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Seanfhocail an Lae

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Table of Contents

Abstract	pg 4
Declaration of Originality	pg 5
Acknowledgements	pg 6
Chapter 1: Introduction	pg 7
Chapter 2: Literature Review	pg 9
2.1 The Irish Language Today and Why it is Important to Sustain	pg 9
2.2 The Role of Technology in Irish Language Revival	pg 11
2.3 The Importance of Preserving Proverbs	pg 13
2.4 Mapping the Digital Presence of Seanfhocail	pg 14
2.5 Comparative Analysis of Similar Apps	pg 16
Chapter 3: Methodology	pg 18
3.1 Research Design	pg 18
3.2 Data Collection	pg 20
Chapter 4: Design	pg 24
4.1 App Components	pg 24
4.2 Design Personas	pg 25
Chapter 5: Implementation	pg 27
5.1 Content Management and Data Handling	pg 27
5.2 User Interface	pg 28
5.3 Widget Integration	pg 29
Chapter 6: Limitations and Future Developments	pg 30
Conclusions	pg 32

Appendix: Seanfhocail Corpus

pg 34

References

pg 68

Abstract

This project explores the development of Seanfhocail an Lae, a language learning mobile application designed to promote the Irish language through daily exposure to seanfhocail, which are traditional Irish proverbs. Combining linguistic insight with cultural heritage, the app serves as both an educational tool and digital archive, encouraging users to engage with Irish in a meaningful and accessible way. This study adopts a Design Based Research (DBR) approach, guided by an iterative design process that refines pedagogical, technical and cultural theories in practice. This project addresses these theoretical frameworks while demonstrating the potential of digital tools in revitalising endangered languages and preserving cultural heritage.

Seanfhocail an Lae presents a model for culturally rooted language learning in the digital age. The app responds to current revitalisation efforts in an innovative, constructive manner.

Declaration of Originality

In signing this declaration, you are conforming, in writing, that the submitted work is entirely your own original work, except where clearly attributed otherwise, and that it has not been submitted partly or wholly for any other educational award.

I hereby declare that:

- this is all my own work, unless clearly indicated otherwise, with full and proper accreditation;
- with respect to my own work: none of it has been submitted at any educational institution contributing in any way to an educational award;
- with respect to another's work: all text, diagrams, code, or ideas, whether verbatim, paraphrased or otherwise modified or adapted, have been duly attributed to the source in a scholarly manner, whether from books, papers, lecture notes or any other student's work, whether published or unpublished, electronically or in print.

Signed: . . Caragh Hegarty Date: . . . 17 April 2025.

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Introduction

The Irish language holds a central place in the cultural identity of Ireland. As both the national and first official language of the Republic of Ireland, Irish represents more than a system of communication, it is a repository of memory and tradition, a lens through which we can view the world and connect to predecessors. Despite its cultural significance, Irish faces considerable challenges in terms of everyday usage, particularly among younger generations and urban populations. Due to the growth of globalisation and increasing world dominance of the English language, many traditional elements of Irish linguistic culture risk becoming marginalised or extinct. Therefore, innovative, culturally sensitive approaches to language revitalisation are urgently needed. This project responds to that in the form of the development of Seanfhocail an Lae, a language learning mobile app which utilises the daily exposure to seanfhocail (traditional Irish proverbs) as a method to support Irish language learning and active cultural engagement.

Seanfhocail are Irish proverbs (directly translated as old words) which convey significant insights on Irish beliefs, values and perspectives that have been passed down for generations. Often delivered through a metaphorical, humorous or even a poetic lens, seanfhocail reflect a uniquely Irish worldview. They play an important role in understanding the linguistic and idiomatic nuances of the language, simultaneously containing immense cultural value. However, many seanfhocail are overlooked and underutilised in modern contexts. Additionally, when they are translated, it is often in an anglicised manner that dilutes their original form and strips them of their meaning. This project seeks to bring seanfhocail into contemporary relevance by integrating them into a mobile learning environment that is accessible and engaging, while also promoting a pedagogical agenda. Rather than presenting the seanfhocail in an archival format, the app offers an interactive and dynamic experience that encourages active learning and cultural reflection.

The Seanfhocail an Lae app delivers a new seanfhocail each day, accompanied by a direct translation, an English equivalent and a brief contextual explanation. This design is carefully curated to immerse users in Irish language while building cultural awareness of the framework by which the language operates. To guide the development of the app and assess its effectiveness as an educational tool, the project adopts a Design Based Research (DBR) methodology approach. DBR is designed to address complex, real world problems through the iterative design process, while simultaneously developing and contributing to theoretical knowledge. In this project the key problems addressed include the lack of visibility of Irish in everyday digital contexts and the underrepresentation of culturally embedded resources, like seanfhocail, in current language learning tools. The iterative nature of DBR allows the app to be continuously refined based on feedback, testing and evolving understanding of specific theoretical and pedagogical needs.

This study is grounded in constructivist learning theory and sociocultural theory, which inform the iterative DBR process. Constructivism views learning as an active process in which learners construct knowledge through meaningful interaction with content. In the context of Seanfhocail an Lae, the seanfhocail function as learning tools that allow users to build a deeper understanding not only of the Irish language and the culture embedded within it, but also of themselves, through interpretive reflection. Sociocultural theory emphasises the importance of social interaction, cultural tools and historical context in shaping learning. These ideas highlight the relevance of seanfhocail as linguistic tools. Seanfhocail an Lae offers users the opportunity to seamlessly integrate seanfhocail into their daily routines, fostering meaningful interaction with the language through a unique, culturally embedded lens.

This thesis documents the full development cycle of Seanfhocail an Lae from conceptualisation to implementation. It begins by outlining the theoretical framework that inspires the project, including relevant literature on language revitalisation, the role of digital tools in language learning, and the role of seanfhocail in Irish linguistic heritage. I explain the DBR methodology in practice, detailing how iterative cycles of design, testing, reflection and researching were used to shape the app. Additionally, I describe the development process of the app including decisions about the interface design, user experience and functionality. The thesis concludes with a discussion of the project's limitations and discussion about future development opportunities.

In summary, Seanfhocail an Lae is a creative response to the challenges of language and cultural revitalisation in the digital age. Its aim is to foster a deep, engaged relationship with Irish. Through the focused lens of seanfhocail, this project illustrates how even small linguistic forms can have powerful impacts when thoughtfully embedded in digital learning environments. It prioritises translating minority languages in their most natural form, while also encouraging users to develop meaningful connections to the languages to enhance their learning experience.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 The Irish Language Today and Why it is Important to Sustain

The Irish language is an ancient celtic language that is a descendant of Proto-Celtic, which can be traced back to the Proto-Indo-European language spoken during the Neolithic period over 6000 years ago (Stifter, 2017). Subsequently, Irish shares similarities with several European languages as well as languages in the Near and Middle East (Stifter, 2017). Over the past few centuries, the Irish language has had a tumultuous life. Viking raids, British rule as well as systemic efforts through famine, legal oppression as well as societal necessity to speak English have all contributed to its decline (Shah, 2014). Consequently, many efforts to revive the language throughout history have been hindered due to incessant attempts to deter Irish people from speaking and learning the language. Generational attitudes and economic pressures have provided consistent barriers to these efforts, sustaining an unsteady population of fluent Irish speakers.

Despite this, the language has persevered and continues to inspire revival efforts. According to the 2022 census, about 40% of the population of Ireland aged three and over can speak Irish, and 10% reported being able to speak the language very well (Central Statistics Office, 2023). In comparison, the 2021 census carried out in Wales concluded that 17.8% of the population aged three and over can speak Welsh (Welsh Language Commissioner, n.d; Welsh Government, 2022), clearly demonstrating that there is a larger population of Irish speakers. In the face of adversity, a devotion to preserve the language reigned consistent throughout history. Which begs the question: why? Pecnikova and Slatinska (2019) explain that ‘language and culture are intrinsically linked.’ A language inherently connects communities, and provides a sense of purpose and identity among the people who speak it. In the late nineteenth century, crucial efforts were made to preserve the Irish language, after a dramatic decline in speakers due to The Great Famine which caused widespread death and emigration. Organisations such as ‘Conradh na Gaeilge’ were set up to promote the Irish language through art, education and publishing documents in Irish. This effectively contributed to establishing the language as essential to Irish identity. When Ireland became a Free State, a staunch focus was placed on Irish restoration. This was most evident in the education sector with Irish becoming a compulsory subject. Additionally, grants were offered to residents of Gaeltacht areas in Ireland, where Irish is the primary language of communication (McDermott, 2017). In 2010, the Irish government implemented a 20 Year Strategy for Irish Language in order to foster revitalisation efforts and simultaneously support the growth of speakers (Pecnikova and Slatinska, 2019). Reactions to this plan vary, many view it as an overly-ambitious contingency strategy with minimal hope in its success. However, the strategy has benefitted numerous initiatives aimed at restoring and digitising the Irish language. For example, the Irish government Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht funded the Schools’ Manuscript Collection, available on Dúchas.ie, which contains thousands of resource materials of the Irish language (Williams, 2018). Pecnikova and Slatinska (2019) deduce that fair critique of the plan cannot rightfully be considered until the strategy’s roadmap concludes in 2030. Government attempts to integrate

Irish into daily use have had varying degrees of success, exhibiting that policy isn't the only method necessary to restore a language.

Pecnikova and Slatinska (2019) highlight that a vital tool in language revitalisation is public opinion and attitude. In tandem with policy, active enthusiasm toward the language is required. With many people viewing Irish primarily as a school subject, and leaving school with limited fluency, it is clear public perception needs reformation (Shah, 2014). "Each language reflects a different unique world view and culture complex, mirroring the manner in which a speech community has formulated its thinking and its understanding of the world" (Wurm 1999, p.163). Wurm outlines here that in losing language, we lose deep insight of humanity and connection to our ancestors' thought process. Ó Héalaí in his TED Talk reinforces this idea by stating that actively engaging with Irish culture allows us to carry the voices and traditions of our ancestors forward (Ó Héalaí, 2016). He recites his fathers idea of why the loss of Irish would be so devastating to the nation, describing it as 'bás na háilleachta' (the death of beauty).

In addition to Irish being an important language culturally, there are several other reasons why it is important to sustain. Benefits of bilingualism cannot be ignored, with studies showing bilingual people have increased cognitive function, positively affecting attention span, problem solving abilities, multitasking abilities as well as having more efficient brain networks (Bialystok, 2011). It is claimed that students studying in gaelscoils (Irish speaking schools) perform better than peers in English speaking schools (Pecnikova and Slatinska, 2019). Furthermore, young people with fluency in Irish are gaining new work opportunities. This includes state institutions around Ireland as well as within European institutions where translation and mediation abilities are needed. Additionally, there are several initiatives set up in Ireland to encourage people to learn, starting at preschool level (Pecnikova and Slatinska, 2019). Another incentive to keep the language alive is tourism. As an economical tool, Irish draws tourists to the Gaeltacht regions and its establishments, simultaneously promoting the language. Organisations such as Conradh na Gaeilge promote ideas like 'an cúpla focal' (meaning few words) and 'caint agus pint' (meaning chat and pint), encouraging locals and tourists alike to utilise as much irish as possible (Pecnikova and Slatinska, 2019).

Pechnikova and Stlatinska (2019) state, 'the Irish language should be promoted more among ordinary people and through popular social media' (p.59). Fortunately, a fresh perspective on Irish is emerging. Evident by bands like Kneecap incorporating the language into their music, as well as *The Quiet Girl* getting nominated for an Oscar, marking the first time a fully Irish spoken film was nominated. Additionally, numerous efforts utilising technology have been employed to restore the language and breathe new life into it (Irish Examiner, 2023; Ireland.ie, 2024). For example, the platform tiktok has become a breeding ground for new Irish speakers, with tags such as '#gaelgetok' and '#irishlanguage' being used frequently, featuring videos of people teaching the language, covering songs in irish and sharing resources.

Technology provides an innovative way to interact with the language. I am going to discuss existing efforts to revive Irish through various technological mediums. I will also outline the importance of the Irish seanchaí in a modern context. Additionally, I will analyse existing

resources aimed at digitising seanfhocail, addressing their strengths and limitations. Finally I will present a solution to address some of the limitations of these resources in the form of my app.

2.2 The Role of Technology in Irish Language Revival

Technology has always played an important part in language. Television and radio for example have significantly contributed to the global shift toward dominant languages, often at the expense of minority languages. Eisenlohr, (2004) discusses how electronic mass media can influence language ideologies and practices, potentially leading to the abandonment of minority languages. This is why promoting the Irish language in new, innovative ways is crucial to ensure its survival and relevance in modern culture. Pecnikova and Slatinska (2019) state that in order for Irish to survive, it must serve a practical role in society. Long term revitalisation can only succeed if it is integrated into daily life. Digital platforms facilitate access to linguistic resources and create spaces for interactive language learning. This allows for inexpensive language learning, while also enabling the distribution of resources in a manner considered more economical than traditional methods (Eisenlohr, 2004). In the context of Irish language revival, Chasaide et al. (2019), explain: 'Precisely because of its increasingly central presence in our lives, digital technology also presents an unprecedented opportunity for the documentation, preservation, and revitalisation of the endangered language' (p.1).

There are many digital platforms supporting the dissemination and education of Irish. Ward (2014) discusses the use of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in Irish primary schools. She highlights that CALL offers several advantages such as the fact that it never tires and grants undivided attention to the student where a typical classroom setting cannot. Additionally, it allows students to progress at their own pace, beneficial for both students who want to accelerate their learning and students who require more time to process (Ward, 2014). CALL also provides a cheaper alternative to purchasing books, especially regarding an updated curriculum whereby the book rental scheme adopted by many schools becomes ineffective (Ward, 2014). These benefits expand beyond primary school, demonstrating that CALL is an inexpensive and valuable tool for language acquisition at any level (Eisenlohr, 2004). Chasaide et al. (2019) highlight the importance of digital resources for Irish, and using CALL, particularly for people with visual or hearing impairments who benefit immensely from text to speech tools as well as alt text on image resources. Judge et al. (2014) illustrate that the primary problem with these resources is the sheer lack of them as CALL requires a multidisciplinary team which is difficult to assemble, especially for a minority language like Irish.

