

Irish Lesson 11

PRONUNCIATION

The pair of letters "ea" within a word or at a word end often gets an (a) sound like that in the English word "hat". Examples: fear (far), man; bean (ban), woman; leat (lat), with you; is ea (sha), it is; ní hea (nee HA), it is not.

At the beginning of a word, the "ea" often gets the (ah) sound in the English word "psalm". Examples: eagla (AH-gluh), fear; eaglais (AH-glish), church; each (ahk*), horse.

Sometimes "ea" is pronounced (ou), as in English "out", when it is inside a word.

Examples: ceann (kyoun) head; leabhar (LOU-wuhr), book; gleann (gloun), glen; seabhac (shouk), hawk.

If in an unaccented syllable, "ea" is usually pronounced (uh). Examples: seisean (SHESH-uhn), he (emphatic); aingeal (ANG-uhl), angel.

We will continue to give you the pronunciation guide for all new words and most of the exercises, but you will gradually develop ability to pronounce words by drawing on your experience with similarly spelled words, so that after a time you will not depend on the pronunciation guide.

REFLEX EXPRESSIONS

Here are several more expressions that you should learn for quick use in conversation and thought.

B'fhéidir (BAY*-dir), Perhaps.

Gan amhras (guh-n OU-ruhs), Without doubt.

Fan go bhfeicfidh mé (fahn goh VEK-hee may*), Wait till I see.

Is maith é sin (is MAH ay* shin), That's good.

Notice that the second "f" in "bhfeicfidh" is pronounced like an "h". This letter "f" indicates the future tense.

GRAMMAR

Last week we learned how to say that a person or thing is in a general class. An example:

Is seomra é (is SHOHM-ruh ay*), It is a room.
Here are the basic forms for this:

Is scoláire mé (is skuh-LAW*-re may*), I am a student.

Is scoláire tú (is skuh-LAW*-re too), You are a student.

Is scoláire é (is skuh-LAW*-re ay*), He is a student.

Is scoláire í (is skuh-LAW*-re ee), She is a student.

Is scoláirí sinn (is skuh-LAW*-ree shin), We are students.

Is scoláirí sibh (is skuh-LAW*-ree shiv), You (plural) are students

Is scoláirí iad (is skuh-LAW*-ree EE-uhd), They are students.

VOCABULARY

Masculine nouns

dinnéar (DIN-yay*r), dinner
Im, an t-im (im, un tim), butter, the butter
siúcra (SHOOK-ruh), sugar
fo-chupán (FOH-k*upaw*n), saucer
ith, ag ithe (i, eg I-he), eat, eating
éist, ag éisteacht (ay*sht, eg AY*shtyahk*t), listen, listening

Feminine nouns

scoil, an scoil (skuhl, un skuhl), school, the school
subh, an tsubh (soov, un toov), jam, the jam
cathaoir, an cathaoir (KAH-heer, un K*AH-heer), chair, the chair
ól, ag ól (ohl, eg ohl) drink, drinking
milis (MIL-ish), sweet
dána (DAW*-nuh), bold

DRILL

Go through the basic forms for "is" (is), with:

dochtúir, dochtúirí (dohk*-TOO-ir, dohk*-TOO-IR-ee), doctor,
doctors

múinteoir, múinteoirí (moo-in-TYOHR, moo-in-TYOHR-ee),
teacher, teachers

péintéir, péintéirí (PAY*N-tay*r, PAY*N-tay*r-ee), painter,
painters

CONVERSATION

Máirín (maw*-REEN), Maureen: Tar isteach sa chistin agus
suigh síos (tahr is-TYAHK* suh HYISH-tin AH-guhs si
SHEE-uhs). Tá do dhinnéar ullamh (taw* duh YIN-yay*r

UL-uhv). Come into the kitchen and sit down. Your dinner is
ready.

Dónall (DOHN-uhl), Donald: Ach cá bhfuil Pádraigín? (ahk*
caw* vwil PAW*-dri-geen) Nach bhfuil sí abhaile ón scoil fós?
(nahk* vwil shee uh-VWAHL-e ohn skuhl fohs) But where is
Patricia? Isn't she home from school yet?

Máirín: Níl sí (neel shee). Níl a fhios agam cá bhfuil sí (neel is
uh GUHM kaw* vwil shee). She's not. I don't know where she
is.

Dónall: Tá gach rud ar an mbord, go cinnte, ach tá an fochupán
seo salach (taw* gahk* rud er un mohrd, goh KIN-te, ahk*
taw* un FOH-k* u-paw*n shuh suh-LAHK*). Everything's on
the table, certainly, but this saucer is dirty.

Máirín: Nigh é, mar sin (ni ay*, mahr shin). Tá mé an
ghnóthach (taw* may* AHN-gnoh-huhk*). Wash it then. I'm
very busy.

Dónall: Ó, tá Pádraigín ag teacht anois (oh, taw*
PAW*-dri-geen uh tyahk*t uh-NISH). Tá sí ag siúl trí gach áit
fhliuch ar an tsráid. (taw* shee uh shool tree gahk* aw*t lyuk*
er un traw*d). Oh, Patricia's coming now. She's walking
through every wet place on the street.

Máirín: Agus í gan a buataisí! (AH-guhs ee guhn uh
BOO-ti-shee) And she without her boots!

Notes: In Irish, "an-" before an adjective means "very". It
usually aspirates the next consonant, as in "an-fhliuch"
(AHN-lyuk*), very wet. Accent is usually on the "an-" prefixed
to the word.

Irish Lesson 12

The letter pair "eo" usually represents the sound "oh". Hold it somewhat longer than if it were in an English word, and do not add the short (oo) sound in English (oh). Examples of "eo" beginning a word: eolas (OH-luhs), knowledge; eorna (OHR-nuh), barley.

If a consonant comes before the "eo", the consonant gets its slender sound, and there is often an audible (y) sound, between consonant and "eo". Examples, with slender consonants you learned to pronounce in Lessons 1 and 2: ceo (kyoh), mist; deo (dyoh), end; geoin (GYOH-in), hum; teo (tyoh), warmth. Other examples: beo (byoh), living; feoil (FYOH-il), meat; meon (myohn), mind; neodrach (NYOH-druh*), neutral.

If an "s" comes before the "eo", no (y) sound is heard, only the (sh) of slender "s". Examples: seoid (SHOH-id), jewel; seomra (SHOHM-ruh), room; seó (shoh), show. Do not confuse "seó" with "seo" (shuh), meaning "this". "Seo" is an exception to the general (oh) pronunciation for "eo". "Deoch" (dyuhk*), a drink, is also an exception.

The word "seomra" is another exception in parts of Ireland, where it is pronounced (SHUHM-ruh). In general, the (oh) sound in "seomra" is not held as long as in most "eo" examples.

GRAMMAR

To say that a person or object is not in some general class, use these forms:

Ní dochtúir mé (nee dohk*-TOO-ir may*), I am not a doctor.

Ní dochtúir tú (nee dohk*-TOO-ir too), You are not a doctor.

Ní dochtúir é (nee dohk*-TOO-ir ay*), He is not a doctor.

Ní dochtúir í (nee dohk*-TOO-ir ee), She is not a doctor.

Ní dochtúir sinn (nee dohk*-TOO-ir shin), We are not doctors.

