappear in conversation having been 'assimilated' by or merged with a neighbouring sound. For example, the 'd' in Pádraig is usually dropped giving Páraig, or the t in taitníonn is merged with the 'n' giving tainíonn. In fagtha, the voiced 'g' is pronounced 'k' because of the voiceless 'th' giving faka.

Cleachtadh

1. Read the following words:

luí	fear	Pádraig	Lá
bord	árasán	athair	mise
cónaí	eolas	cathaoir	bean
oíche	maith	bileog	uimhir
oifig	mac léinn	dalta	rúnaí
oifig an phoist	Domhnach	dona	inniu
peann luaidhe	ainm	rothar	hata
anseo	Corcaigh	i gCorcaigh	suigh síos
mo sheoladh	Peadar	Sinéad	tuigim
na cláracha	ní thuigim	deirfiúr	mo chuid
dhá bhliain	príomh	dubh	daor
suipéar	giorra	póca	seoladh
carr	mo charr	ár gcarr	leahbar
nuachtán	conas	Luimneach	i dToronto
Baile Átha Cliath		Gaillimh	i nGaillimh
sráid	le do thoil	go deas	duine
teaghlach	leanbh óg	againn	comhrá
mo theaghlach	taitneamhach	tuisceanach	ag a lón

2. Read the following sentences.

Tá Máire ina cónaí i Mericeá.

Tá áthas orm bualadh leat.

Is mise do chomharsa nua.

Tá sé fuar inniu.

An bhfuil an Ghaeilge deacair, dar leat?

Cén tsli bheatha atá agat?



Áine ní Chonaill is ainm di.

As Nua Eabhrac é.

Tá duine as Mericeá i mo rang.

Tá Cáit ocht mbliana d'aois.

Cheannaigh Seosamh rothar nua aréir.

Cé leis a bhí tú ag caint?

Leathdhosaen oisrí úra ar leaba oighir.

Pióg úll le huachtar nó uachtar reoite.

Beidh anraith muisiriúin agam ar dtús agus ansin ba  
mhaith liom sicín rósta agus bagún, le do thoil.

Tá Seán ag foghlaim Gaeilge le beagnach trí bliana anuas.

Rinne mé cúrsa ar dtús i mBaile Átha Cliath agus d'éirigh  
go maith liom ansin.

Is é an rud a chonaic mé ar an mbóthar.

Cuir isteach an t-ubh, an salann agus an siúcra agus measc  
iad go láidir.

Cá mbeidh tú ag dul an tseachtain seo?

Tá an tOireachtas ar siúl i gCluain Dolcáin. Seo an clár don  
Luan.

Níl gearán ar bith agam.

Cad faoi sin?

Labhair liom fútsa.

Ceapaim go bhfuil an banc dúnta.

Tá slaghdán uirthi.

3. Review the sentences and/or words in the above exercises finding examples of the following:

a) unmarked, long vowels.

b) lenition (séimhiú)

c) eclipsis (urú)

d) places where elision can occur.

e) un-written vowels

f) vowels serving only to indicate a slender consonant.

g) vowels serving only to indicate a broad consonant.

4. Practice reading this dialogue. To improve your pronunciation, read dialogues over and over until they come quite naturally. It is a good idea to memorize dialogues. This way, the sounds and structures are more quickly internalized and automatic.

*Gaeilgeoir:* Conas tá ag éirí leat sa Ghaeilge?

*Foghlaimoír:* Réasúnta maith, ach tá sé mall go leor.

*Gaeilgeoir:* Cén fhad atá tú á foghlaim?

*Foghlaimoír:* Le dhá bhliain anuas.

*Gaeilgeoir:* Cad é an rud is deacra sa Ghaeilge?

*Foghlaimoír:* Tá an litriú deacair go leor agus tá an séimhiú agus an t-urú cuíosach deacair freisin.

*Gaeilgeoir:* Agus cad é an rud is fusa?

*Foghlaimoír:* Níl aon rud an-fhurasta, i ndáiríre. Bíonn ort oibriú go dian chun teanga a fhoghlaim.

(O'Sé: Teach yourself Irish p. 189)

**Nótaí**

Nótaí

Nótaí



**A list of works used to prepare this leaflet**

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- Ó' Sé, Diarmuid and Joseph Sheils. **Irish: A complete course for beginners**. Chicago: National Textbook Company, 1994.
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