Many speakers and teachers approach the Irish language as a second language, which subsequently alters the language and how it is learned and used. This approaches the language as something we can translate into English, rather than encouraging immersion and natural fluency in Irish (Chasaide et al., 2019). Such translation based learning can strip the language

of its unique structures, idioms, and cultural depth, making it more difficult for learners to engage with Irish in a truly organic and expressive way. Therefore, digitizing the language is vital in preventing further destruction of its natural use. Digital tools can enhance accessibility, foster engagement, and create immersive learning environments that prioritize direct interaction with Irish rather than translation based learning (Judge et al., 2014). By leveraging speech technology, interactive applications, and multimedia content, Irish can be learned in context, helping speakers internalise its grammatical structures and idiomatic expressions rather than treating it as a code to be converted into English. Furthermore, digital platforms such as ABAIR, language-learning apps, and AI-driven pronunciation tools can support authentic spoken Irish by incorporating regional dialects and natural speech patterns (Chasaide et al., 2019). These tools help learners hear and use Irish as it was meant to be spoken, reinforcing its cultural and linguistic integrity while making the language more accessible and engaging for modern users. One major issue is there is a severe underrepresentation of minority languages, including Irish, in AI driven and NLP applications (Nilsson-Fernández, Spence, and Wells, 2024; Eisenlohr, 2004). Ward (2014) further validates this claim, noting that many NLP projects for Irish fail to progress past the prototype stage, which contributes to the extreme scarcity of digital tools for the language. Chasaide et al. (2019) explain that this forces a shift towards the dominant language. Digital tools are important for language learning and expansion, unfortunately there is a serious lack of support and contributions to their development.

Social media plays an interesting role in the discussion of language revival. While some may argue social media can lead to low language proficiency due to the informal nature of platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, Reinhardt (2019) argues this is primarily a problem when used as a sole tool for language learning. Eisenlohr (2004) augments this idea, agreeing that social media is useful for minority language visibility, but should not be substituted for other methods of language learning. Belmer and Glass (2019) state that regardless of any practical use, the presence of minority languages on social media is a vital tool for their promotion and dissemination. The idea of language purity rejects the idea of innovation, potentially deterring young people from engaging with the language. Therefore, online spaces such as group chats and forums, where the language can be explored naturally and creatively, serve as a space to protect and reclaim minority languages (Belmer and Glass, 2019). Furthermore, social media platforms provide an open and accessible space where anyone can contribute to language discussions outside of institutional barriers (Nilsson-Fernández, Spence, and Wells, 2024). This creates a free and interactive platform for language propagation, significantly contributing to revival in innovative ways. Judge et al. (2014) provide an interesting perspective on the role of digital tools in language revitalisation : ‘The extent to which digital technology serves to revitalize the language depends on the extent to which the language community makes it their own’, (Judge et al., 2014, p5.) In this context social media is a tool by which the community dictates the future of the language, making it a unique attribute to revitalisation. The resources can therefore reflect the people learning it, making it more appealing and enticing to learn (Lindová, 2014).

2.3 The Importance of Preserving Proverbs

As previously mentioned, language and cultural identity are intrinsically linked (Pecnikova and Slatinska, 2019). Proverbs by nature are a reflection of humanity. They stem from human nature, highlighting both our flaws and virtues. In linguistics, proverbs can vary depending on origin, language and context. A proverb can deliver insight on the human psyche, therefore in the case of the Irish language, preserving proverbs is integral to maintaining cultural values and ideals. A seanhocail can be a gateway into our past, and a reflection of Irish culture. Carson Williams (2018) details that Irish proverbs are most commonly rich metaphors directly linked to Irish culture. Common themes are nature, drinking, food, agriculture and religion. Williams highlights the importance of proverbs in understanding our ancestors, ‘The proverbs used by a community become an integral part of that locality’s inheritance and are regarded as such by that community, not as something brought in from outside or in any way international.’ (Williams, 2018, p 364). In this sense, a seanhocail serves as a window into the past, offering insights into the values, beliefs and priorities of the society that they originate.

Lindová (2014) details Ireland’s strong cultural history and fondness of storytelling, ‘Ireland was like a country created for the art of storytelling. ‘The Celts on the island compensated for their illiteracy by their amazing memory and ability to recite stories and poems in great detail.’’ (Lindová, 2014, p36). Seanfhocail provides a connection to this oral heritage, allowing us to engage with ancient narratives through the proverbs that sprouted from them, or potentially inspired them. Ó Héalaí (2016) explains that speaking in Irish allows one to view life through a different lens. ‘This language connects me with my landscape and environment in a way that transcends that which is visual and obvious’ (Ó Héalaí, 2016).

As previously discussed, digital tools need to be used in tandem with human interaction in order for the most effective language learning to occur. Digital resources can complement language learning, but they cannot replace the fundamental need for social and cultural embedding of a language. (Eisenlohr, 2004). Seanfhocail can be adopted into daily use as they directly link to the human experience within concise, memorable phrases. Digitising them within an interactive platform would be a way to address existing limitations within digital language tools while optimising language learning in an interactive and engaging way.

Before development, it was important to assess the current digital presence of seanhocail and to research existing applications with similar concepts to Seanfhocail an Lae. This analysis ensured my idea was well informed and original. This was to ensure the app filled a genuine gap in the market rather than, unintentionally, replicating existing solutions. Additionally this process offered valuable insight into what design choices, features and user experiences have been proven effective or ineffective within the current landscape of apps pertaining to proverbs.

2.4 Mapping the Digital Presence of Seanfhocail

The digital preservation of seanfhocail plays a crucial role in the broader efforts to sustain and revive the Irish language. Mapping the digital presence of these proverbs involves assessing existing platforms, their effectiveness, and their accessibility qualities for different users. This section explores various projects and initiatives that archive and share seanfhocail, examining their strengths and limitations in engaging modern audiences.

Currently, a variety of online resources provide lists of seanfhocail, often with English translations. Some platforms offer deeper insights into the origins and literal meanings of the proverbs, while others provide only surface-level collections. Additionally, numerous e-books dedicated to seanfhocail are available for purchase, but these resources tend to be static and non interactive, limiting their ability to engage users in active learning. While these collections serve as valuable archives, they often lack dynamic, immersive features that could integrate seanfhocail into contemporary digital usage. Nilsson-Fernández, Spence, and Wells (2024) reinforce this idea stating archival material, such as the Digital Repository of Ireland, is insufficient at language revival on its own and needs to be complimented with interactive tools.

I will be discussing online platforms with freely accessible lists pertaining to preserving seanfhocail.

1. Duchas.ie is a data management system open to the public with access to the material collected by the Irish Folklore Commission. The Main Manuscript Collection, The Schools' Collection, The Photographic Collection, all assisted by the National Folklore Foundation, make up the bulk of the website. In addition audio, music and video archives were collected. In summation the site includes manuscripts, audio recordings, photographs, and interactive maps, showcasing a wide variety of Irish traditions, stories, and customs originating across all 32 counties of Ireland. The site displays images of written Irish, preserving the language in its original form. The site is partnered with National Folklore Collection, UCD, the National Folklore Foundation, UCD Digital Library Gaois, Fiontar & Scoil na Gaeilge, DCU and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. The site contains an archive of proverbs with translations, predating when Irish was standardised, from local people who use the language. It serves as an excellent platform for education, providing an extensive archive of Irish language and heritage. (Duachas, n.d.)

2. Daltaí na Gaeilge is an organisation dedicated to promoting and teaching the Irish language, offering resources such as proverbs, phrases, grammar guides, and immersion programs. The immersion programmes are offered across America in New York State, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, suitable for all levels of Irish. Their website however offers additional resources, including a comprehensive collection of Irish proverbs, each accompanied by English translations and cultural notes that provide context and insights into Irish heritage. The proverbs are categorized thematically, covering topics like relationships, personal qualities, material things, and life and death. This thematic organisation allows users to explore specific areas of interest, facilitating a deeper understanding of the values and wisdom embedded in the Irish language. Some proverbs are also accompanied by audio recordings, enabling learners to hear correct pronunciations and improve their language skills. (Daltaí na Gaeilge, n.d.)
3. Foclóir Stairiúil na Gaeilge (Historical Dictionary of the Irish Language) is a research initiative by the Royal Irish Academy aimed at documenting the evolution of the Irish language from its earliest records to the present. While the primary focus of this project is on compiling a comprehensive historical dictionary, it also contains an extensive list of seanfhocail. The project has digitized and made accessible texts such as 'Seanfhocail na Muimhneach,' which is a collection of seanfhocail that originated in the province of Munster. This resource offers valuable insights into regional expressions and the cultural context of the Irish language. By integrating such collections, Foclóir Stairiúil na Gaeilge not only preserves these traditional sayings but also provides researchers and the public with tools to explore the linguistic and cultural heritage embedded in Irish proverbs. Foclóir Stairiúil na Gaeilge contributes to the preservation and accessibility of seanfhocail by incorporating them into its extensive digital corpus, thereby supporting the study and revitalization of the Irish language (Royal Irish Academy, n.d.)

All of these resources provide extensive lists of seanfhocail readily available to the public. However, these resources remain largely archival, lacking interactive features that engage modern users (Eisenlohr, 2004). Judge et al. (2014) highlight the need for adaptable digital tools that can integrate Irish proverbs into contemporary usage. Carson Williams (2018) documents Dúchas as a key resource for digitized Irish proverbs, however acknowledges the limitation of archival resources. These tools could include interactive games or multimedia platforms to make proverbs more accessible and engaging for learners. Additionally, Chasaide et al. (2019) suggest utilising speech technology to enhance the usability and appeal of linguistic resources. Bialystok (2011) explains that the most effective method of language learning is practice. Therefore, digital tools encouraging daily interaction would be an optimal asset for language learning.

The digital presence of seanfhocail is growing, with resources like Dúchas, Foclóir Stairiúil na Gaeilge, and Daltaí na Gaeilge providing valuable documentation and preservation. However, their lack of interactivity and integration with modern digital learning tools limits their effectiveness. As Judge et al. (2014) argue, for language revival to succeed, proverbs must be

actively used rather than simply stored. Nyhan (2009) further emphasises a need to incorporate interactive methods to language learning digital tools rather than rely on archival mediums as it limits their potential and ability to capture the attention of modern audiences.

2.5 Comparative Analysis of Similar Apps

In addition to analysing platforms focused on the preservation and visualisation of seanfhocail, I also examined mobile apps that share similar intentions to my vision. While these apps aren't affiliated with the Irish language, they use comparable strategies such as daily content delivery, habitual use and reflective messages. Analysing these apps offers further insight into the effectiveness of short form, reflective content in mobile apps, helping to shape Seanfhocail an Lae within the landscape of digital tools.

1. Wake: Motivation & Inspiration is a mobile application providing daily quotes to motivate and inspire users. Drawing from a wide range of themes, it features quotes by philosophers, historians and modern figures to provide daily affirmations to encourage positive thinking. The app features a quote of the day, which can be added via widget to your home screen enabling habitual exposure. Users can also browse categories, save favourites to their personal library and access AI generated insights about the origins and meanings of each quote. The AI element introduces an interactive layer, allowing users to explore contextual information to refine their personal reflections. (Stress Free Music and Books LLC, 2025)
2. Motivation - Daily Quotes follows a similar structure, the app delivers daily quotes in order to motivate users. It covers a vast number of topics, aimed to ensure each user is heard and attended to. Users have the ability to schedule reminders throughout the day and utilise a widget to display quotes in order to support habitual engagement. The app highlights the importance of daily inspiration and reflection in order to support mental health and wellbeing. (Monkey Taps, 2025)
3. Pearls: Language Quotes is a mobile app that delivers carefully curated daily quotes in various different languages, focusing on the complexity of language. The quotes derive from a range of sources including linguists and philosophers, all aimed at encouraging users to consider how language shapes identity, culture and perception. Each quote is presented clearly, to emphasise the importance of the language. The app highlights the importance of proverbs as they provide immense wisdom about our ancestors. The app also features the ability to discover key phrases from each language it covers, mainly conversational greetings, as well as additional context on the history of each language included. (McFarland, 2024)

Examining these apps displays how reflective, concise content is valuable. It fosters daily, positive engagement and habitual use. Although these apps are not centered around the Irish language, their strategies for delivering meaningful, insightful content helped shape the design and functionality of my app. These apps reinforce the potential of seanfhocail as a powerful medium for personal reflection and inspiration.

Digital tools hold immense potential to aid in the revival of the Irish language, particularly by enhancing access to cultural elements like Irish sayings. Current resources provide a foundation but lack the interactivity needed to fully engage modern users. Developing innovative, community focused tools could significantly strengthen Irish language revival efforts and ensure the survival of its cultural heritage. However as Pecnikova and Slatinska (2019) discussed, digital preservation isn't enough to revive the language on its own. Irish must be used actively, with innovative ideas required to interest young people specifically. Interaction is important for language revival, therefore digital tools require alterations to allow for fun interactive involvement with the language. Digital technologies often end up serving as archives rather than tools of daily linguistic practice, limiting their impact on language revival. (Eisenlohr, 2004). I believe my app addresses these problems by creating a niche, simple, fun and interactive way to engage with Irish daily. It addresses the cultural aspect of the language while also offering simple, easy phrases users can pick up and incorporate into their daily lives.

Seanfhocail an Lae was developed as an iOS app providing an extensive collection of fun, practical and insightful Irish Seanfhocail. Each day, the app refreshes with a new Seanfhocail accompanied by a translation, equivalent proverb in English (if applicable) and contextual information to enhance understanding. The daily update coincides with research indicating that daily immersion and practice is vital for language retention (Bialystok, 2011). The platform presents a simple yet effective method of digital language learning utilising methods of consistent exposure which has been identified as a key factor in language revitalisation (Chasaide et al., 2019).