Ní dochtúirí sibh (nee dohk*-TOO-ree shiv), You (plural) are not doctors.

Ní dochtúirí iad (nee dohk*-TOO-ree EE-uhd), They are not doctors.

The questions connected with this are:

An dochtúir mé? (un dohk*-TOO-ir may*) Am I a doctor?, etc., and: Nach dochtúir mé? (nahk* dohk*-TOO-ir may*), Am I not a doctor? Etc.

To answer these questions, the forms are:

Is dochtúir mé, or:

Is ea (sha), It is so, I am.

The negative answer is:

Ní hea (nee HA), It is not so, I am not. A longer answer is: Ní hea, ach múinteoir (nee HA, ahk* moo-inTYOHR), I am not, but I am a teacher.

VOCABULARY

Masculine nouns

páiste (PAW*SH-te), child
páistí (PAW*SH-tee), children
éireannaigh (AY*R-uh-nee), Irish persons
Meiriceánaigh (mer-uh-KAW*-nee), Americans

dlíodóir (dlee-uh-DOH-ir), lawyer
dlíodóirí (dlee-uh-DOH-i-ree), lawyers
feirmeoir (fer-im-OH-ir) farmer
feirmeoirí (fer-im-OH-i-ree) farmers

Feminine nouns

banaltra, an bhanaltra (BAHN-uhl-truh, un VAHN-uhl-truh),
nurse, the nurse
banaltraí (BAHN-uhl-tree), nurses
buatais, an bhuatais (BOO-tish, un VOO-tish), boot, the boot
buataisí (BOO-ti-shee), boots
garbh (GAHR-ruhv), rough
dona (DUH-nuh), bad; (as weather)
go leor (goh lohr), enough
ar dtús (er DOOS), at first, first
trom (truhm), heavy

DRILL

Go through "is", substituting all the nouns above except "buatais", in the following pattern: An páiste mé?, Ní hea, ach éireannach. An páiste tú? Ní hea, ach Meiriceánach. An páiste é? Ní hea, ach dlíodóir. Etc. Continue to: An páistí iad? Ní hea, ach Meiriceánaigh.

Then change to: An éireannach mé? Ní hea, ach Meiriceánach. Etc. In each sentence, make sure that you use the proper number, either singular or plural.

CONVERSATION

Pádraigín (PAW*-dri-geen): Dia daoibh, a mham agus a dhaid (DEE-uh-geev, uh vwahm AH-guhs uh gahd). Hello mom and dad.

Máirín (maw*-REEN): Dia duit, a stór (DEE-uh git, uh stohr). Conas tá tú? (KUN-uhs taw* too) Hello, dear. How are you?

Pádraigín: Tá mé go maith (taw* may* goh mah). Lá garbh sa scoil inniú (law* GAHR-ruhv suh skuhl in-YOO). Céard é sin ar an mbord? (kay*rd ay* shin er un mohrd) I'm well. Rough time in school today. What's that on the table?

Máirín: Is subh í, ach bain diot an cóta agus na bróga, ar dtús (is soov ee, ahk* bwín DEE-uht un KOH-tuh AH-guhs nuh BROHG-uh er DOOS). Tá do chosa fliuch (taw* duh K*UH-suh flyuk*). It's jam, but take off the coat and shoes first. Your feet are wet.

Pádraigín: Tá an aimsir dona go leor (taw* un EYEM-sheer DUH-nuh goh lohr), The weather's bad enough.

Dónall (DOH-nuhl): Suas an staighre leat, agus ná bí ag piocadh ar an arán (SOO-uhs un STEYE-ruh lat, AH-guhs naw* bee uh PIK-uh er un uh-RAW*N). Up the stairs with you, and don't be picking at the bread.

Máirín: Cá bhfuair mé an páiste sin? (kaw* VOO-ir may* un PAW*SH-te shin) Where did I get that child?

Note: In the word "aimsir", the first syllable approximately rhymes with the English word "chime" not with the phrase "buy 'em".

Irish Lesson 13

This week we return to consonants. You learned in Lesson 2 that each Irish consonant has two sounds:

A broad sound if the nearest vowel in the word is "a", "o", or "u".

A slender sound if the nearest vowel in the word is "e", or "i".

Two closely related consonants, "p" and "b", are a good example of this. They are closely related because they are pronounced in the same way except that the vocal cords are vibrated for the "b" but not for the "p". You can feel the vibration or humming in your vocal cords as you start to say "bet" but not as you start to say "pet".

To pronounce broad "b" or "p", extend your lips much farther than for the English sounds and round the opening. Then pronounce the letter. Try: *bád*, *bó*, *bun* (bun), *bláth* (blaw*), *blúire* (BLOO-i-re), *bróg*, *brú*, *brád*, *pá*, *post*, *punt* (punt), *plúir* (PLOO-ir), *práta* (PRAW*-tuh).

For the slender sound of "b" and "p", spread the lips somewhat, as if you were beginning to smile. Try: *bean*, *beir* (ber), *bí* (bee), *bith* (bi), *bliain* (BLEE-in), *breá* (bir-RAW*), *bris* (brish). Then try "b" next to "eo", which usually gets a (yoh) sound: *beo* (byoh), *alive*.

You can now realize the clear difference in Irish between "brách" (braw*k*), meaning "ever", and "breá" (bir-RAW*), meaning "fine". "Erin go bragh" is actually a badly anglicized form of "éire go brách", meaning "Ireland forever".

In going from a broad "b" or "p" sound to a slender vowel such as "i", you will naturally make a sound somewhat like English "w". Try: *buí* (bwee), *bain* (bwin). Notice that the "u" and "a" in these words are there chiefly to tell you to make the broad "b" sound instead of the slender, as in *bí* (bee), *beir* (ber). Last, try: *buíochas* (BWEE-uhk*-huhs), *thanks*.

The sounds for "m" are akin to those for "b", except that air is expelled through the nose for "m". Protrude and round the lips, then try: *mó* (moh), *mór* (mohr), *má* (maw*), *mála* (MAW*-luh) *múch* (mook*), *múin* (MOO-in), *mná* (muh-MAW*), *mura* (MUR-ruh).

For slender "m", hold the lips as for slender "b" and "p" Try: *mín* (meen), *minic* (MIN-ik), *méad* (may*d), *Meiriceá* (MER-i-kaw*).

VOCABULARY

Masculine nouns

bricfeasta (brik-FAS-tuh), *breakfast*

lón (lohn), *lunch*

tae (tay*), *tea*

trí bhéile bidh (tree VAY*L-uh bee) *three meals*

práta, *na prátaí* (PRAW*-tuh, nuh PRAW*-tee), *potato*, *the potatoes*

Feminine nouns

feoil, *an fheoil* (FYOH-il, un OH-il), *meat*

mias, *an mhias*, *na miasa* (MEE-uhs, un VEE-uhs, nuh MEE-uhs-uh) *dish*, *the dishes*

Verbs

faigh (feye), *get*

cuir (kir), put
ith (i), eat
téigh (tay*), go
nigh (ni), wash

Other words

réidh (ray*), ready

DRILL

To help you learn the difference between "is" and "tá", do the following drill, either alone or with classmates:

1. Ask "Céard é seo? (kay*rd ay* shuh), pointing to an object or person mentioned in the Vocabularies of the previous lessons. Use drawings if necessary.

