

The rules governing aspiration and eclipsis are many and complex and are not given here. In the course of the lessons many of the rules will be discussed and illustrated. Formerly, in the older forms of the language, a final nasal eclipsed the initial of the following word. That **n** may still be seen before vowels, in instances where a consonant would be eclipsed: **ár nAthair**. Our Father; **ár n-ollamh**, our professor; **ár n-údar**, our author.

H AND T AS PREFIXES

Certain words ending in a vowel sound and which neither aspirate nor eclipse prefix **h** to words beginning with a vowel: **go hálainn**, lovely; **go hÉirinn**, to Ireland; **Seán Ó hAogáin**, John O'Hagan; **chomh hard le**, as high as.

The article **an** prefixes **t-** to masculine nouns beginning with a vowel in the nominative and accusative singular: **an t-uan**, the lamb; **ól an t-uisce**, drink the water.

After the article in the singular **t** is placed before **s** (unless **c, f, m, p, t** follows **s**):

- (a) a feminine noun not in the genitive case: **an tsúil** (the eye), **roimh an tsron** (before the nose).
- (b) a masculine noun in the genitive case: **teach an tsagairt** (the priest's house).

INFLECTION

Irish is an inflected language in that it shows grammatical relationships by making changes in the forms of nouns, verbs, adjectives and pronouns: thus **cóta mór**, overcoat, becomes **cótaí móra** in the plural and the verb **cuir**, put, will have the following forms among others: **cuirim**, I put; **cuirimid**, we put; **cuirfidh mé**, I will put.

ATTENUATION

By this inflection a broad consonant is made slender. In its simplest form attenuation is denoted by placing the letter **í** in front of the consonant:

bád, boat, becomes **báid** in the genitive singular and the nominative plural;
fear, man, becomes **fí** in the genitive singular and nominative plural.

BROADENING

By this inflection a slender consonant is made broad: the genitive singular of **feirmeoir**, farmer, is **feirmeora** and the genitive singular of **cuid**, share, is **coda**.

SYNCOPATION

In this inflection a short unaccented vowel (or vowels) is omitted from the last syllable of a word of more than one syllable whenever the word is lengthened by any inflection beginning with a vowel: the comparative of the adjective **íseal**, low; is **ísle**; the first singular, present of **imir**, play, is **imrím**.