The app features a widget which further entices users to discover the 'seanfhocail an lae,' advocating for consistent immersion and engagement with the language, aligning with Pecnikova and Slatinska's (2019) research that highlights this as a key factor in language revitalisation. The app's simple interface will address calls for user friendly and accessible digital language learning tools (Judge et al. 2014).

Unlike traditional digital repositories which are mainly archival, this app will refresh daily with an interactive interface that can suit each users' needs. It reinforces findings that digital tools must prioritise engagement rather than remain as static documentation (Eisenlohr, 2004).

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Research Design

For this project, I followed a Design Based Research (DBR) approach, where the primary aim was to develop a digital resource that enhances engagement with Irish seanfhocail. Unlike traditional qualitative or quantitative research, which relies on empirical data collection, this project emphasises the design and development of the Seanfhocail an Lae app. DBR is a methodology commonly used in educational and technological innovation to create practical, context driven solutions through the iterative design process, while simultaneously refining theoretical insights (Wang, Hamat and Shi, 2024; Jayatileke et al. 2018). According to Anderson and Shattuck (2012, p.17), the DBR process “usually evolves through the creation and testing of prototypes, iterative refinement, and continuous evolution of the design, as it is tested in authentic practice” . My project follows this process as I prioritised app development, while simultaneously collecting data and refining the interface due to theoretical insight. This suitably accentuates the interdisciplinary nature of this project.

My approach follows current trends to create Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) applications designed to address specific needs within the language learning community (Chuah & Kabilan 2022). MALL is a subset of CALL, which is ideal for creating specific tools aimed at achieving a specific goal. In this case a MALL tool aimed at preserving and teaching Irish Seanfhocail. Olaare (2024) notes, mobile apps can make endangered or minority languages more accessible while preserving cultural heritage in a form that is engaging, inclusive, and sustainable. Wang et al. (2024) reinforce the fact that MALL is a strong, innovative pedagogical tool, particularly when used in tandem with DBR methods.

My research was fuelled by theories such as Sociocultural Theory which ‘emphasizes the fundamental role of social interaction and cultural context in cognitive development,’ (Olaare 2024, pg.50). Seanfhocail an Lae provides a vessel for both language learning and preservation by encouraging daily interaction that is rich in cultural meaning. It also creates opportunities for users to integrate Irish into everyday conversation, as proverbs naturally lend themselves to conversational contexts. Lantolf & Pavlenko (1995) express the importance of developing a relationship with the language you are learning through interacting with it both conversationally and personally. They further emphasise the symbiotic relationship between language learning and cultural immersion, reinforcing the importance of seanfhocail as culturally relevant language learning tools (Lantolf & Pavlenko 1995). Additionally, Constructivism was essential to my development process. Wang and Suwanthep (2017, pg.106) explain ‘Constructivism is a psychological theory of knowledge and learning acquisition that people actively interpret and construct their own understanding and knowledge by interacting with their prior knowledge and new information’. Seanfhocail an Lae correlates this theory by using Irish proverbs as reflective learning tools. The seanfhocail provide an opportunity for users to interpret, reflect on and

develop personal meanings, stimulating a deeper connection to the language. In doing this, users are not only constructing knowledge applied to their own sense of self but are also subtly engaging with Irish grammar, vocabulary and cultural content. This aligns with the self directed, meaningful learning at the core of constructivism (Wang and Suwanthep 2017).

My development process was primarily driven by the content itself—seanfhocail. This meant the development of a thoroughly researched and reliable database of proverbs. Ensuring clarity, accuracy, and accessibility was central to my approach, particularly given the broad target audience, which includes learners at various proficiency levels and cultural backgrounds. As Chuah and Kabilan (2022) observe, “The underlying problem in mobile learning is the lack of discourse on necessary theoretical considerations as the spotlight is often on the technological aspect” (p. 254). Therefore, I deliberately focused on the pedagogical and cultural value of the material rather than relying solely on technological features. This involved curating content that not only exposed learners to seanfhocail but also contextualised their meanings. My app was designed with theoretical concerns such as accessibility and the digital divide in mind. I was conscious of the need to present content in a format that was uncomplicated and inclusive, to reduce barriers for learners who may have limited digital literacy or access to the internet.

I chose to use SwiftUI in Xcode as my development programme and programming language. Due to the extensive documentation provided by Apple, countless online guidebooks, the availability of high quality tutorials as well as vast community support through platforms like Stack Overflow, SwiftUI was an accessible and efficient option (Apple Inc, n.d, Stack Overflow n.d). Additionally, as I personally use a Mac and iPhone, SwiftUI was the most logical choice, allowing for a seamless testing process.

Early in the development process, I identified two core features that were central to my vision for the app: The first was a daily seanfhocail which automatically reset at midnight and was accompanied by an English translation. The second was a widget displaying the daily seanfhocail, with the ability to direct users into the app.

These features align closely with Sociocultural Theory, MALL frameworks, and Constructivism. The daily updating of seanfhocail reinforces consistent exposure to Irish, supporting internalisation through habitual interaction which is an approach central to both Sociocultural Theory and MALL. The widget, which solely displays the seanfhocail, is intentionally minimalist in order to abide by Constructivism methodology. The limited content is designed to encourage users to engage further with the app to access translations and context. Rather than encouraging passive consumption, this constructivism inspired approach enables users to engage in meaningful interaction with the language, positioning them as vessels in their own learning journey (Wang and Suwanthep, 2017). In essence, both the app and the widget function in tandem to create a platform that supports deep, culturally embedded learning. By fostering regular engagement and personal exploration, the app stimulates cognitive development and supports the internalisation of language in context, aptly aligning with Sociocultural Theory (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995).

3.2 Data Collection

Proverbs serve as a key link between language and culture, offering insights into societal values, traditions, and ways of thinking (Lindová, 2014). When curating the list of seanfhocail, I wanted enough variety to satisfy all potential users. This began with utilising as many primary and secondary sources as possible to gather a large database of seanfhocail to choose from. These sources included personal notebooks, conversations with people, websites, books, and public signs, murals and posters (Ó Conghaile, 2023; Titley, 2022; Irish American Mom, 2012; St. Andrew's College, n.d.; Gaelic Matters, n.d.; Master It, n.d.; Mac the Knife n.d.; Roux, 2022; Tuigim, n.d.; Seanfhocail n.d.; Dúchas.ie n.d.; Royal Irish Academy, n.d.; Daltaí na Gaeilge, n.d.; Quizlet, n.d.; The Irish Times, 2015; Cumann na Gaeilge, n.d.; Talk Irish, n.d.; Gaelic Athletic Association, n.d.; O'Byrne, n.d.; Blag Gaeilge SMPSS, n.d.; Durrus History, 2022). From this list, I began narrowing down the selection to create a database of 365 seanfhocail so that there was one for each day of the year. Proverbs, by their nature, encapsulate cultural ideals of the time (Williams, 2018), but as society evolves, so too must our engagement with them. Therefore I developed a set of objectives that I wanted my database to meet. This ensured I created a database that captured Ireland's history, yet reflected Ireland's values today.

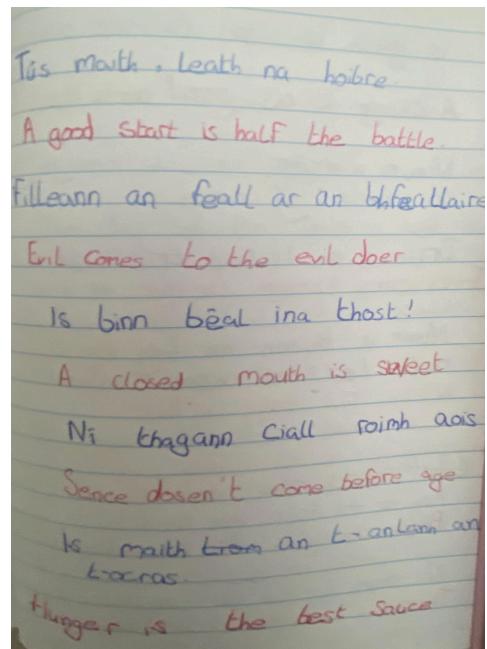
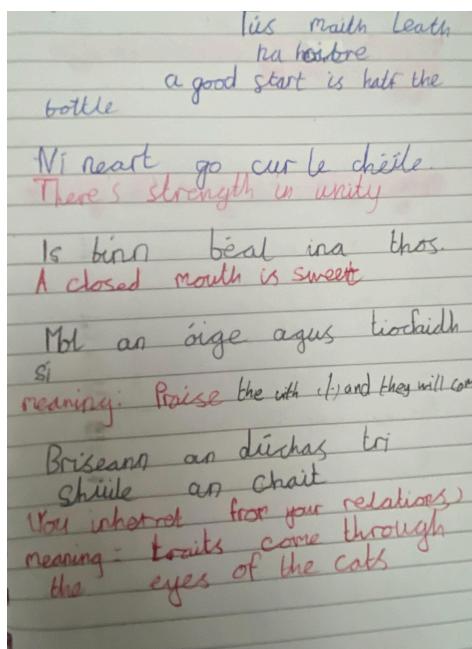


Figure 1 & 2: Seanfhocail sourced from my old notebooks.

Firstly, I aimed to include some of the most common seanfhocail to provide beginners with an accessible introduction, while also sourcing more intricate and lesser known ones to offer something fresh for people familiar with Irish as well as fluent speakers. My second objective was for the database to reflect Irish people and culture in a meaningful way. Additionally I intended the tone, for the most part, to be lighthearted, with sad or melancholy seanfhocail included only when particularly relevant to Irish tradition or culture. I also chose to exclude seanfhocail that were heavily affiliated with religion, as I wanted the app to be accessible to all users, regardless of their religious beliefs. Above all, I aimed for a wide variety in tone and message, avoiding any over reliance on a single theme.

To demonstrate, here are some examples of the thought which went into curating my list. ‘Bíonn síl le muir ach ní bhíonn síl le tir,’ (There's hope from the sea but none from the grave) is sad in tone, yet reflects the ongoing issue of emigration in Ireland and the feeling of homesickness felt by many who leave Ireland. Emigration has been a defining aspect of Irish history, from events like the Flight of the Earls to the devastation of the Famine which forced Irish people to leave the country under the scrutiny of British rule (McCavitt, 1994; Fitzpatrick, 1980). In comparison, ‘Bean gan leanbh is fada é a céalacan’ (A woman without a child has a long quiet life) is unnecessarily sad and perpetuates unhealthy, sexist gender stereotypes therefore I excluded it from my database. Additionally, seanfhocail such as, ‘Bean gan aprún nó bó gan eirball. Ní bhíonn an dealramh ceart ortha,’ (A woman without an apron or a cow without a tail. They don't look right), were also excluded from the database as they reflect outdated narratives about gender roles. When it came to seanfhocail involving religion, I chose to exclude examples like ‘Is giorra cabhair Dé ná an doras’ (‘God's help is nearer than the door’), as I felt it was too directly linked to Catholicism. However, I didn't want to completely omit all seanfhocail that incorporate religious symbolism, given its deep connection to Irish history. As a compromise, I included phrases such as ‘Cleamhnas an chairn aoiligh nó cáirdeas Críost i bhfad amach’ (‘A relationship like a manure heap or a distant friendship with Christ’), which, while referencing religion, does so in a light, culturally reflective tone that isn't overly preachy or suggestive.

After curating my list of seanfhocail, I considered what additional information should accompany each one in the app alongside its translation. Gouws (2002) explains, ‘Contrary to what dictionary users often think, a specific translation equivalent may not arbitrarily be regarded as the meaning of the lemma,’ (p.195). With this in mind, I decided that providing an English equivalent and a contextual explanation would be a priority. I believe an English equivalent helps users better understand the meaning and usage of each seanfhocail while a further contextualisation offers deeper insight, including explanations of specific words, cultural references, or traditions. Admittedly, some seanfhocail do not have a direct English equivalent. For example, ‘Is fearr Gaeilge bhriste ná Béarla cliste’ (‘Broken Irish is better than clever English’). Others, like ‘Tús maith leath na hoibre’ (‘A good start is half the battle’), are more universally understood and require little contextual explanation. Regardless, I chose to provide a contextualisation for each seanfhocail to ensure the app is as accessible and user-friendly as possible. This aligns with Gouws' statement that ‘the assignment of the lexicographer of a bilingual dictionary is not only to achieve semantic equivalence between source and target language but also to ensure and enhance communicative equivalence’ (Gouws, 2002, p.206).

The decision to include an English equivalent was primarily based on the observation that many sources offered anglicised translations that often diluted or contradicted the original tone and intention of the proverb. For example, the seanfhocal “Ní neart go cur le chéile” is often translated as ‘There is strength in unity’ in English. However, a more accurate translation is ‘There is no strength until we are put together,’ which carries a subtly different connotation, suggesting a more active process of unification rather than a static state of unity. Another example is ‘Tús maith leath na hoibre,’ which is commonly translated as ‘A good start is half the battle.’ However the word ‘hoibre’ is a grammatical variant of ‘obair’ (work), making the phrase less metaphorical and more pragmatic. By including both direct translations as well as English equivalents, I aimed to preserve the cultural and linguistic integrity of each seanfhocal while still making it accessible to learners. This dual approach supports both linguistic comprehension and cultural appreciation, aligning with the pedagogical aims of the app. In order to create the most accurate translations possible, I consulted multiple sources throughout the process. In addition to my personal knowledge, notebooks and books, I used Foclóir.ie and Teanglann.ie as well as Google Translate (Foclóir, n.d; Teanglann, n.d; Google Translate n.d). The latter often proved unreliable, particularly when dealing with polysemous words or idiomatic structures, but was helpful as a starting point for convoluted seanfhocail. For each seanfhocail, I began by translating each word individually in order to construct a direct and literal translation, one that preserved the linguistic intent of the Irish form. For the English equivalents I utilised my personal knowledge, indirect translations found across several seanfhocail databases, as well as websites such as Pinterest and Goodreads to source quotes and proverbs that conveyed similar meanings or sentiments (Pinterest, n.d.; Goodreads, n.d.).