2. Answer "Is ____ é", or "Is ____ í". Use some adjectives, too.

3. Ask "Nach ____ é?"

4. Answer "Ní hea, ach ____." (nee HA, ahk*)

5. Ask: "Cá bhfuil sé?", or "Cá bhfuil sí?", meaning "Where is it?"

6. Answer "Tá sé ____." Use phrases from past vocabularies.

Repeat this for at least ten objects or persons. Some words are: arán, feoil, bainne, uisce, cupán, spúnóg, fear, bean, cailín, páiste, feirmeoir, dochtúir, lámh, súil.

REFLEX EXPRESSIONS

Here are additional expressions that you should learn for quick use in conversation and thought.

Ceart go leor (kart goh lohr), Right enough

Isteach leat anois (ish-TYAHK* lat uh-NISH), In with you now.

Ar chor ar bith (er HUHR er BI), at all. (Put at sentence end.)

CONVERSATION

Seán: An bhfuil an bricfeasta réidh? (un vwil un brik-FAS-tuh ray*) Is the breakfast ready?

Bríd: Tá, ach níl na miasa ar an mbord fós (taw*, ahk* neel nuh MEE-uhs-uh er un mohrd fohs) It is, but the dishes are not on the table yet. Cuir ar an mbord iad (kir er un mohrd EE-uhd). Put them on the table.

Seán: Déanfaidh mé sin (DAY*N-hee may* shin). I'll do that.

Bríd: go raibh maith agat (gu-ruh MAH huh-guht). Tá mé an-ghnóthach anois (taw* may* AHN-gnoh-huhk* uh-NISH). Faigh spúnóg mhór dom (feye spun-OHG vwohr duhm), más é do thoil é (MAW* shay* duh HIL ay*). Thank you. I am very busy now. Get me a big spoon, please.

Seán: Seo duit é (shuh git ay*). Here it is.

Bríd: Go raibh maith agat (gu-ruh MAH huh-guht). Cad ba mhaith leat le haghaidh an dinnéir? (kahd buh vwah lat le HEYE-ee un din-YAY*R) Thank you. What would you like for dinner?

Seán: Ba mhaith liom feoil, prátaí, agus cabáiste (buh vwah

luhm FYOH-il, PRAW*-tee, AH-guhs kuh-BAW*SH-te). I would like meat, potatoes, and cabbage. Nach maith an dinnéar é sin? (nahk* mah un din-YAY*R ay* shin) Isn't that a good dinner?

Bríd: Nach agatsa atá an ceart? (nahk* uh-GUHT-suh uh-TAW* un kart) Aren't you the one who's right?

Irish Lesson 14

Irish has two sounds for the letter "n". If "n" starts a word and is followed by a broad vowel--"a", "o", or "u"--then "n" gets its broad sound To learn this sound, place the front part of the tongue along the mouth top, with the tongue end touching the inside of the upper front teeth. Then pronounce "n". Try: ná (naw*), nach (nach*), náire (NAW*-re), nó (noh), nua (NOO-uh), nóis (NOH-ish), Nollaig (NUHL-ig).

If "n" starts a word and is followed by a slender vowel--"e" or "i"--then "n" gets its slender sound. Place the front of the tongue on the hard ridge in the roof of the mouth behind your upper front teeth and pronounce "n". It will have a faint (yuh) sound at the end as you go to the rest of many words. try: néall (nyay*1), nead (nyad), neamh (nyav), ní (nee), níl (neel), neodrach (NYOH-druhk*).

In pronouncing slender "n", do not pronounce a separate (yuh) sound. For example, don't pronounce "néall" as (nyuh-AY*L), but as (nyay*1). In "níl", the faint (yuh) sound disappears in the (eel).

If "n" is inside or at the end of a word and has "a", "o", or "u" near it, pronounce it more like an English "n". Examples: bean (ban), bán (baw*n), lón (lohn), dúnadh (DOON-uh).

This gives you most of the pronunciation for "n". One more sidelight will show how noticeable is the difference between broad and slender sounds in Irish. In Lesson 10 you learned that "aoi" is pronounced (ee), as is "í" (ee). If "n" is before "aoi", the "n" gets its broad sound, made as described in the first paragraph above. Say "naoi" (nee) and then "ní" (nee) with a slender "n", described in the second paragraph.

There is a clear difference. Remember that our simple pronunciation guide does not show this difference, so you must learn to watch for the vowel next to the consonant, as Irish people do when they read Irish.

GRAMMAR

Before we return to "tá" next week, we will look at another use for "is" (is). Irish speakers often make a statement stronger by "is". For example, instead of saying "Tá an lá go breá" (taw* un law* goh bir-RAW), meaning "the day is fine", they will say "Nach breá an lá é?" (nahk* bir-RAW* un law* ay*), Isn't it a fine day? The answer is "Is breá, go deimhin" (is bir-RAW* goh DEYE-in), It's fine, certainly.

Here are some examples to repeat until you understand how the Irish do this:

Nach fliuch an aimsir í?" (nahk* flyuk* un EYEM-sheer ee)

Is fliuch, go deimhin (is flyuk* goh DEYE-in), It is indeed wet.

Is deas an cailín í (is das un kah-LEEN ee), She's a pretty girl.

Is deas, go deimhin, She is indeed pretty.

Is mór an fear é (is mohr un far ay*), He's a big man.

Is mór, gan amhras (is mohr, guhn OU-ruhs), He's big, without a doubt.

Nach fada an bóthar é seo? (nahk* FAH-duh un BOH-uh r ay* shuh), Isn't this a long road?

Is fada, go cinnte (is FAH-duh, goh KIN-te), It's long, certainly.

Ní dona an lá é (nee DUH-nuh un law* ay*), It's not a bad day.

Ní dona, ar chor ar bith (nee DUH-nuh, er HUHR er BI), it's not bad at all.

This last sentence pair shows you how to disagree with the original statement or question. For example:

Nach fuar an lá é? Ní fuar, ar chor ar bith, ach té.

Note that in all sentences above, the verb "tá" could have been used, as in "Tá an aimsir fliuch." Irish speakers like variety, however, and often think that "Tá an aimsir fliuch" will sound flat and dull. They say "Nach fliuch an aimsir í?" instead.

CONVERSATION

Bríd (breed): Seo duit do uibreacha agus do bhagún (shuh git duh IV-ruh-huh AH-guhs duh vwuh-GOON). tá an bagún beagán dóite, ach ná bac leis (taw* un buh-GOON beg-AW*N DOH-i-te, ahk* naw* bahk lesh). Here are your eggs and bacon. The bacon is a little burned, but don't worry about it.

Seán (shaw*n): Is cuma liom (is KUM-uh luhm). Tá an caife te,

ar aon chuma (taw* un KAH-fe te, er AY*N K*UM-uh). Cuir braon bainne air, mas é do thoil é (kir BRAY*-uhn BAHN-ye er, MAW* shay* duh HIL-ay*). I don't care. The coffee is hot anyway. Put a drop of milk in it, please.

Bríd: Déanfaidh mé sin (DYAY*N-hee may* shin). I'll do that.

Seán: Ba mhaith liom sú oráiste (buh VWAH luhm soo oh-RAW*SH-te), mas é do thoil é. I would like orange juice, please.

Bríd: seo duit gloine de (shuh git GLIN-e de). Here's a glass of it.

Seán: Go raibh maith agat, a Bhríd (guh ruh MAH huh-guht, uh vreed). Anois, rud amháin eile (uh-NISH, rud uh-WAW*-in EL-e. Cuir chugam píosa arán (kir HOO-uhm PEES-uh uh-RAW*-in), mas é do thoil é. Thank you, Bridget. Now, one other thing. Pass me a piece of bread, please.

Bríd: Seo duit é, agus bíodh im agat, freisin (AH-guhs BEE-ohk* im uh-GUHT FRESH-in). Here it is, and have butter, too.

Seán: Beidh mé chomh ramhar le muc (beg may* hoh ROU-wuhr le muk). I will be as fat as a pig.

Bríd: B'fhéidir (BAY*-dir). Perhaps.

Irish Lesson 15

PRONUNCIATION

The Letter "s" in Irish is sounded (s), as Americans pronounce

"s" in "sun", if the nearest vowel in the word is "a", "o", or "u". This is the broad "s". Try: sál (saw*1), saol (say*1), só (soh), solas (SUH-luhs), sú (soo), súil (SOO-il). If "s" is next to an "e" or an "i", pronounce it (sh), like the "sh" in English "shawl". This is the slender "s". Examples: sean (shan), séid (shay*d), seilide (SHEL-i-de), sín (sheen), siar (SHEE-uhr).

If another consonant is between the "s" and the "e" or "i", the broad sound may be heard. For example: smig (smig), spéir (spay*r), srian (SREE-uhn), stríoc (streek).

Remember that "is" is an exception. Always say (is), never (ish), and of course never (iz).

GRAMMAR

We return to "tá" this week, following your introduction to "is". Before we take up the new work, review "tá" quickly by reciting "tá mé, tá tú, etc. Níl mé, níl tú, etc. An bhfuil mé, an bhfuil tú, etc. Nach bhfuil mé, nach bhfuil tú, etc." Review lessons 4 to 6 if you have forgotten any of this. It is vital to know.

To say the equivalent of "I am reading" in Irish, we add a word called a verbal noun to "tá mé", with the preposition "ag", meaning "at", before the verbal noun. Learn these examples:

Tá mé ag léamh (taw* may* uh LAY*-uhv), I am reading.

Níl sé ag scríobh (neel shay* uh shkreev), He is not writing.

An bhfuil siad ag imeacht? (un vwil SHEE-uhd eg im-AHK*T), Are they departing?

Nach bhfuil tú ag éisteacht? (nahk* vwil too eg AY*SH-tyahk*t), Aren't you listening?

Pronounce the "ag" as (uh) before a verbal noun starting with a consonant, and as (eg) before a verbal noun starting with a vowel.

This grammar form serves as in English--to show that an action is going on at present. There is also a way, as in English, to say that an action takes place off and on but may not be going on now. To understand the difference, compare "I am walking" with "I walk".

A few verbs do not follow this pattern.. Irish is much like English in this. In Irish we say:

"I understand you", not "I am understanding you".

"I see it", not "I am seeing it".

"I hear him", not "I am hearing him".

The first part of a verbal noun nearly always looks and sounds somewhat like the imperative of the verb, although the verbal noun is usually longer and has an added syllable. From now on, learn the verb's imperative and verbal noun together, as in the vocabulary below.

The term "ag léamh" (uh LAY*-uhv) literally means "at reading". "I am reading a book" becomes "I am at reading of a book". The word "book" in this form takes a slightly different look and pronunciation from the one you have learned, (LOU-wuhr). It changes to "leabhair" (LOU-wir), the genitive case. We will introduce you to this by the phrase method, so

that you will have a good background and an inventory of examples by the time we begin studying how nouns change.

REFLEX EXPRESSIONS

Learn these expressions for quick use in thought and speech:

Más é do thoil é (MAW* shay* duh HIL ay*), Please.

Go raibh maith agat (gu-ruh MAH huh-guht), Thank you.

Fáilte romhat (FAW*L-tye ROH-uht), Welcome to you.

Go sabhála Dia sinn (goh suh-VWAW*-luh DEE-uh shin), May God save us.

VOCABULARY

téigh, ag dul (tay*, uh DUHL), go

tar, ag teacht (tahr, uh TYAHK*T), come

scríobh, ag scríobh (shkreev, uh SHKREEV), write

ith, ag ithe (i, eg I-he), eat

imigh, ag imeacht (IM-ee, ag im-AHK*T) depart, leave

ól, ag ól (ohl, eg OHL), drink

faigh, ag fáil (feye, uh FAW*-il), get

déan, ag déanamh (day*n, uh DAY*N-uhv) do, make

siúil, ag siúl (SHOO-il, uh SHOOL) walk

rith, ag rith (ri, uh RI) run

éist, ag éisteacht (ay*sht, eg AY*SH-tyahk*t) listen

foghlaim, ag foghlaim (FOU-lim, uh FOU-lim), learn

fan, ag fanacht (fahn, uh FAHN-uhk*t), wait

CONVERSATION

Diarmaid (DEER-mwid): A Dhóirín, tá sé ag éirí dorcha (uh GOH-i-reen, taw* shay* eg EYE-ree DUHR-uh-huh). Cá bhfuil Una? (kaw* vwil OON-uh) Jerry: Doreen, It's getting dark. Where is Una?

Dóirín (DOH-i-reen): Níl a fhios agam (neel is uh-GUHM) cad atá sí a dhéanamh (kahd taw* shee uh YAY*N-uhv). I don't know what she is doing. Fan nóiméad go bhfeicfidh mé (fahn NOH-may*d go VEK-hee may*) Wait a minute until I see. Go sabhála Dia sinn! (goh suh-VWAW*-luh DEE-uh shin) May God save us! Tá sí ag siúl amuigh i lár na sráide! (taw* shee uh SHOOL uh-MWEE i law*r nuh SRAW*-de) She's walking out in the middle of the street!

Diarmaid: Agus tá na gluaisteáin ag dul thairis (AH-guhs taw* nuh GLOOSH-taw*-in uh duhl HA-rish). And the autos are going past her. Téigh amach agus faigh í (tay* uh-MAHK* AH-guhs feye ee). Go out and get her.

Dóirín: Tá mé ag dul amach go díreach anois (taw* may* uh duhl uh-MAHK* goh dee-RAHK uh-NISH). I going out right

now. Nach díol trua mise? (nahk* DEE-uhl TROO-uh MISH-e). Isn't it an object of pity that I am?

Irish Lesson 16

PRONUNCIATION

The letter "f" in Irish is pronounced almost like the "f" in English, except that you must start with the inside of the lower lip against the edge of the upper front teeth. Then, if "a", "o" or "u" is the nearest vowel to the "f", move both lips out for the vowel sound. Examples: fá (faw*), fód (fohd), fuar (FOO-uhr), scríofa (SHKREE-fuh). This is the broad sound of "f".

Start the slender sound the same way, but draw the lower lip back a little to make the vowel sound. Try: fear (far), féin (fay*n), fill (fil), deifir (DE-fir), fliuch (flyuhk*).

In some cases "f" is pronounced (h). We will study this later.