Certain English equivalents were reused across multiple seanfhocail as they often shared the same meaning yet were expressed in completely different ways in Irish. For example, ‘Ni haon maith a bheith ag caonineadh nuair a imíonn an tsochraíd,’ (It's no good mourning when the funeral is gone) and, ‘Ní fiú bheith ag seanchas agus an anachain déanta,’ (There is no use in lore when the damage is done). Both align with the English proverb ‘No use crying over spilled milk.’ While the overall sentiment remains the same within both seanfhocail, the imagery, tone and phrasing contrast each other. This highlights the importance of providing an initial direct translation before attributing an English equivalent. Additionally, there were certain seanfhocail that had no clear English equivalent. In these instances I tried to select the closest possible equivalent, offered a word which conveyed the same sentiment or simply marked the slot as ‘N/A’ to indicate that there was no accurate comparison in English. For example, ‘Is cuma le tae cé ólfas é’ (Tea doesn't care who drinks it) was marked ‘N/A,’ as there is no true equivalent in English. Similarly, I used ‘N/A,’ in cases where the direct translation is already widely recognised in English, such as ‘Is fearr an tsláinte ná an táinte’ (Health is better than wealth). In these instances the direct translation served the same function as the English equivalent and adding a separate phrase would have been redundant.

I wrote the contextualisation myself, aiming to keep the language clear, conversational and accessible. Where necessary I provided more detailed explanations, particularly among proverbs with deep cultural or historical significance which often derive from Irish folklore or

tradition. The aim of these contextualizations was to provide support to users who may not understand the meaning or cultural weight behind the seanfhocail, while not overwhelming them with content, ensuring the seanfhocail remained the focus. I believe these explanations are important to support the cultural learning ethos of the app, providing not just a platform of exposure to Irish language but to the cultural depth and worldview embedded within each seanfhocail.

Chapter 4: Design

Seanfhocail an Lae prioritises simplicity and accessibility in its design in order to engage a broad and diverse user base. The architecture of the app consists of four key components: the user interface (UI), the data layer, the logic layer and the home screen widget. The components work in tandem to deliver a smooth user experience. The decision to keep the system lightweight and local was driven by accessibility concerns, potential target audience's varied levels of digital literacy and the desire to avoid dependence on internet access. I relied heavily on Apple's official tutorials in order to implement each component into my app (Apple Inc, n.d.). I am going to do a breakdown of each individual component in order to address their functionality within the app.

4.1 App Components

User Interface (UI)

The UI was designed using SwiftUI. The UI consists of the main screen displaying the daily seanfhocail, a toggle button containing additional information. All text is displayed on white, rounded rectangular cards with black font, ensuring high contrast and readability. The background employs SwiftUI's gradient tool, blending green and orange tones in order to subtly emulate the Irish flag. The design enforces visual clarity and simplicity, supporting accessibility while maintaining aesthetic appeal.

Data Layer

The data layer consists of a lightweight content management system implemented using a locally stored JSON file. This file contains 365 seanfhocail, each structured as an object with fields titled 'id', 'seanfhocail', 'translation,' 'englishEquivalent,' and, 'context.' This design choice enabled efficient iteration and scalability, while also supporting offline interaction with the app. The JSON file is bundled with the app and is loaded at runtime. A new seanfhocail is displayed each day, refreshing at midnight.

```
[{"id": 1, "seanfhocail": "Is fearr Gaeilge bhriste nd Béarla cliste", "Translation": "Broken Irish is better than clever English", "English Equivalent": "N/A", "Context": "Encouraging people to use any bit of Irish they have, even if it isn't strong", "id": 1}, {"id": 2, "seanfhocail": "Tús maith leath na hoibre", "Translation": "A good start is half the work", "English Equivalent": "A good start is half the battle", "Context": "Getting a good start on your work lightens the load down the road", "id": 2}, {"id": 3, "seanfhocail": "Athnionn ciard ciaróp eile", "Translation": "A beetle recognises another beetle", "English Equivalent": "It takes one to know one", "Context": "Potentially derives from beetles ability to release pheromones in order to attract and recognise other beetles.", "id": 3}, {"id": 4, "seanfhocail": "Bionn gach duine go lách go dtéann bó ina ghearráil", "Translation": "Everyone is nice until a cow goes into their garden", "English Equivalent": "True colours are shown when things don't go their way", "Context": "Fair weather friends are a universal concept, however not everyone will know the beast that is awoken when a cow stampedes into your garden leaving massive holes in your lawn. This seanfhocail is a lighthearted reminder that sometimes true colours are revealed in the face of adversity", "id": 4}],
```

Figure 3: Displays some of the Data Layer (JSON file)

Logic Layer

The logic layer controls the behavioural functionality of the app. It determines which seanfhocail to display based on the current day of the year, using a simple function that calculates an index and loops back once the end of the list is reached. This approach ensures consistency across devices, allows for the alignment of specific proverbs for particular dates, and avoids need for external dependencies. The logic layer also manages the interactive components of the app, such as the toggle mechanism that expands or collapses additional information.

```
func getIndexForToday(total: Int) ->
    Int {
    guard total > 0 else { //checks
        total is greater than 0,
        returns error if not
        print("Error no seanfhocail ")
        return 0
    }
    let calendar = Calendar.current
    let today =
        calendar.ordinality(of: .day,
        in: .year, for: Date()) ?? 0
        //gets current day of year,
        defults to 0 if cannot
    return today % total
}
```

Figure 4: Displays a function from the Logic Layer

Widget

The widget was developed using Apple's WidgetKit framework (Apple Inc. n.d). It works to display the daily seanfhocail on the home screen. It uses the same JSON dataset and date based logic as the main app, ensuring synchronisation between the app and widget. The style coincides with the app, using the same green and orange blended background. It opens the app using a custom URL scheme, enabling a seamless transition into the app with a single tap.



Figure 5: Displays Widget

4. 2 Design Personas

In order to analyse and justify the design choices made during the development of Seanfhocail an Lae, I created three distinct user personas. These personas represent different levels of Irish language proficiency ranging from a complete beginner to a fluent speaker and helped to shape the app's features and overall user experience. By considering the unique needs, motivations, and learning contexts of each persona, I was able to ensure that the app would be inclusive, pedagogically grounded, and culturally engaging for a broad and diverse audience.

Persona 1 – Re-engaging Learner

This person learned Irish in school but never advanced beyond a basic level. While they retain fundamental grammar, sentence structure and a reasonable vocabulary, they are unsure where to begin when trying to pick the language up again. The app serves as an ideal reintroduction to Irish, offering a fun, free, and interactive platform that makes the learning process engaging and accessible. According to Babazade (2024), proverbs provide contextualised language use and enhance vocabulary and syntactic knowledge, making them particularly valuable for learners with prior exposure. The user may recognise familiar phrases but will discover new ones alongside them. The daily updates transform Irish into a part of their routine without becoming a chore, aligning with MALL frameworks, which promote easily accessible and habitual interaction with language (Wang et al., 2024). This daily engagement which supports constructivist learning is well adept for this kind of user as it allows them to rebuild their understanding through meaningful exposure (Chuah & Kabilan, 2022).

Persona 2 – Fluent Speaker

This person speaks Irish fluently and uses it confidently in daily life. The app provides an opportunity to reinforce familiar phrases while also introducing new expressions in an enjoyable way. According to Pandey (2021), mobile applications are powerful tools for both preservation and revitalisation of languages as they offer engaging platforms to encourage continued use of heritage languages. For the fluent speaker, Seanfhocail an Lae provides a platform to reincite interest and connection to the language. It builds upon their knowledge while offering a fresh, new way to deepen their connection to spoken Irish.

The app's simple design interface and daily seanfhocail offer a culturally resonant experience, which supports sociocultural learning theory especially in how tools mediate mental activity and cultural identity (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995). This user may also use the app as a conversational bridge, sharing phrases and cultural wisdom with others, which aligns with the role of proverbs in cultural transmission and communal knowledge sharing (Babazade, 2024).

Persona 3 – Complete Beginner

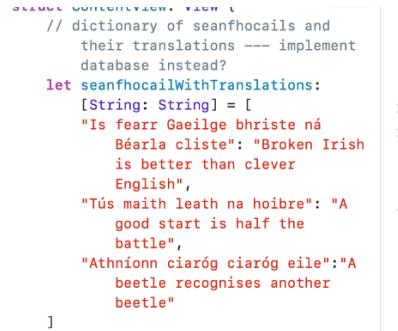
This user has no prior knowledge of Irish and may be drawn to the language for various reasons such as tourism, curiosity, or yearning to connect with Irish culture. The app offers a casual, approachable entry point without overwhelming them with complex grammar. Instead, it introduces practical, conversational content through seanfhocail. Babazade (2024) describes proverbs as succinct, memorable expressions that encapsulate cultural wisdom which is ideal for beginners seeking simple yet useful content. By removing formal structure and focusing on intuitive, daily engagement, the app follows constructivism principles, allowing users to build understanding through real-world context rather than rote learning (Babazade, 2024; Dimmock & Goh, 2011) This method aligns with research on Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), which is particularly beneficial for casual learners and digital natives (Wang et al., 2024).

Chapter 5: Implementation

As a beginner with XCode and Swift, I dedicated much of the early development phase to learning basic functions and techniques. I primarily relied on Apple Developer tutorials as well as Youtube tutorials (Apple Inc, n.d). This helped me understand how to declare variables, create UI and manage data within the app. Stack Overflow helped immensely during the development process, thanks to its large and active community of developers who consistently provide helpful solutions to common coding challenges (Stack Overflow, n.d)

5.1 Content Management and Data Handling

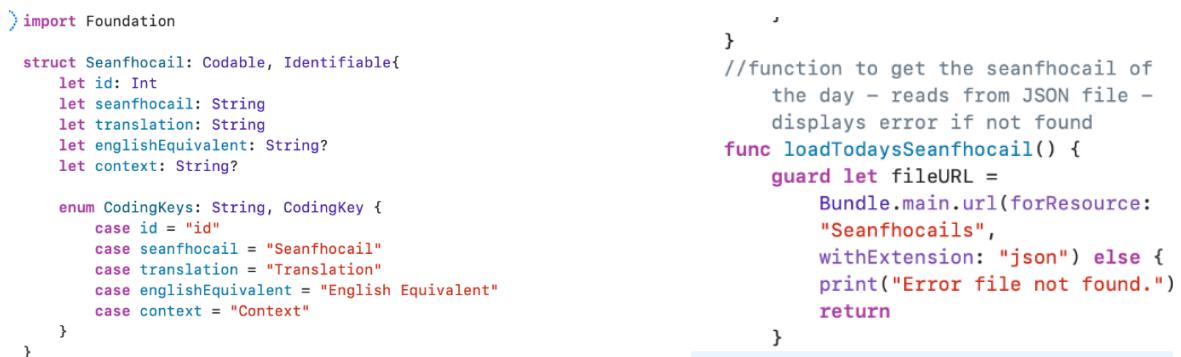
In the early stages of app development, I initially relied on reading a static list of seanfhocail directly within the code. This allowed me to test and validate other core functionalities of the app while allowing me to simultaneously build the basic structure.



```
// dictionary of seanfhocails and
// their translations --- implement
// database instead?
let seanfhocailWithTranslations:
    [String: String] = [
    "Is fear Gaeilge bhriste ná
    Béalra cliste": "Broken Irish
    is better than clever
    English",
    "Tús maith leath na hoibre": "A
    good start is half the
    battle",
    "Athníonn ciaróg ciaróg eile": "A
    beetle recognises another
    beetle"
]
```

Figure 6: Shows in-code database

Once my seanfhocail database was developed a significant amount I began exploring more dynamic and scalable methods of implementing the content. At first, I used a CSV file to store and retrieve the data. However, I later transitioned to a JSON format, as it offered improved readability, organisation and had better compatibility with the app's data handling requirements. Swift's Codable protocol allowed me to decode each section of the JSON file into a structured Swift object, making it easier to access and iterate through each individual proverb. The JSON file is bundled with the app and is loaded at runtime. I employed a generous amount of error catching throughout my code. This was particularly valuable during the development process, as it allowed me to quickly identify the source of any issues and promptly address them. This subsequently is helpful in enabling the app to handle errors sufficiently should problems arise.



```
import Foundation

struct Seanfhocail: Codable, Identifiable{
    let id: Int
    let seanfhocail: String
    let translation: String
    let englishEquivalent: String?
    let context: String?

    enum CodingKeys: String, CodingKey {
        case id = "id"
        case seanfhocail = "Seanfhocail"
        case translation = "Translation"
        case englishEquivalent = "English Equivalent"
        case context = "Context"
    }
}

//function to get the seanfhocail of
//the day - reads from JSON file -
//displays error if not found
func loadTodosSeanfhocail() {
    guard let fileURL =
        Bundle.main.url(forResource:
            "Seanfhocails",
            withExtension: "json") else {
        print("Error file not found.")
        return
}
```

Figure 7: Shows Codable protocol

Figure 8: Function to load daily seanfhocail

To present a new proverb each day, the app calculates an index based on the current day of the year and selects the corresponding entry from the dataset. If the index exceeds the number of entries it loops back to the beginning ensuring the daily update never halts. This method ensures all users see the same seanfhocail everyday.

5.2 User Interface

The application user interface (UI) was one of the more tedious aspects of the development process. My goal was to create an app that was easy to read and simple to navigate, while also being aesthetically pleasing. I experimented with various colours, fonts and scale options to achieve this. Ultimately I used a gradient background inspired by the Irish flag, typography that was clear and readable.

Rather than downloading external tools for UI development, namely Apple Sketch, I opted for using Xcode built in interface builder and SwiftUI's native styling features to build a consistent and responsive interface. The only exception being the app logo which I created using Canva. This was primarily due to the allocated time I had attributed to the design process. The core content view displays the daily seanfhocail inside a rounded box element. Below it users can use a toggle button to reveal further information. These views are managed using @State variables to show and hide the content based on user interaction.

Below are images illustrating several key stages in the design process as the app developed, highlighting the progression from initial concepts to a more defined and realised interface.