VOCABULARY

Masculine nouns

solas (SUH-luhs), light
balla (BAHL-luh), wall
sorn (SOHR-ruhn), stove
cúisneoir (koosh-NYOH-ir), refrigerator
gloine (GLIN-e), glass
doirteal (DUHRT-uhl), sink
forc (fohrk), fork
fó-chupán (FOH-k*u-PAW*N), saucer
citeal (KIT-uhl), kettle
naipcín (nap-KEEN), napkin
pota (POHT-uh), pot

sconna (SKOHN-uh), faucet
éadach boird, an t-eadach boird (AY*-duhk*BWIRD, un TAY*-duhk*BWIRD), tablecloth, the tablecloth
oigheann, an t-oigheann (EYE-uhn, un TEYE-uhn), oven, the oven

Feminine nouns

scian, an scian (SHKEE-uhn), knife
síleáil, an tsíleáil (SHEEL-aw*-il, un TEEL-aw*-il), ceiling
cathaoir, an chathaoir (KAH-heer, un K*AH-heer), chair

Phrases

i lár na sráide (i LAW*R nuh SRAW*-de), in the middle of the street
ag ól bainne (eg OHL BAHN-ye), drinking milk
ag ól tae (eg OHL tay*), drinking tea
ag ól uisce (eg OHL ISH-ke), drinking water
ag ithe a bhricfeasta (eg I-he uh vrik-FAS-tuh), eating breakfast
Go hiontach (goh HOON-tuhk*), Great!

DRILL

We will try a vocabulary drill first, to help you learn the larger vocabulary that you are acquiring. Go to the kitchen and begin this drill for each object you can name:

Céard é seo? (kay*rd ay* shuh), What is this?
Or (Céard é sin? (shin), What is that?
Is ___ é. Tá an ___ anseo (un-SHUH), The ___ is here.

Continue for as many objects as you can name. If necessary, replace "anseo" by one of these:

ansin (un-SHIN), there; ar an mbord (er un mohrd), on the

table; ar an urlár (er un oor-LAW*R), on the floor; ar an mballa (er un MAHL-luh), on the wall.

The next drill is a mini-conversation drill. Do these short exercises alone or with another student. Repeat them several times to get the full benefit from them.

1. Cé atá ag teacht? (kay* taw* uh TYAHK*T), Who is coming?

Tá Séamas, an ea? (un A) Séamas is it? Is ea (sha), It is.

Nach bhfuil Brian ag teacht freisin? (FRESH-in), also.
ó, níl. Tá sé amuigh sa tsráid (uh-MWEE), He's out in the street.

2. Cé atá imeacht? (eg im-AHK*T), Who is leaving?

Tá Ruairí (ROH-i-ree) ag imeacht.

Nach bhfuil Seán ag imeacht freisin?

ó, níl. Tá sé sa seomra eile fós (suh SHOHM-ruh EL-e fohs),
He's still in the other room.

3. Cé atá ag ithe a bhricfeasta (eg I-he uh vrik-FAS-tuh), eating his breakfast

Liam, an ea? Is ea.

Nach bhfuil sé ag obair fós? (eg OH-bir), Isn't he at work yet?

Níl sé ag obair fós. Tá sé déanach (DAY*N-uhk), He's late.

4. Céard atá tú a dhéanamh? (uh YAY*N-uhv), What are you doing?

Tá mé ag déanamh báid (BAW*-id), I'm making a boat.

Bád, an ea? (baw*d, un A), A boat, is it? Is ea.

Nach maith an buachaill tú! (BOO-uhk*-il), Aren't you the good boy!

5. Cá bhfuil Seoirse ag siúl? (SHOHR-she uh SHOOL), Where is George walking?

Tá sé ag siúl ar an gcosán (er un guh-SAW*N), He's walking on the sidewalk.

Ar an gcosán, an ea? Is ea.

Maith an fear é! (mah un far ay*), He's a good man!

6. An bhfuil tú ag ól bainne? (eg ohl BAHN-ye), Are you drinking milk?

Níl mé ag ól bainne, ar chor ar bith (er HUHR er BI), not at all.
Céard atá tú ag ól, mar sin? (mahr shin), What are you drinking, then?

Tá mé ag ól uisce (ISH-ke), I am drinking water.

Uisce fuar, an ea? Is ea.

7. An bhfuil tú ag scríobh litreach? (uh shkreev LI-trahk*), Are you writing a letter?

Níl mé ag scríobh litreach anois (uh-NISH). Tá mé tuirseach (taw* may* toor-SHAHK*), I am tired.

Tuirseach, an ea? Is ea.

8. Cé atá ag fanacht amuigh? (uh fahn-uhk*t uh-MWEE), Who is waiting outside?

Nach bhfuil do mháthair amuigh ar an gcosán? (duh VWAW*-hir), Isn't your mother out on the sidewalk?

Má tá sí, abair léi teacht isteach (maw* taw* shee, AH-bir lay* tyahk*t ish-TYAHK*), If she is, tell her to come in.

Note: To tell someone to give an order to a man, say "Abair leis" (AH-bir lesh) and add a verbal noun, such as "teacht" or "dul". An example: Abair leis dul abhaile (uh-VWAHL-e), Tell him to come home.

Irish Lesson 17

PRONUNCIATION

You know the basics of pronunciation by now. Although you should be able to sound out most new words, we will continue to give you the pronunciation guide for all new words--and most of the old ones, too--for a few more lessons. We will also begin reviews to help you maintain your pronunciation if you have no speakers, records, or tapes available.

We will now begin to take up some of the details of pronunciation and some of the regional variations. First, the word "maith" (mah), good. The "th" at the end of the word means that the vowel sound of (ah) gets cut short, rather than running long as it if were (maaah).

We do the same in English sometimes. For example, when you say "ah" to indicate pleasant surprise, the sound is held for a much longer time than when you say "ah" to indicate disgust or impatience. In the second "ah", you cut the sound off short, as you do for the Irish word "maith". This cutting short of the sound for "th" also occurs inside words, usually at the end of a syllable before a vowel, as in: leathan (LA-huhn), wide; athair (A-hir), father. We will indicate where this happens from now on.

At the start of a word, "th" gets an (h) sound, like English "h". For example: tharla sé (HAHR-luh shay*), it happened.

"Maith" is pronounced (meye) in some parts of Ireland, and you must learn to listen for this. If a speaker says (goh MEYE), you

will know that it is the equivalent of the (go MAH) that you have learned. Regional differences exist in Ireland, as in the United States where, for example, the word "rifle" may be pronounced (REYE-fuhl), (RAH-fuhl) or (ROY-fuhl) along the Eastern seaboard alone.

GRAMMAR

Irish has no word for the verb "to have". Instead, Irish speakers say the equivalent of "it is at me" or "the book is at him". The preposition "ag" (eg), at, serves here. "A man has the book" becomes "Tá an leabhar ag fear" (taw* un LOU-wuhr eg far), the book is at a man.

This is very annoying at first to the average English speaker, because it requires him to rearrange his thought patterns slightly. With a little practice and drill, however, it will become second nature to you.

The preposition "ag" combines with "me", tú", and other pronouns to form the following, which you should learn now:

agam (uh-GUHM), at me
agat (uh-GUHT), at you
aige (eg-GE), at him
aici (a-KI), at her
againn (uh-GIN), at us
agaibh (uh-GIV), at you (plural)
acu (ah-KUH), at them

The term "ag an" (eg un) means "at the" and it often causes eclipsis. For example, "at the man" becomes "ag an bhfear" (eg un VAR). We will drill on this to make you fluent in the form.

VOCABULARY

Masculine Nouns

cúirtín (koo-TEEN), curtain
sáspan (SAW*S-puhn), saucepan
lampa (LAHM-puh), lamp
buicéad (bwi-KAY*D), bucket
crúscín (kroosh-KEEN), jug, pitcher
cófra (KOH-fruh), cupboard
buidéal (bwi-DAY*L), bottle

ciseán (ki-SHAW*N), basket; ciseán páipéir (paw*-PAY*-ir), wastebasket

Feminine Nouns

fuinneog, an fhuinneog (fwin-YOHG, un in-YOHG) window
scuab, an scuab (SKOO-uhb), broom, brush

Verbs

faigh, ag fáil (feye, uh FAW*-il), get
cuir, ag cur (kir, uh-KUHR), put
glan, ag glanadh (gluhn, uh GLUHN-uh), clean
tóg, ag tógáil (tohg, uh TOHG-aw*-il), take, lift
stad, ag stad (stahd), stop

DRILL

First, for "have":

Tá cupán agam (taw* ku-PAW*N uh-GUHM), I have a cup. Tá cupán agat (taw* ku-PAW*N uh-GUHT), You have a cup. Tá cupán aige (taw* ku-PAW*N eg-GE), He has a cup. Tá cupán aici (taw* ku-PAW*N a-KI), She has a cup. Tá cupán againn (taw* ku-PAW*N uh-GIN), We have a cup. Tá cupán agaibh (taw* ku-PAW*N uh- GIV), You (pl) have a cup. Tá cupán acu

(taw* ku-PAW*N ah- KUH), They have a cup.

Next, go through the negatives:

Níl cupán agam (neel ku-PAW*N uh-GUHM), I don't have a cup. Níl cupán agat (neel ku-PAW*N uh-GUHT), You don't have a cup. And so on.

Then the questions:

An bhfuil cupán agam? (un vwil ku-PAW*N uh-GUHM), have I a cup? And so on.

Finally, the negative questions:

Nach bhfuil cupán agam? (nahk* vwil ku-PAW*N uh-GUHM, Don't I have a cup? And so on.

You are now ready, after a short rest, for a progressive drill. Go through this form: Nach bhfuil leabhar ag Seán? (nahk* vwill LOU-wuhr eg shaw*n), Hasn't John a book? Níl leabhar ag Seán. An bhfuil leabhar ag Máire? (MAW*-re). Has Mary a book? Tá leabhar ag Máire.

Continue with "Máire", but then substitute: Séamas, Liam, Bríd, úna and Diarmaid in succession. Your last sentence will be: Tá leabhar ag Seán. Each time you say a sentence, form a picture of a person holding a book or without a book.

For the second drill, go to the kitchen again and run through:

Céard é seo? or Céard é sin? for each object in the kitchen as given in the vocabularies of Lesson 16 and this lesson. Also,

ask the question "cá bhfuil an _____" (kaw* vwil un _____).
Where is the _____? for each object and answer by "Tá sé _____", using the phrases in the drill of Lesson 16.
Visualization of the object should be easy, since it will be before you.

Irish Lesson 18

PRONUNCIATION

In going from the broad vowel "á" in a word to a slender consonant, such as slender "d", "r", "s", or "t", the movement of the tongue to get into position for the slender consonant will result in an extra sound between vowel and consonant.

The extra sound is called a "glide". It is usually shown in writing by the letter "i", and this indicates that the following consonant gets its slender sound. The overall effect can be somewhat like (oy) in English "boy", but you should not try to pronounce an (oy) for these cases.

To see what this means, first review the pronunciation of slender and broad "t" in Lesson 2, and then slowly pronounce: át (aw*t), áit (AW*-it). Notice that in "áit" you make a slight (i) sound as your tongue tip goes to the hard ridge behind your upper teeth. In some parts of Ireland, the word "áit" may even sound like (oych).

Here are some examples for practice. Review the pronunciation of slender and broad consonants if necessary, before starting:

bád *baw*d); báid (BAW*-id)
pád (paw*d); Páid (PAW*-id)
lár (law*r); láir (LAW*-ir)

pás (paw*s); páis (PAW*-ish); páista (PAW*-ish-te)
trád (traw*d); tráid (TRAW*-id)
srád (sraw*d); sráid (SRAW*-id)
i lár na sráide (i LAW*R nuh SRAW*-id-e)

It is a shortcoming of our simplified pronunciation guide that we can not show this transition or glide as well as it should be, so it will be your task to watch for it and make sure that your pronunciation includes it. We will usually show a word like "báid" to be pronounced (baw*d), and you must note the "id" at the word end and give the "d" its slender sound, with the tongue tip against the hard ridge behind your upper front teeth.

GRAMMAR

"Ag" means "at", and it also serves to express "to have", as in "Tá cota ag Seán" (taw* KOH-tuh eg shaw*n), John has a coat. You may think that use of "ag" for these two purposes would be confusing, but that is not so in the actual Irish language. You can tell from the nature of the sentence and the circumstances in which it is used whether "ag" is "at" or is part of the idea of "having".

For example, "Tá Seán ag an doras" must mean that John is at the door. Obviously the door does not "have" John. On the other hand, "Tá carr ag Seán" means that John has a car, rather than a car is "at John", or even at John's house. Irish has another expression for "at some one's house": "tigh Sheáin" (tee HYAW*-in).

PROGRESSIVE DRILL

Go through the following drill for expressing "to have" in Irish. Remember to recite aloud and form a mental picture for each

sentence.

An bhfuil nuachtán agam? (un vwil NOO-uhk*-taw*n uh-GUHM).

Níl nuachtán agat (neel NOO-uhk*-taw*n uh GUHM)

Tá nuachtán agat (uh-GUHT).

An bhfuil nuachtán agat?

Níl nuachtán agat.

Tá nuachtán aige (eg-GE).

An bhfuil nuachtán aige? And so on, until you return to "Tá nuachtán agam" as the last sentence.

VOCABULARY

Here are some phrases to help you learn how "ag an" (eg un), at the, causes eclipses. "Ag an" does not always cause eclipses, especially in the case of words starting with "d" or "t", but learn the eclipses for all cases initially.

bean, ag an mbean (ban, eg un man), woman, at the woman
fear, ag an bhfear (far, eg un var), man, at the man
doras, ag an ndoras (DUH-ruhs, eg un NUH-ruhs), door, at the door
carr, ag an gcarr (kahr, eg un gahr), car, at the car
páista, ag an bpáiste (PAW*SH-te, eg un BAW*SH-te), child, at the child
geata, ag an ngeata (GAT-uh, eg ung AT-uh), gate, at the gate
teach, ag an dteach (tahk*, eg un dyahk*), house, at the house

CONVERSATION

Pól: (pohl): Dia duit, a Róisín (DEE-uh git, uh roh-SHEEN). Hello, Rose.

Róisín: Dia's Muire duit, a Phóil (DEE-uhs MWIR-uh git, uh FOH-il). Conas tá tú? (KUN-uhs taw* too) Hello, Paul. How are you?