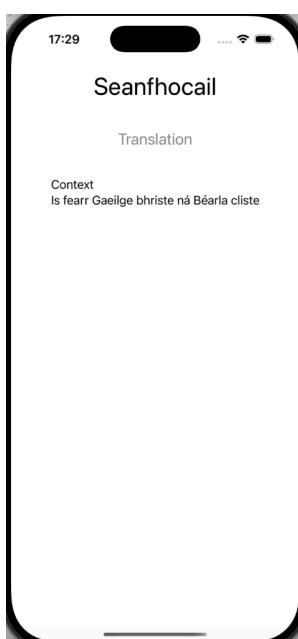


Figure 9: Initial app UI Figure 10: Improved app UI development Figure 11: Finalised app UI

5.3 Widget Integration

To extend usability beyond the app itself, I developed a home screen widget using Apple's WidgetKit framework. The widget reads from the same local JSON file and uses the same date based indexing system to remain synchronised with the main app. It displays the daily seanfhocail in a simplified format, styled with a matching gradient background. A fallback sample seanfhocail is shown in case of any loading issues involving the JSON file, maintaining a positive user experience.

Tapping the widget opens the main app via a custom URL scheme. This was achieved by registering the URL scheme within the app's Info.plist file and linking the widget view to this scheme using .widgetURL(). When the user taps the widget the iOS recognises the custom URL and launches the app. This creates a quick transition from the widget to the app.

Below are images illustrating several key stages in the design process as the widget developed, highlighting the progression from initial concepts to a more defined and realised interface.



Figure 12: Initial widget UI



Figure 13: Improved widget UI development

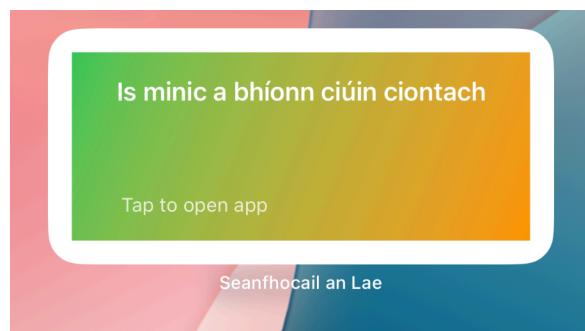


Figure 14: Finalised widget UI

Chapter 6: Limitations and Future Developments

One of the major setbacks with this project was the limited time frame, which forced me to scale back on my original intentions for the app. I had to limit the scope, ultimately deciding on 365 seanfhocail, one for each day of the year. With more time the app could have expanded to a larger database, offering deeper contextualisation containing information about each seanfhocail origin and contemporary use. This would have added depth to the cultural learning experience and strengthened the app's function as an educational and cultural preservation tool. Another key component I would have integrated is a text to speech feature for each seanfhocail, allowing users to hear the correct pronunciation. As Chasaide et al. (2019) highlighted, this would have supported users in developing their aural comprehension and pronunciation skills, while also enhancing the app's overall accessibilities.

Additionally, working as a solo developer significantly impacted the pace of the project. The development process was slower as I had to take time to learn, design, implement and test each component independently. With additional support or collaboration the app could likely have developed more efficiently, with additional components added. Another aspect this negatively impacted was the app's content, particularly the English equivalents and contextualisation, as they were primarily shaped by my own perspective. While I made a staunch effort to remain unbiased, these aspects of the app's content inevitably reflect my individual understanding. A collaborative approach would have provided a more diverse range of interpretations, and by association, more developed responses.

Another limitation is the fact the app can only be hosted on iOS devices. Ideally, Seanfhocail an Lae would be available on both Android and Apple devices, especially considering Android remains the most widely used mobile operating system globally (StatCounter, 2025). However, due to the limited timeframe of the project and the fact I primarily use Apple devices for developing and testing, focusing on iOS was the most practical choice. Moving forward, a key advancement would be to expand the app's compatibility to Android in order to increase accessibility and reach a broader user base.

Overall, the app has been received with positive feedback and strong interest. When presenting the project to a group of approximately 75 transition year students, the majority expressed they would be interested in downloading the app. This response validates the relevance and appeal of Seanfhocail an Lae to younger audiences. Additionally, I have applied for funding with the aim of launching the app on the App Store in the near future. Furthermore, the database, in both JSON and Excel format, containing the seanfhocail, translations, english equivalents and contextualisation have been uploaded on Zenodo, making it openly accessible to support future research and initiatives (Hegarty, 2025).



Figure 15: Presenting the project to Transition Year students

Conclusions

Seanfhocail an Lae was a project conceived with a clear and pressing purpose: to contribute to the revitalisation of the Irish language in a meaningful way by promoting culture through digital innovation. In the face of English language dominance and globalisation there is a growing need to reimagine how traditional linguistic and cultural practices can be preserved and promoted in meaningful ways, especially in the context of minority languages such as Irish. Through the development of the Seanfhocail an Lae app I aimed to increase the visibility of Irish in a culturally significant way.

This thesis displayed how a Design Based Research (DBR) methodology could be used to develop an educational tool that was pedagogically grounded. DBR was a fitting approach as it allowed for the continuous refinement of the app through cycles of research design, implementation and reflection. This methodology also supported the integration of theoretical frameworks into every stage of the development process, namely Constructivism and Sociocultural theory. These theories informed how learning was conceptualised within the app and shaped how the user experience was designed to encourage deeper engagement with both language and culture.

Constructivism views knowledge as something that learners actively construct through meaningful interaction. In the context of Seanfhocail an Lae, the app positions users as active participants in their learning journey. The daily seanfhocail paired with translations and contextualisation allow users to construct personal meanings and prompt reflection. This kind of learning supports more than retention as it encourages users to see the Irish language as something relevant and personally resonant. Sociocultural theory emphasises the role of culture, tools and interaction in learning. This supports Seanfhocail an Lae as a relevant, useful learning tool. Seanfhocail are seen as tools that enrich Irish as they contain communal values, humour, history and insightful perspectives. By integrating seanfhocail into users' everyday routine, Seanfhocail an Lae reinforces the idea that language learning is not merely about acquiring grammatical structures but about immersing yourself in cultural heritage. The app's minimal but meaningful design choices, such as its widget and daily update mechanic support this by embedding Irish exposure into daily routine.

In developing the app, one of the most important aspects was the careful curation and contextualisation of the seanfhocail database. The process required thoughtful decisions about language, tone and inclusion. Some proverbs were excluded for their outdated or exclusionary messages, while others were chosen precisely for their timeless resonance or contemporary relevance. In providing both direct translations and English equivalents I aimed to make the content more accessible to users at varying levels of language proficiency without eroding the accurate meaning of the original Irish in order to preserve the cultural symbolism contained within each seanfhocail.

One of the most important outcomes of this project has been the demonstration that digital tools can, where carefully and intentionally designed, support both linguistic and cultural learning in tandem. Unlike many existing Irish language learning platforms which focus solely on vocabulary or grammar structure, Seanfhocail an Lae emphasises cultural immersion through short, reflective daily interactions. These short, meaningful interactions expose users to the language while not overwhelming them with monotonous content. This microlearning strategy respects the realities of modern digital attention spans while offering a steady and cumulative path to deeper engagement. Moreover the app resists the anglicisation often seen in Irish language content, maintaining fidelity to the unique phrasing and cultural logic of the proverbs wherever possible.

However the development also suffered limitations. Working as a solo developer meant the progress was slower and the scope of the app was more limited than originally intended. The content creation, specifically the English equivalents and contextualisation, was shaped primarily by my own perspective despite my efforts to remain objective and inclusive. A more collaborative approach would likely result in richer and more nuanced interpretations. Additionally the app is currently only available for iOS due to development constraints which limits its availability to a wider audience. Another limitation was the lack of a text to speech feature which would have significantly improved the apps support for aural learning and pronunciation. As discussed in my literature review, the integration of speech technology can play a vital role in revitalisation efforts by reinforcing correct spoken forms and promoting listening comprehension. Including audio features in future iterations of the app would not only enhance language acquisition but also improve accessibility for users with different learning preferences or needs.

Seanfhocail an Lae contributes to the discussion surrounding digital tools supporting minority language revitalization. As shown through this thesis, language is inseparable from cultural identity. When we lose a language, we not only lose a communication system, but a way of seeing and understanding the world. By digitising seanfhocail, this project seeks not to simply archive the past but animate it. Revitalise it so that it is spoken again and help new generations hear its voice. Seanfhocail an Lae emphasises the importance of cultural authenticity in the modern world. The user centered design and daily low effort engagement model serve as an example for how traditional linguistic forms can be thoughtfully adapted for the digital age. It does not strip them of their complexity but invites users to appreciate the intricacy of language and adapt it into their lives. Users are offered a uniquely Irish worldview that captures the values of its people through metaphorical, poetic, humorous and reflective proverbs.

Ultimately, Seanfhocail an Lae represents a small but meaningful contribution in the ongoing effort to preserve and revive the Irish language. It demonstrates how technology, when guided by sound pedagogy and cultural sensitivity, can be a powerful tool for learning and connection to heritage, community and self. The development of this app has highlighted the importance of creativity, reflection, and user centred thinking in language learning technology design. It has also affirmed the value of seanfhocail as vibrant pieces of Irish identity.

8. Appendix

Full database of Seanfhocail corpus, with literal translation, equivalent saying in English, and contextualisation. The database has been uploaded to Zenodo featuring both JSON and Excel file format: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15223168>

Seanfhocail	Translation	English Equivalent	Context
Is fearr Gaeilge bhriste ná Béarla cliste	Broken Irish is better than clever English	N/A	Encouraging people to use any bit of Irish they have, even if it isn't strong
Tús maith leath na hoibre	A good start is half the work	A good start is half the battle	N/A
Athníonn ciaróg ciaróg eile	A beetle recognises another beetle	It takes one to know one	Potentially derives from beetles' ability to release pheromones in order to attract and recognise other beetles.
Bíonn gach duine go lách go dtéann bó ina gharraí	Everyone is nice until a cow goes into their garden	True colours are shown when things don't go their way	Fair weather friends are a universal concept, however not everyone will know the beast that is awoken when a cow stampedes into your garden leaving massive holes in your lawn. This seanfhocail is a lighthearted reminder that someones true colours are revealed in the face of adversity
Filleann an feall ar an bhfeallaire	Betrayal will return to the traitor	What goes around comes around	Often translated, 'evil comes to the evil doer,' this seanfhocail is a warning that actions have consequences.
Is binn béal ina thost	A mouth in silence is sweet	Silence is golden	Silence is more commonly translated as 'ciúnas'
Ni thagann ciall roimh aois	Sense doesn't come before age	Wisdom comes with age	A more cynical take in English is 'the youth is wasted on the young,' or alternatively 'experience is the best teacher.'
Is maith an t-anlann an t-oiras	Hunger is the best sauce	Hunger is the best cook	Food tastes better when you're hungry. Can also be used in the context of anticipation, things are more appreciated when you have to wait for them.

Is geall le sos malairt oibre	A change is as good as a rest	Variety is the spice of life	Changing course can be motivating, refreshing and can prevent burnout
Nuair a bhíonn an cat amuigh, bíonn na lucha ag rince	When the cats out, the mice dance	When the cats away the mice will play	Chaos ensues when authority is absent
Briseann an dúchas trí shúile an chait	Hereditary break through the eyes of a cat	What's bred in the bone will come out in the flesh	A person can't ever truly conceal their nature
Nuair a bhíonn an bolg lán, is maith leis na cnámha síneadh	When the belly is full, the bones like to stretch	Eat well, rest well	Food-coma
Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí	Praise the youth and it will come	Encouragement breeds success	Positive reinforcement reaps positive results
Ní neart go cur le chéile	There is no strength until we're put together	United we stand, divided we fall	Often translated as 'there is strength in unity.'
Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine	People live in each others shadows	No man is an island	We all rely and learn from each other
Ní hé lá na gaoithe lá na scolb	The day of the wind is not the day for thatching	Don't fix the roof when it's storming	'Scolb' refers to wooden pegs used to pin down a thatch.
Bíonn an fhírinne searbh	The truth is bitter	The truth hurts	And yet honesty is the best policy
Ní mar a síltear a bítear	What is thought isn't what it is	Things aren't always what they seem	Just because it's thought, doesn't make it true
Is glas iad na cnoic i bhfad uainn	The faraway hills are greener	The grass is always greener on the other side	We always want what we can't have
Cuir síoda ar ghabhar agus is gabhar i gcónaí é	Put silk on a goat and it will always be a goat	Lipstick on a pig	Appearance doesn't change the true nature of something