Pól: Tá mé go maith (taw* may* goh mah). Agus conas tá tú féin? I am well. And how are you?

Róisín: Tá mé go maith leis (lesh). I am well, too.

Pól: An bhfuil aon scéal nua agat? (un vwil ay*n shkay*1 NOO-uh uh-GUHT) Have you any news? ("new story," literally).

Róisín: Níl. Ach bhí mé ag léamh an nuachtáin aréir (uh LAY*-uhv un NOO-uhk*-taw*-in uh-RAY*R). I don't. But I was reading the paper last night. Rud suimiúil a chonaic mé (rud sim-OO-il uh K*UHN-ik may*). An interesting thing I saw. Tá raidió agus teilifíseán ag beagnach gach duine sa tír seo (taw* RAH-dee-oh AH-guhs TEL-i-fee-shaw*n eg BYUHG-nahk* gahk* DIN-e suh teer shuh). Nearly everyone in this country has a radio and television set.

Pól: Níl teilifíseán agamsa (uh-GUHM-suh). I don't have a television. An bhfuil teilifíseán agatsa? Have you one?

Róisín: O, tá, agus tá ceann (kyoun) ag gach cara eile liom (KAH-ruh EL-e luhm). Oh, I do, and every other friend of mine has one.

Irish Lesson 19

PRONUNCIATION

Two letter groups, "adh" and "agh", are usually pronounced (eye) when in accented syllables inside a word. Here are examples for "adh":

adharc (EYE-uhrk), horn
radharc (REYE-uhrk), sight
Tadhg (teyeg), Tadhg, a man's name
gadhar (GEYE-uhr), hound
fadhb (feyeb), problem

Some examples for "agh":

aghaidh (EYE-ee), face
laghad (LEYE-uhd), least
slaghdán (SLEYE-daw*n), a cold, hay fever
ó Raghallaigh (oh REYE-lee), O'Reilly

If the letter group "adh" is at a word end or in an unaccented syllable, it does not take the (eye) sound. For example:

samhradh (SOU-ruh), summer; ionadh (OON-uh), wonder.
Many verbal nouns are similar: dúnadh (DOON-uh), closing;
briseadh (BRISH-uh), breaking; glanadh (GLUHN-uh),
cleaning.

VOCABULARY

Masculine Nouns

néal, na néalta (nay*1, nuh NAY*L-tuh), cloud, the clouds
biseach (BI-shahk*), recovery

slaghdán (SLEYE-daw*n) a cold

Feminine Nouns

feoil, an fheoil (FYOH-il, un OH-il), meat, the meat
beoir, an bheoir (BYOH-ir, un VYOH-ir), beer, the beer
bain, ag baineadh (bwin, uh BWIN-uh), cut, reap; also part of

expressions such as "bain diot an cóta" (bwin DEE-uh un KOH-tuh), take off your coat.

ith, ag ithe (i, eg I-he), eat

ag ithe an aráin (un uh-RAW*-in), eating the bread

ag ithe an bhricfeasta (vrik-FAS-tuh), eating the breakfast

ag ithe mo lóin (muh LOH-in), eating my lunch

ag ithe feola (FYOH-luh), eating meat

ag ithe prátaí (PRAW*-tee), eating potatoes

á ithe (aw* I-he), eating it

á ithe sin, eating that

á ithe seo, eating this

Tá biseach orm (OH-ruhm), I am recovering

cnag, ag cnagadh (kuh-NAHG, uh kuh-NAHG-uh), knock; as in
"ag cnagadh ar an doras", knocking at the door

ól, ag ól (ohl, eg OHL), drink

ag ól bainne (BAHN-ye), drinking milk

ag ól tae (tay*), drinking tea

ag ól uisce (ISH-ke), drinking water

ag ól caife (KAHF-e), drinking coffee

ag ól mo chaife (muh K*AHF-e), drinking my coffee

ag ól beorach (BYOH-ruhk*), drinking beer

á ól (aw* ohl), drinking it

á ól sin, drinking that

á ól seo, drinking this

féach, ag féachaint ar (FAY*-ahk, uh FAY*-uhk*-int er)
looking at

Tá slaghdán ort (OH-ruht), you have a cold

NOTES ON VOCABULARY

1. This vocabulary gives you many phrases combining "ag ithe" and "ag ól" with nouns. The drills for the next few weeks will stress these to familiarize you with ways of phrase formation.

2. The forms "ag ithe", "ag cur", etc., are often followed by nouns in the genitive case, becoming in English : "of the _____". "Ag ithe feola" is literally "at eating of meat". The

genitive case of Irish nouns is formed in several ways. You will gradually learn to recognize these, so that you can form the case for new words.

Some nouns don't change at all for the genitive, such as "bainne". Others may change a final broad consonant to a slender, such as "lón, an lóin", or "arán, an aráin". A few nouns add a syllable, such as "beoir, na beorach" or "feoil, na feola".

3. In Irish, you don't "have" illnesses. Instead, they are "on" you. "Tá slaghdán ar Shéamas" means "James has a cold".

Recovery, happiness, sorrow, anger and the like are also "on" you.

CONVERSATION

Nioclás (NEE-klaw*s): éist (ay*sht)! Tá duine éigin ag cnagadh ar an doras (taw* DIN-e AY*-gin uh kuh-NAHG-uh er un DUH-ruhs). Listen! Someone is knocking on the door.

Córa (KOH-ruh): Cé hé sin (kay* hay* shin) ag an doras?
Who's that at the door?

Seán: Seán anseo. Oscail an doras agus lig isteach sa teach mé. It's John here. Open the door and let me in the house. Tá sé ag cur báistí amuigh anseo (uh KUR BAW*SH-tee uh MWEE un-SHUH). It's raining out here.

Nioclás: O, tá tú anseo faoi dheireadh (fwee YER-uh). Fan nóiméad, más é do thoil é (fahn NOH-may*d, MAW* shay* duh HIL ay*). -- Isteach leat, a Sheáin (ish-TYAHK* lat, uh HYAW*-in). Oh, you are here at last. Wait a minute please. -- In with you, John.

Seán: Dia daoibh, a Niocláis agus a Chóra (DEE-uh yeev, uh NEE-klaw*sh AH-guhs uh K*OH-ruh). Hello, Nicholas and Cora.

Córa: Dia's Muire duit, a Sheáin. Conas tá tú ar chor ar bith? (HUHR er bi) Hello, John. How are you, anyway?

Seán: Tá me go maith, agus conas tá sibh (shiv) féin? I am well and how are you yourselves?

Nioclás: Táimid go maith leis, ach tá slaghdán ar Chóra. We are well, too, but Cora has a cold.

Córa: Tá biseach orm anois (uh-NISH), áfach (AW*-fuhk*). I am recovering now, however.

Nioclás: Bain diot an cóta, a Sheáin. Take off your coat, John. Ina dhiaidh sin (in-uh YEE-uh shin), tar amach i seomra an bhídh (tahr uh-MAHK* i SHOHM-ruh un VEE), agus bíodh (BEE-ohk*) cupán tae agat (uh-GUHT). After that, come out into the dining room and have a cup of tea.