An áit a bhfuil do chroí is ann a thabharfas do chosa thíú	Your feet will bring you to where your heart is	Home is where the heart is	You will find what is meant for you if you let your heart guide you there
An té a thabharfas scéal chugat tabharfaidh sé dhá scéal uait	Whoever will bring a story to you will take two stories from you	One story leads to another	Telling stories is a common occurrence in Ireland, and subsequently exchanging stories. A more sinister interpretation of this seanfhocail links to Irish gossip culture, suggesting that if someone gossips to you they will gossip about you.
Ceannaigh drochrud agus bí gan aon rud	Buy something bad and be left with nothing	Buy cheap, buy twice	Perhaps a modern interpretation could be 'buy from Shein and be left with nothing.'
An rud nach leigheasann im ná uisce beatha nil leigheas air	What whiskey or butter can't cure, can't be cured	Whiskey makes a good band aid	Humorous seanfhocail relaying that if food or drink can't fix it, it can't be cured. Can be said about trying to fight a flu, or to someone going through hardship. The Irish often seek comfort from a hot whiskey during dire times.
Is túisce deoch ná scéal	First a drink then a story	No good story started with a glass of milk	Irish protocol - offer a drink before you start chatting. Also can be said regarding the stories that arise from a night of drinking.
Is olc an chearc nach scríobann di féin	It is a bad hen that does not scratch itself	Don't let others do your dirty work	Hens scratch the floor to source food, build their nests and bond with others. This seanfhocail criticises those who leech off others and encourages hard work and self reliance.
Is lia gach othar i ndiaidh a Leighis	Every patient is a surgeon when he's cured	A little knowledge is a dangerous thing	People love to gloat, often without the credentials to do so. This seanfhocail emphasises this nature, poking fun at people who talk like an expert at something they may have only done once.
Obair ó chrích obair bean tí	Work that never ends is the work of a housewife	A woman's work is never done	A misogynistic assumption that women are the only people required to do housework, regardless this seanfhocail highlights the endless work required in maintaining household chores.
Is fearr lán doirn de cheird ná lán mála d'ór	It is better to have a fist full of craft than a bag full of gold	Knowledge is wealth	A seanfhocail praising the strength of skill and knowledge
Mac an tsaoir ábhar an tuata	The son of a craftsman has	Skills aren't inherited, they're taught	This seanfhocail alludes to the fact that a child grows up clueless of skills they are not taught. Perhaps through blatant ignorance - why learn

	the skills of an amateur		to cook if mammy does it? Or change a lightbulb if daddy can? However this works both ways - how should a child know how to do things if they are never taught by their parents.
Is buaine port ná glór na n-éan, Is buaine focal ná toice an tsaoil	A tune outlasts the voice of the birds, a word outlasts the wealth of the world	Words live longer than wealth	Don't underestimate the power of speech
Bíonn an grá le feiceáil sna gníomhartha beaga	Love is seen in the small actions	Love is in the little things	Perhaps the simplest way to express love in Ireland is to offer a cup of tea
Is maith an scáthán súil charad	A friend's eye is a good mirror	Better the slap of a friend than the kiss of an enemy	The most honest reflection of yourself comes from those closest to you
Ag caitheamh an tsaoil is an saol ár gcaitheamh	Consuming life while life consumes us	We shape our lives and life shapes us	A somber reflection of life, but a true one all the same. Another reminder make the most of our time while we have it
Ní sia gob an ghé na gob an ghandail	The goose's beak is no longer than the gander's	Cut from the same cloth	Men gossip just as much as women - A gander is a male goose
Is maith an scéalaí an aimsir	Time is a good storyteller	Time will tell	Storys grow with time, which can be a good and bad thing. The truth gets revealed with time, but also a story can grow tails after being retold. 'Aimsir' means weather which can allude to unpredictable relationships with memories and stories.
Ní fhanann trá le hénne	The tide waits for no one	Time waits for no one	A reminder that life and nature continue regardless of your personal experience. In acknowledgment of the tides and their changing courses its also a precaution that what is given today might be taken tomorrow.
Sceitheann fíon firinne	Wine spills the truth	Drunken words are sober truths	Inhibitions are lowered when inebriated, often leaving people spilling their secrets
An rud a théann i bhfad, téann sé i bhfuaire	What takes too long grows cold	Its lost its spark	This seanfhocail warns against taking too long with decisions and tasks. An antonym to the common English proverb 'distance makes the heart grow fonder,' this seanfhocail argues

			that enough time kills any spark. Whether it be between people or motivation
Níl aon leigheas ar an ngrá ach pósadh	The only cure for love is marriage	Marry in haste, repent at leisure	A humorous seanfhocail which can serve as a reminder to marry for the right reasons
Drochubh, drochéan	Bad egg, bad bird	A bad beginning makes a bad ending	Bad kid means bad parenting
Níl leigheas ar an gcathú ach é a mharú le foighne	There is no cure for regret but to kill it with patience	Time heals all wounds	Cathú can be translated as temptation, which makes the seanfhocail versatile in meaning
Níl aon tinteán mar do thinteán féin	There is no hearth like your own hearth	There is no place like home	A hearth in this seanfhocail symbolises the comfort and warmth provided at home
Ní thuigeann an sách an seang	The well fed doesn't understand the lean	You can't understand hunger if you've never been hungry	Empathy can only take you so far
Is ceirín do gach créacht an fhoighne	Patience is a poultice for all wounds	Time heals all wounds	Both physical and emotional
Is cuma le fear na mbróg cá leagann sé a chos	The man with the boots doesn't care where he places his foot	The rich don't understand the poor	Privilege can breed ignorance
Ní troimide an loch an lacha	The duck doesn't make the lake heavier	Like water off a ducks back	Don't worry about the little things in life
Ná caill grá toisc go bhfuil tú buartha faoi amárach	Don't lose love because you're worried about tomorrow	Don't let tomorrows worry steal today's joy	Don't get preoccupied with anxieties or you'll lose out on good things
Ní mhealltar an sionnach faoi dhó	You wont fool a fox twice	Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me.	A wise person will not be fooled twice
Giorraíonn beirt bóthar	The road is shorter with two	Time flies when you're having fun	A partner shortens the journey and makes life more enjoyable

Is gairid ár gcairt ar an saol seo	Our lease on life is short	Seize the day	Life is short so make the most of it
Ní haon ualach an chiall	Sense is not a heavy burden	Knowledge is light	Having sense won't weigh you down
Tosach sláinte codladh	Health starts with sleep	Sleep is the best medicine	Sleep is the first sign of recovery and vital to maintain both physical and mental health
Ní heolas go haontíos	You don't know them until you live together	You can't understand someone until you've walked a mile in their shoes	A big test of a relationship, be it friendship or romantic, is living together. However this seanfhocail also highlights how you will never truly know someone.
Céard a dhéanfadh mac an chait ach luch a mharú?	What will a cat's son do but kill a mouse?	Like father like son	This seanfhocail tackles the debate of nature vs nurture
Ní dhéanfach an saol capall rás d'asal	Life will not make a racehorse of an ass	A leopard can't change its spots	Sometimes you aren't made to do certain things and that's ok
Bíonn súil le muir ach ní bhíonn súil le tir	There's hope from the sea but none from the grave	As long as there is life, there is hope	This seanfhocail originates from Irish people longing for home after emigrating, implying that the hope to return home remains until death
Ní fiú bheith ag searchas agus an anachain déanta	There is no use in lore when the damage is done	No use crying over spilled milk	Sometimes actions have consequences no excuse can justify so it's better to move on
Is minic a bhí fear maith i seanbhríste	It is often a good man in old trousers	Don't judge a book by its cover	Looks can be deceiving, and this seanfhocail highlights that they often don't reflect the integrity of what's inside.
Dhá dtrian sainte ag lucht saibhris	The rich have two thirds of the world's greed	The more you get, the more you want	Criticism of materialism and money addiction
Marbh le tae agus marbh gan é	Dead with tea and dead without it	Can't live with it, can't live without it	Irish people love tea. And complaining. This seanfhocail pokes fun at these traits insinuating you can be reliant on something and still find a way to complain about it.
Cleachtadh a dhéanann máistreacht	Practice makes mastery	Practice makes perfect	Cleachtadh' can also be translated as making a habit

Ní féidir leis an ngobadán an dá thrá a fhreastal	The sandpiper cannot tend two beaches	You can't be in two places at once	Divided loyalties will lead to dissatisfaction
Imíonn an tuirse ach fanann an tairbhe	The tiredness leaves but the benefits remain	Hard work will pay off	Pain is temporary
Is é ceol teanga an anama	Music is the language of the soul	Music expresses that which cannot be put into words	This seanfhocail is a testament to music, which holds a strong pillar in Irish culture
Folaíonn grá grán	Love hides hate	Love is blind	This seanfhocail highlights the fact that love and hate are so intrinsically linked they're often confused with one another
Síleann do chara agus do namhaid nach bhfaighidh tú bás choice	Both your friend and your enemy think you will never die	We always think we have more time	Appreciate your loved ones and make amends while you can
I dtosach na haicíde is fusa í a leigheas	The beginning of the disease is easiest to cure	A stitch in time saves nine	Address your problems as early as possible or they'll only grow
Is deacair do malá folamh seasamh suas direach	It's hard for an empty sack to stand upright	You can't pour from an empty cup	This seanfhocail reminds us that sustenance is key. Food, water and self care are vital to achieving your best self
Tógfaidh dath dubh ach ní thógfaidh dubh dath	Colour can take black, but black can not take colour	Actions cannot be reversed	Actions sometimes have irreversible consequences
Ná caitheadh amach an tuisge salach go mbeidh an tuisge glan istigh	Don't throw out the dirty water until the clean water is in	Don't burn your bridges before you cross them	Don't make rash decisions and be left with nothing
Is geal leis an bhfiach dubh a géarrach fhéin	Every raven thinks its own nestling fair	A mother's love is blind	It's hard to accept your child isn't perfect
Nuair a bhíonn an t-ól istigh bhíonn an chiall amuigh	When the drink's in the wit's out	Wine in, wits out	Good decisions and alcohol aren't great friends

Nuair a stadann an ceol stadann an rince	When the music stops the dancing stops	Enjoy it while it lasts	All good things must come to an end so enjoy it while you can
Bíonn an mhil milis ach bíonn an bheach cealgach	Honey is sweet but the bee is deceitful	Every rose has a thorn	The bee stings and the thorn pricks, nothing can ever be perfect
Bíonn dhá insint ar scéal agus dhá leagan déag ar amhrán	There are two sides to every story and twelve versions of a song	There's two sides to every story and the truth lies somewhere in the middle	This seanfhocail acknowledges that stories change depending on who's telling it, and songs bare the same ability
An té a bhíonn thuas, óltar deoch air. An té a bhíonn thíos, buailtear cos air	When they're up, they drink to them. When they're down, they're kicked	Success has many friends but failure is an orphan	Critique on society's tendency to only celebrate achievements and turn their back on those who struggle
Oíche aerach is maidin bhrónach	A lively night and a sad morning	The morning after the night before	Hangovers
Déan mórán agus can beagán	Do a lot and say little	Actions speak louder than words	Modesty is a creed heavily respected
Ar mhaithe leis féin a bhíonn an cat ag crónán	The cat only purrs for its own sake	There's no such thing as a selfless act	Sincerity in kindness is hard to come by
Is minic a bhíonn ciúin ciontach	Silence is often a sign of guilt	Still waters run deep	Silence can speak volumes
Is teanga an ceol a thuigeann cách	Music is a language everyone understands	Music is a universal language	Regardless of lyrics moods can be interpreted through music
Má chailleann tú uair ar maidin beidh tú á tóraíocht i rith an lae	If you miss an hour in the morning you'll be chasing it all day	Early bird catches the worm	Lost time is never found again
Tarraingíonn scéal scéal eile	One story leads to another	Tales grow in the telling	Testament to Ireland's love of storytelling
Ní dhíolann dearmad fiacha	Forgetting doesn't settle a debt	Ignoring your problems	All debts will catch up to you eventually

		won't make them go away	
Beatha teanga í a labhairt	The life of a language is to speak it	Use it or lose it	Often said about Irish revival
Tógann mionclocha caisleáin	Small stones build castles	Rome wasn't built in a day	As Tesco would say - every little helps
Is beag le rá an chuileog nó go dtéann sí sa tsúil	A fly is a small thing until it gets in ones eye	People don't care until it happens to them	Can be said about underestimating the strength or significance of things
Bíonn earrai maithe i mbeairtí beaga	Big things come in small packages	Don't judge a book by its cover	Applies to people, gifts, advice or ideas
Is fearr glas ná amhras	A lock is better than doubt	Better to be safe than sorry	There's no harm in being cautious with your life, your decisions and your heart
Doras feasa fiafraí	Asking is the door to knowledge	Ask and you shall receive	Don't be afraid to ask questions
Tá grá cosúil le lasair, caithfear aire a thabhairt dó le go mairfidh sé	Love is like a flame, it must be tended in order to survive	A garden must be tended to grow	Don't take your relationships for granted
Ní beag a bheith go dona gan a bheith go dona faoi	It's bad enough being miserable without being miserable about it	Pain is inevitable, but suffering is optional	A critique of people who love to complain
Ní hé an té is fearr a thuileann is mó a fhraigheann	The most deserving isn't always the most rewarded	The rich get richer, and the poor get poorer	An unfortunate fact of life
Is dána gach fear go tulaigh	Every man is brave until he reaches the battle	All talk and no trousers	Every coward seems courageous in the safety of a crowd
Is minic a bhris béal duine a shrón	A man's mouth often broke his nose	Your mouth is writing a check your body can't cash	Particularly when he's drunk

Ní dheachaigh fial ariamh go hlfreann	A generous person never went to hell	Kindness is its own reward	Choose kindness always
Tar éis a thuigtear gach beart	It's easy to be wise after the event	Hindsight is a killer	We learn from our mistakes
Roghnaigh do chuideachta sul a dtéann tú ag ól	Choose your company before you go drinking	Choose your friends wisely	You should always keep good company, especially when in vulnerable situations
Chuirfeadh sé cosa faoi cheارقا duit	He would put legs under a chicken	Talk the hind legs off a donkey	Used to describe a chatterbox - as a compliment or insult
Ní bhíonn a fhios ag duine cá luíonn an bhróg ar an duine eile	You don't know what shoe fits another person	You don't know what other people are going through	Be kind to everyone because looks can be deceiving
Tá eirbeall an chait sa ghríosach	The cats tail is in hot ashes	A disaster waiting to happen	Unique way of saying that bad weather is coming
Tosach staile nó deire láreach	The start of a stallion or the end of a mare	A fresh start or a tired end	The choice between something fresh or relying on something worn out but familiar
Is fearr lúbadh ná briseadh	It is better to bend than to break	Be like water	Compromise is key
Má bhíonn tú ar lorg cara gan locht, beidh tú gan chara go deo	If you're looking for a friend without fault, you'll be friendless forever	Nobody's perfect	Don't hold people to impossible standards
Fág an drochscéal san áit a bhfuair tú é	Leave the bad story where you found it	Let sleeping dogs lie	Some things are best left where they belong
Trí shaghas fear nach féidir leo mná a thuscint: fir óga, fir aosta agus fir mheánaosta	Three types of men who don't understand women: the old, the young and the middle-aged	N/A	Men will never understand women
íosann cat ciúin biadh	The quiet cat eats food	Don't judge a book by its cover	Quietness isn't an indication of intention or capability

An té ná tógfaidh cómhairle, gheóbhaidh sé cómhrac	He who will not take advice will get a combat	Thick skull	If you don't learn from mistakes you'll keep getting hurt
Teas gréine is gar do dhubhadh	Sunshine follows darkness	Darkest before the dawn	Good times often follow a period of darkness
Bíonn cluasa ar na claíocha	Fences have ears	Walls have ears	Be careful of eavesdropping
An rud is annamh is iontach	What is rare is wonderful	What's strange is beautiful	Embrace what's unique
Fásann níos mó i ngort ná mar a chuirtear ann	More grows in a field than is planted there	Big things come from small beginnings	A testament to the capability and individuality of children
Níor bhris focal maith fiacal riámh	A good word never broke a tooth	Kindness costs you nothing	No one gets punched in the face over being kind
Is maol gualainn gan bhráthair	It's a bald shoulder without a brother	No man is an island	Friendship is vital
Is olc an ghaoth ná séideann maith do dhuine éigin	It's a bad wind that doesn't blow good for someone	Every action has an equal opposite reaction	Someone must reap the benefits of a dire situation
Ní bhíonn saoi gan locht	There isn't a wise man without fault	Nobody is perfect	And if you think you are perfect, you're dense
Is fearr rith maith ná droch-sheasamh	It's better to have a good run than a bad stance	It's better to try and fail than to never try at all	Failure is a part of your success
Is mórlach de shrón duine	An inch is big on a nose	Truth is relative	Perspective is everything
Nuair a chacann gé cacann siad go léir	When one goose shits, they all shit	People are sheep	Used in a negative way to describe herd mentality
Ni sheasann sac folamh	An empty sack won't stand	You can't pour from an empty cup	It's hard to work on an empty stomach, additionally, empty promises are useless

Tá cluasa fada ar muca beaga	Little pigs have big ears	Walls have ears	Children hear more than you think
Ní féidir fear gan ceann a chrochadh	You can't hang a headless man	You can't build a house without a foundation	Know your limits
Is trom an t-ualach é an leisce	Laziness is a heavy burden	Hard work pays off	You're cutting yourself off from so many opportunities by being lazy
Go n-éirí an bóthar leat	May the roads rise with you	Good luck on your journey	Said to someone leaving on a journey
La millte na móna lá fómhar an chabáiste	The rain that destroys the turf is good for the cabbage	Silver lining to every cloud	Something good comes out of everything
Fál maith a dhéanas comharsana maithe	A good fence makes for good neighbours	Respect the peace	Healthy boundaries make healthy relationships
Coimhéad fearg fhear na foighde	Beware the anger of a patient man	Wolf in sheep's clothing	The longer they wait the harder they break
An té a chaillfeas a chlú, caillfidh sé a náire	He who loses his fame, loses his shame	Shameless	Honesty can be freeing
Is maith é an bád a dhéanann amach an caladh a d'fhág sé	It's a good boat that remembers the harbour it left from	Remember your roots	Remember where you came from and respect it
An truas is faide tosnaíonn sé le coiscéim bheag amháin	The longest journey begins with a single step	A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step	Small actions lead to big results
An té a bhíonn síúlach, bíonn scéalach	He who travels has stories to tell	Travel broadens the mind	Travel leads to experience, experience leads to growth
Is minic a bhíonn an t-úll go holc ina chroí	An apple is often rotten at heart	Beauty can be deceptive	Looks can be deceiving

Maireann an crann ach ní mhaireann an lámh a chuir é	The tree lasts but the hand that planted it does not	You may not see the fruits of your labour	Legacy outlives your lifetime
Dá mbeifeá chomh láidir le crann darach, gheobhaidh an bás an ceann is fearr ort	Even if you're as strong as an oak tree, death will still get the best of you	Even the mightiest fall	Death comes for everyone
Bailíonn brobh beart	A blade gathers in a bundle	Many a little makes a mickle	There's value in little things
Is deas an rud an beagán ach é a dhéanamh go maith	A little is best if done right	Quality over quantity	Bigger isn't always better
Is neamhbhuan cogadh na gcarad; má bhíonn sé crua, ní bhíonn sé fada	The war of friends is temporary; even if its bitter, it's not long	Forgive and forget	True friendship is more important than being right
Is maith an cúnamh an lá breá	A fine day is help to everyone	N/A	Good weather is a mood booster
Scuabann scuab úr go glan, ach tá fios ag an sean scuab ar an ciornéil	A fresh brush sweeps clean, but an old brush knows the corners	Experience is the best teacher	You can't beat experience
Ná glac pioc comhairle gan comhairle ban	Don't take advice without a woman's guidance	Behind every great man is an even greater women	Perspective is important when making a decision, especially a woman's
Is faide a théann an dúchas ná an fhoghlaim	Nurture goes further than learning	You can't teach an old dog new tricks	Parenting in the first few years can determine the rest of a child's life
Cad a bheadadh súil agat a fháil ó bhó ach preab	What would you expect from the cow but to kick	You can't get blood from a rose	Don't expect the impossible

Faigheann an tseanbhróg an tseanstoca	The old shoe finds the old stocking	There's a lid for every pot	There is someone for everyone
Éiríonn an té a luíonn le madraí le dreancaidí	He who sleeps with dogs will rise with fleas	You're known by the company you keep	Bad habits can rub off on you if you keep bad company
Nuair a chruaann an tslat is deacair í a lúbadh	When the rod hardens its difficult to bend	You can't teach an old dog new tricks	Its hard for the old to change their ways
Ní heaspa go díth carad	There is no need like the lack of a friend	Loneliness is the greatest poverty	Having a sense of community is vital for a happy life
Chomh diomhaoin le laidhricín piobaire	As idle as a fiddlers pinky finger	A ship without a sail	Completely useless
An rud a líonas an tsúil líoann sé an croí	What fills the eye fills the heart	Beauty is in the eye of the beholder	What we can see makes a big impact on our decisions
Éiste le fuaim na habhann agus gheobhaidh tú breac	Listen to the river and you'll find trout	Patience is a virtue	Have patience and trust in nature
Ní haon maith a bheith ag caonineadh nuair a imíonn an tsochraíd	It's no good mourning when the funeral is gone	No use crying over spilled milk	No use causing a fuss over something that's already been done
Is fearr focal sa chuírt ná punt sa sparán	A good word in court is better than a pound in your purse	True friends are worth more than gold	Value your friendships over money
Is minic a bhain seangán léim as gearrá	It's often an ant jumped out of a trap	Every dog has its day	Everyone's good for something
Is fearr an tsláinte ná an táinte	Health is better than wealth	N/A	Value your health and wellbeing over money
Múineann gé seift	A goose teaches a trick	Necessity is the mother of invention	You can learn things from unlikely sources

Is minic a rug cú mall ar ghiorra	A slow hound often catches a hare	Slow and steady wins the race	Patience and persistence bring success
Tig maith móras moill bheag	Great good can come from a short delay	Good things come to those who wait	Good things take time, and waiting makes things feel more gratified
Ní dhéanfaidh smaoineamh an treabhadh duit	You won't plough a field by thinking about it	Actions speak louder than words	Procrastination won't get you anywhere
Is fearr beagán cuidithe na móran trua	A bit of help is better than a lot of sympathy	A little help goes a long way	Practical help is better than empty sympathy
An té a bhíonn siúlach, bíonn sé scéalach agus an té a bhíonn scéalach bíonn sé bréagach	He who travels is a storyteller and he who is a storyteller is a liar	The more you tell the less you know	People tend to add embellishments or exaggerate their stories to appear more interesting
Is cuma le tae cé ólfas é	Tea doesn't care who drinks it	N/A	Tea is a universal comfort and there's an endless supply
Is treise toil ná tuiscint	Will is stronger than understanding	Where there's a will there's a way	Having determination and willpower is stronger than knowledge
Taephota sa teallach, 'sé a shásóidh an chailleach	A pot of tea on the hearth is what will satisfy the old woman	Simple pleasures	The comfort of a fire and a warm cup of tea is a kind comfort
Téann íseal agus uasal chuig tórramh	Both the rich and the poor attend funerals	We all end up in the same place	Death is inevitable for everyone
Ná mol agus ná cáin tú féin	Neither praise nor criticise yourself	Self praise is no praise	Maintain humility
Maireann croí éadrom i bhfad	A light heart lives long	Laughter is the best medicine	Keep stress free and look on the bright side of life
Ní cleas é go ndéantar trí huairé é	It isn't a trick until its done three times	Three is a pattern	Can't say its a skill if you rely on chance

Ní chaitheann an chaint an t-éadach	Chatting doesn't wear the clothes	Talk is cheap	Talking won't get any work done
Inis do Mháire i gcógar é, is inseoidh Máire dó phóbáil é	Tell it to Mary in a whisper, and Mary will tell the whole parish	Loose lips sink ships	A humorous warning of gossip culture
Ná bíodh do theanga faoi do chrios	Don't keep your tongue under your belt	Don't be afraid to speak your mind	Speak up on important matters
An té is mó a osclaíonn a bhéal is é is lú a osclaíonn a sparán	He who opens his mouth the most is he who opens his purse the least	Put up or shut up	The person talking often 'misses' their round when out drinking. Can also refer to someone who talks about plans but never follows through
Mórán cainte ar bheagán cúise	Much talk with little reason	Empty vessels make the most noise	Someone who makes statements with no proof to back it up
Galar gan náire an tart	Thirst is a shameless disease	Thirst is no shame	Don't feel shameful desiring things you need
Is fearr a bheith diomhaoin ná droch-ghnóthach	Better to be idle than to be badly occupied	Better to do nothing than to do what is wrong	Taking a break is more beneficial than overworking yourself to burnout or getting involved with something bad
Ná nocht d'fhiacula go bhféadair an greim do bhreith	Don't bare your teeth until you can bite	Don't make promises you can't keep	Warning against boasting about your strength prematurely
Nuair a bheidh do lámh i mbéal na con tarraing go réidh í	When your hand is in the hound's mouth, take it out gently	Don't fan the flames	Don't make a bad situation worse, proceed with caution
Baineann an druncaeir an díon dá thigh féin agus cuireann ar an teach tábhairne é	The drunkard removes the roof from his house and puts it on the pub	Drinking his life away	Spending too much time at the pub it becomes more like their home, to the detriment of their finances

Is milis dá ól é ach is searbh dá ioc é	It's sweet to drink but bitter to pay	Pleasure today, pain tomorrow	Drinking is fun until you have to pay the bill and suffer a hangover
Mura gcuirfidh tú san earrach ní bhainfidh tú san fhómhar	If you do not sow in the Spring, you will not reap the autumn	Hard work will pay off	Even if its not noticeable right away your efforts will be rewarded
Dhá thrian den obair í an chosúlacht	Two thirds of the work is appearance	Appearance is everything	If things look good on first impressions people tend to react to it better
Na ceithre rud is measa amú: ceann tinn, béal seirbh, intinn bhuartha, agus poca folamh	The four least useful things: a headache, a bitter mouth, a worried mind, and an empty pocket	N/A	Be careful with your time, effort and resources
Má tá moladh uait, faigh bás. Má tá cáineadh uait, pós	If you want praise, die. If you want complaints, marry	You can't win em all	Poking fun at marriage while also acknowledging the fact in life we often complain rather than compliment until its too late
Pós bean ón sliabh agus pósfaidh tú an sliabh ar fad	Marry a woman from the mountain and you will marry the whole mountain	N/A	Humorous seanfhocail acknowledging that when you come from a small community everyone gets involved in each others life
Is maith leis an chat iasc ach ní mhaith leis a chrúba a fhliuchadh	A cat likes fish but doesn't like to get its claws wet	You can't have your cake and eat it too	You have to suffer for what you want sometimes
Ná bris do loirgín ar stól nach bhfull i do shlí	Don't break your shin on a stool thats not in your way	Don't make a mountain out of a molehill	Avoid unnecessary trouble or overcomplicate things
Is minic a chealg briathra míne cailín crónna	Smooth words often decieve a wise girl	All that glitters is not gold	Being young and naïve can often lead to your downfall, regardless of your wits
An rud a ghoilleas ar an gcroí caithfidh	What pains the heart the eyes	Tears are the words the	You need to cry away the pain, not repress it

an t-súil é a shileas	must shed tears for	heart can't express	
Chonaic sé an dá shaol	He saw both lives	He's seen it all	He's been through the good and the bad that life has to offer
Bionn ceann caol ar an óige	You can't put an old head on the young	Youth is wasted on the young	Wisdom can't be earned easily
Deoch roimh tarta, deoch i ndiaidh tarta, agus deoch in aghaidh tarta	A drink before a thirst, a drink after a thirst, and a drink in case of a thirst	N/A	Any excuse for a drink
An t-ualach is mó ar an gcapall is míne	The heaviest load is on the gentlest horse	Still waters run deep	The kindest people sometimes suffer the worst hardships
Buail an t-iarann te	Strike while the irons hot	Opportunity knocks once	Take opportunities when they're presented
Ag dul chun dlí leis an ndiabhal is an chíúrt i n-ifreann	Going to law with the devil and the court is in hell	Never wrestle with a pig—you both get dirty, and the pig likes it	You may be in the right but sometimes the odds are stacked against you - remember to pick and choose your battles
Seachnaíonn súil ní nach bhfeiceann	Eyes avoid what the cannot see	Ignorance is bliss	Sometimes being unaware of things can work in your favour
Is doimhin é poll an amhras	The pit of doubt is deep	Doubt is a black hole	You can keep digging yourself into a deeper hole if you give in to anxiety
Shíl mé gur den bhaisteadh é	I thought it was part of the baptism	N/A	When you thought something out of pocket was supposed to happen or you misunderstood the situation
Ní troime don chaora olann agus ní troime don cholainn ciall	A sheep isn't any heavier for having wool and a body isn't any heavier for having sense	Using your head won't cost you anything	Using your wits won't add any burden to your life
Ná glac duine choíche ar a thuairisc fhéin	Never accept a persons own account of themselves	Don't take anything at face value	People are often blind to their own flaws as well as virtues
Is minic cuma aingeal ar an Diabhal féin	There's often a look of an angel	Wolf in sheeps clothing	People's looks can be deceiving

	on the Devil himself		
Beagán a rá agus é a rá go maith	Say little and say it well	Brevity is the soul of wit	You can say a lot by saying a little and it's often a sign of intelligence - don't overcomplicate things
Ní scéal rúin é ó tá a fhios ag triúr é	It's not a secret if three people know it	Two can keep a secret if one of them is dead	It's not a secret if more than two people know it
Ní féidir an seanfhocal a shárú	Can't beat an old saying	N/A	Seanfhocail provide insight and wisdom humans still need to learn
Ní fiú scéal gan údar	A story isn't worth anything without an author	Empty words are wasted	Gossip isn't credible without a direct source, and a story is much more engaging when you know the author
Is fada an bóthar nach bhfuil aon chasadadh ann	It's a long road that has no turning	This too shall pass	You luck can and will change eventually
Ní bhíonn deatach ann gan tine	There's no smoke without fire	N/A	There's always a reason for rumours
Cogadh carad, deis namhad	A war of friends is an enemy's opportunity	United we stand, divided we fall	People who pray on your downfall will strike when you're weak
Is breá an ní an óige ach ní thagann sí faoi dhó	Youth is a fine thing, but it doesn't come twice	You only live once	Make the most of your youth while you're living it, and don't mourn it once you've grown out of it
Dá fhaid é an lá, tagann an oíche	However long the day, night will come	Tomorrow is another day	Even the worst days will come to an end - and situations too
Ná comhair do chuid sicíní sula dtagann siad amach	Don't count your chickens before they are hatched	Don't celebrate until the deal is done	Don't count on something not guaranteed
Is iomaí cor sa tsaoil	There is many twists in life	Expect the unexpected	Life is unpredictable
Se leigheas na póite ól arís	It's the hangover cure to drink again	The hair of the dog that bit you	It works but at what cost?