Córa: Oíche dhorcha is ea í (EE-hye GUHR-uh-huh sha ee). Féach ar na néalta dubha (nuh NAY*L-tuh DOOV-uh). A dark night it is. Look at the black clouds.

Irish Lesson 20

PRONUNCIATION

The letter group "omh" in a word often gets the sound of (oh). This sound is held for the same length of time as "ó". Examples

are: romham (ROH-uhm), before me; romhat (ROH-uh), before you; comhar (KOH-uhr), aid; comhairle (KOHR-le), council, advice; comhrá (KOH-raw*), conversation; fómhar (FOH-uhr), autumn; comhacht (KOH-uhk*t), power; comhlacht (KOH-luhk*t), a corporation.

GRAMMAR

To say "I had a book", rather than "I have a book", you merely replace "tá" by "bhí", as in:

Bhí leabhar agam (vee LOU-wuhr uh-GUHM), I had a book. The literal meaning is, of course, "There was a book at me".

Forms for "had" parallel those needed to express "have". Here is practice reading to help you recognize and use the forms. Only the new or less familiar words have a pronunciation guide directly after them.

Bhí airgead (AR-i-guhd) agam inné. Nach raibh bainne agat? Níl mórán bainne againn anois. Tá scian ag Tomás. An raibh cóta ag an mac? Nach bhfuil nuachtán agat? Ní raibh cnaipe (kuh-NAHP-e) ag an gcóta.

An bhfuil carr aige? Níl caifé nó tae aici. Nach raibh bróg ag Peadar? Bhí bord mór acu. An bhfuil léine mhaith aige? Tá leabhar agaibh. An raibh mála bán aici? Nach bhfuil hataí acu? Ní raibh ceann (kyoun) eile agam.

The pronunciation guide and translation for these sentences follow:

vee AR-i-guhd uh-GUHM in-YAY*. nahk* rev BAHN-ye

uh-GUHT? neel moh-RAW*N BAHN-ye uh-GIN uh-NISH.
taw* SHKEE-uhn eg toh-MAW*S. un rev KOH-tuh eg un
MAHK? nahk* vwil NOO-uhk*-taw*n uh-GUHT? nee rev
kuh-NAHP-e eg un GOH-tuh.

un vwil KAHR eg-GE? neel KAH-fe noh tay* a-KI. nahk* rev
brohg eg PAD-uh? vee bohrd mohr ah-KUH. un vwil LAY*-ne
vwah eg-GE? taw* LOU-wir uh-GIV. un rev MAW*-luh
baw*n a-KI? nahk* vwil HAHT-ee ah-KUH? nee rev kyoun
EL-e uh-GUHM.

I had money yesterday. Didn't you have milk? We don't have
much milk now. Thomas has a knife. DID the son have a coat?
Don't you have a newspaper? The coat didn't have a button.

Has he a car? She doesn't have coffee or tea.. Didn't Peter have
a shoe? They had a large table. Has he a good shirt? You have
books. Did she have a white bag? Don't they have hats? I didn't
have another one.

DRILL

1. It is necessary for you to practice with masculine and
feminine nouns accompanied by adjectives, so that you will be
familiar with the changes needed. Here are some drill
expressions. Go over them until you are completely in mastery
of them:

Máthair mhaith (MAW*-hir vwah); an mháthair mhaith (un
VWAW*-hir vwah); mo mháthair mhaith (muh VWAW*-hir
vwah).

cailín maith (kah-LEEN mah); an cailín maith; do chailín maith
(duh k*ah-LEEN mah).

bróg shalach (brohg huh-LAHK*); an bhróg shalach (un vrohg
huh-LAHK*); a bhróg shalach (uh vrohg huh-LAHK*).

bord salach; an bord salach; ár mbord salach (aw*r mohrd
suh-LAHK*).

traein fhada (tray*n AH-duh); an traein fhada; do thraein fhada.

carr fada; an carr fada; mo charr fada (muh K*AHR FAH-duh).

cathaoir chrua (KAH-heer K*ROO-uh), a hard chair; an
chathaoir chrua (un K*AH-heer K*ROO-uh); a cathaoir chrua,
her hard chair.

cóta beag (KOH-tuh byuhg); an cóta beag; mo chóta beag (muh
K*OH-tuh byuhg).

sráid dheas (sraw*d yas), a nice street; an tsráid dheas (un
traw*d yas); a shráid dheas (uh hraw*d yas), his nice street.

fuinneog ghlan (fwin-YOHG gluhn); an fhuinneog ghlan (un
in-YOHG gluhn); do fhuinneog ghlan (duh in-YOHG gluhn).
fear mór (far mohr); an fear mór; do fhear mór (duh ar mohr).

scian ghéar (SHKEE-uhn yay*r), a sharp knife; an scian ghéar;
mo scian ghéar (muh SHKEE-uhn yay*r).

pingin bheag (PEENG-in vyuhg), a small penny; an phingin
bheag (un FEENG-in vyuhg); mo phingin bheag.

These changes are annoying to you at first, but a little practice
will make them seem very natural. Writing them out after you
have gone over the pronunciation several times is another good
way to become used to the changes required.

2. The verbal nouns with "tá" and "bhí" also require some drilling. Repeat this drill until you can do it with full understanding and without hesitation:

Nach bhfuil Seán ag léamh sa chistin? (nahk* vwil shaw*n uh LAY*-uhv suh HYISH-tin). Níl sé ag léamh sa chistin. An bhfuil sé ag léamh thuas an staighre? (HOO-uhs un STEYE-ruh). Tá sé ag léamh ansin.

Nach raibh do mháthair ag caint leat? (uh KEYENT lat) Ní raibh sí uh caint liom (luhm) An raibh sí ag caint le Máire? (MAW*-re) Bhí sí ag caint le Máire agus le Bríd, freisin (le BREED FRESH-in).

Nach bhfuil ár n-athair ag scríobh na litreach? (nahk* vwil aw*r NA-hir uh SHKREEV nuh LI-trahk*), writing the letter? Níl sé ag scríobh na litreach. An bhfuil sé ag obair sa bhaile? (eg OH-bir suh VWAH-le) Tá sé ag obair sa ghairdín (suh gahr-DEEN).

Nach raibh cat agaibh? (uh-GIV) Ní raibh cat againn anuraidh (uh-GINN uh-NOOR-ee), last year. An raibh madra agaibh? Bhí madra álainn againn anuraidh.

Nach bhfuil nuachtán agat? (NOO-uhk*taw*n uh-GUHT) Níl nuachtán ar bith agam. An bhfuil airgead agat (AR-i-guhd uh-GUHT), have you money? Tá mórán airgid agam (moh-RAW*N AR-i-gid uh-GUHM), I have a lot of money.

Nach raibh cathaoir eile agat sa teach? (KAH-heer EL-e) Ní raibh ach cathaoir amháin againn (uh-WAW*-in uh-GIN), we had only one chair. An raibh bord agaibh? O, bhí dhá bhord againn (GAW* vwohrd uh-GIN), We had two tables.

Note: The word for "two" of anything (except persons) is "dhá" (gaw*), and it is followed by the aspirated singular. Examples: dhá bhád (gaw* VWAW*D), two boats; dhá léine, two shirts; dhá fháinne (gaw* AW*-nye), two rings; dhá chat (gaw* K*AHT), two cats.