Beart gan leigheas, foighne is fearr air	What can't be cured requires patience	What can't be cured must be endured	Sometimes you have to suffer in a situation for awhile before reaching a solution or simply accept what can't be fixed
Is minic bréag ar aonach	There's often lying at the fair	Buyer beware	People are dishonest when money is involved
Ní cheileann meisce rún	Drunkenness hides no secrets	Drunken words are sober truths	People release their inhibitions when drunk which can be brilliant or horrifying and there's no in between
Ní bhíonn an grá fíor gan mheas	True love doesn't exist without respect	Respect isn't given it's earned	Love thrives when there is equality and mutual respect
Is fusa duine a ghortú ná a leigheas	It's easier to hurt someone than to heal them	It's easier to break than to fix	Rebuilding trust after being hurt is a painful process so be kind to people
Ní chreidtear an fhírinne ó bhréagadóir	The truth is not believed from a liar	Boy who cried wolf	It's hard to believe people who have lied before
Is fearr an mhaith atá ná an dá mhaith a bhí	Better the good thing that is than two good things that were	Make the most of what you have	Focus on the present and don't mourn the past
Ná beannaigh don diabhal go mbeannaí sé duit	Don't go greeting the devil until the devil greets you	Don't poke the bear	Don't go looking for trouble
Ní chronáitear an t-uisce go dtriomaítear an tobar	Water isn't appreciated until the well dries up	You don't know what you have until you've lost it	Don't take things for granted in life
Is fearr uaigneas fada ná droch-chuideachta	Better to be in solitude for a long time than to have bad company	A bad friend is worse than no friend	It's easier to cure loneliness than trauma
Is fearr leath builín ná bheith gan arán	Half a loaf is better than no bread	A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush	Be happy with what you have
Má bhuaileann tú mo mhadra buailfidh tú mé féin	If you hit my dog you hit me	Mess with the bull, you get the horns	If you hurt someone you're hurting everyone around them, and if you hurt their dog you're evil

Ní lia duine ná tuairim	There's no less people than opinions	Everyone has opinions	Everybody has a unique experience of the world and therefore opinions on countless things
An rud a chíonn an leanbh, is é a níonn an leanbh	What the baby sees, the baby does	Monkey see monkey do	Babies are impressionable and copy what they see, this can be a blessing and a curse
Sliocht sleachta ar shliocht bhur sleachta	May your children's children have children	N/A	Used as a wedding toast
An té a bhíonn ag magadh, bíonn a leath faoi féin	He who mocks others, half is mocking himself	What goes around comes around	Mocking leads you to be vulnerable to the same treatment
An rud is measa le duine ar domhan n'fheadair sé nach é lár a leasa é	The very thing a person dreads most in the world could be the best thing in the world for them	You can't see the forest for the trees	Sometimes you must go out of your comfort zone to discover what is right for you
Is é an grá na sreanga a cheanglaíonn croithe le chéile	Love is the string that binds hearts together	Love is the tie that binds	You'll always be tied to the people you love
Maireann an duine ar aoibhneas croí, agus is fad saoil dó an t-áthas	Man lives on a joyful heart, and happiness prolongs his life	Laughter is the best medicine	Joy can lead to the longevity of your life
Níl sa saol ach gaoth agus toit	Life is just wind and smoke	Life is fleeting	Life is constantly changing and we are not permanent - just like smoke in the wind
Ag duine féin is fearr a fhios cá luíonn an bhróg air	A person best knows where the shoe troubles him	You are your best judge	You know what will hurt you the most
Ní ligfeadh sé luch as pholl ná diabhal as ifreann	It wouldn't let a mouse out of a hole nor the devil out of hell	It's raining cats and dogs	A seanfhocail used to describe a very windy day
Súil le breis a mhilleann an cearrbhach	Hoping for more ruins the gambler	Greed is the root of all evil	Greed will only lead to your downfall - be happy with what you have

Is búaine clú ná saol	Fame is more enduring than life	Your legacy will outlast you	So be kind because it's better to be remembered for doing good
An té a dtéann teist na mochóirí amach air ní cás dó codladh go headra	The person who has the reputation of getting up early can sleep late	Your reputation precedes you	If you gain a reputation for something you'll be known for it even if you've changed - which in this case is a great think, although the opposite can be true
Molfaidh an gníomh é féin	The deed will praise itself	Let your actions do the talking	Your work will receive praise on its own, you don't need to ask for it
Is beag an splanc a lasann tine	Small sparks ignite big fires	Great things have small beginning	A spark is all it takes to light a big fire
An té nach trua leis do chás, ná déan do ghearáin leis	He who does not sympathise with your plight, do not complain to him	Don't waste your time on people who don't care	Some people will never be able to empathise with your situation, so don't waste your breath trying to gain sympathy and find help elsewhere
Beatha duine a thoil	A person's life is their will	To each their own	Everyone is different and has different goals and plans - let people live the way they want to
Ní féasta go rósta is ní céasta go pósta	No feast like a roast and no suffering like a marriage	The best things in life come with a cost	A roast dinner is a common dinner served in Ireland particularly during special occasions, however they are time consuming. While marriage is often painted as pure bliss it is not without its downfalls. This seanfhocail highlights that everything in life comes with its cost
Bíonn adharca fada ar na buaibh thar lear	The cows abroad have longer horns	Faraway hills are greener	If rose tinted glasses were paired with a Paddy cap
Ritheann fear buile trí thuile go dána, ach is minic thug tuile fear buile le fána	A crazy man runs through a flood boldly, but often a flood sweeps a crazy man away	Fools rush in where angels fear to tread	Acting rash can lead to detrimental consequences
Capall an tsaoil an grá	Love is the horse of life	Love makes the world go round	A horse is a strong, mighty creature in Irish mythology
Chíonn beirt rud nach bhfeiceann duine amháin	Two people can see what an individual cannot	Two heads are better than one	You need the help of a friend to fully understand a situation, problem or task

Ní théann dlí ar riachtanas	The law does not apply to necessity	Justice is blind	People can act differently when their needs are deprived but the law does not take this into account
I dtír na ndall is rí é fear na leathshúile	In the land of the blind the one eyed man is king	N/A	Circumstance is everything
Is fearr an tsláinte mhór ná na mílte bó	It's better to have great health than thousands of cows	Health is better than wealth	Irish people love cows, but health is maybe slightly more important
Ní lia thír ná gnás	There's no less countries than customs	When in Rome, do as the Romans do	Every country has countless customs and traditions
Bí beo mura mbeidh tú beo ach leathuair	Live even if your only life for half an hour	Seize the day	A lot can be done in a short amount of time so make the most of it
Géilleann caisleán ón taobh istigh	Castles crumble from the inside	You're your own worst enemy	You can be the constructor of your own demise if you feed in to doubt and anxieties
Ní troid go troid na gcomharsan	There's no fighting like neighbours fighting	Live and let live	Fighting with neighbours is the worst kind of fight because it is unavoidable day to day
Ní féidir selig le madra ar iall	It's not possible to hunt with a dog on a leash	A bird in a cage can't fly	You have to put your all into your work or there is no point in doing it
Ní ionann dul go tigh an rí agus teacht as	Going to the king's house is not the same as coming out of it	It's easier to get into trouble than it is to get out of it	Be careful with your actions
Ná cuir cnaipí órga ar chóta stróicthe	Don't put golden buttons on a ripped coat	Don't put lipstick on a pig	Don't spend time on things that aren't worth it, you can't fix what's broken
Is maith an rud cóccaire fireannach	An honest chef is a good thing	You are what you eat	Food prepared well reflects the person who made it
Ní féidir é a bheith ina ghruth is ina mheadhg agat	You cant have it curd and whey	You can't have it both ways	Refers to byproducts of milk - you can only prepare it one way

Níl cara ag cumha ach cuimhne	Sadness has no friend but memory	Grief is a journey we must walk alone	Grief is hard but at least memories can keep you company
Tabhair drochainm do mhadra agus caithfidh gach éinne cloch leis	Give a dog a bad name and everyone will throw a stone at it	Give a dog a bad name and hang it	Once your reputation is ruined it's hard to rebuild it
Ní fhaigheann lámh iata ach dorn dúnta	A closed hand gets nothing but a closed fist	A closed door cannot open	If you're not open to opportunity it will pass you
Ní breac é go raibh sé ar an bport	Its not a trout because it was on the port	Red herring	Things aren't always what they seem so don't bet on things that aren't guaranteed - the true nature of things sometimes appearance can be deceptive
Ní bhíonn tréan buan	Strength doesn't last forever	All glory is fleeting	Natural progression of life means all things must come to an end
Ní bhfuair minic onóir	Often doesn't receive honour	Familiarity breeds contempt	What is common or routine isn't appreciated
Ná tabhair breith ar an gcéad scéal	Don't judge after the first story	There is two sides to every story	First impressions aren't always reflective of the person or situation
Ná déan nós is ná bris nós	Don't make a habit and don't break a habit	It's easier to form a habit than to break one	Don't pick up bad habits but also don't try too hard to change yourself with 'good' habits
Ná bac le mac an bhacaigh is ní bhacfaidh mac an bhacaigh leat	Don't bother the beggar's son and the beggar's son won't bother you	Mind your own business	Keep to yourself and you wont have to deal with unnecessary conflict
An gad is giorra don scornach is túisce is ceart a scaoileadh	The knot nearest the throat is the one to release first	A stitch in time saves nine	Solve the most pressing matter first and save yourself more suffering
Nuair is gann é an bia is fial é a roinnt	When the food is scarce it's generous to share	Sharing is caring	True generosity is shown in hardship, not when you have more than enough to give

Más olc maol is measa mullach	If it's bad at the bottom its worse at the top	A house built on sand will not stand	You can't build upon a bad foundation
Namhaid an cheird gan í a fhoghlaim	If you don't learn the trade it becomes your enemy	The more you know the more you grow	If you don't learn you block yourself from opportunity
Mura mbeadh agat ach pocán gabhair bí i lár an aonaigh leis	If all you have is a puck goat be in the middle of the fair with it	Make the most of what you have	A puck goat is a wild, mountain goat meaning that they wouldn't have that much value
Mian mic a shúil	The desire of the child is in their eyes	Eyes are the window to the soul	Children have a hard time hiding their emotions, and eyes reveal intentions regardless of words
Is trom cearc i bhfad	A hen is heavy when carried far	A small leak will sink a great ship	A small burden becomes heavy when carried far - don't underestimate the little tasks
Is treise dúchas ná oiliúint	Nature is stronger than nurture	What's in the blood will out	Age old debate - natural instincts reign stronger than learned morals
Is minic a gheall tailliúir is ná tiocfadh sé	It's often a tailor promises to come and does not	Don't promise more than you can deliver	Promises are easier made than kept
Is maith le Dia féin cúnamh	God himself likes a bit of help	Many hands make light work	Don't be afraid to ask for help
Is mairg a dheannan deimhin dá dhóchas	Woe to he who makes certainty of his hope	Don't put all your eggs in one basket	Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst
Is lú ná fríd máthair an oilc	The mother of evil is smaller than a mite	A small leak will sink a great ship	Small problems can grow into great troubles if not dealt with accordingly
Is geal leis an bhfiach dubh a ghearrcach féin	The raven thinks its own offspring is bright	Pride comes before a fall	Everyone thinks their own child is perfect, but it's important to be aware of their faults in order to shape them into their best selves
Is furasta fuineadh in aice na mine	It's easy to bake next to the flour	It's easier to work with the right tools	Things are easier when you have access to the right tools, so don't take them for granted

Is fearr súil le glas ná súil le huaigh	Better an eye on the lock than an eye on the grave	Always look on the bright side of life	Its better to focus on your problems eventually being alleviated than looking to your grave for hope - never give up!
Is fada siar a théann iarsma an drochbhirt	The trail of a bad deed goes a long way	Domino Effect	One bad deed will lead to another
Is deacair rogha a bhaint as dhá dhíogha	It's hard to choose between two evils	Choosing the lesser of two evils	Sometimes in life you'll be presented with two options, both of which aren't great. Often said during an election
Is beo duine tar éis a bhailte ach ní beo é tar éis a chánta	A person is alive after being beaten but not after being berated	Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can hurt forever	Your words can have a stronger impact than physical abuse
Dá mbeadh soineann go Samhain bheadh breall ar dhuine éigin	If it was fair til November, someone would still complain	You can't please everyone	Irish weather is notoriously terrible, but this seanfhocail makes fun of our compulsion to complain about it regardless
Dá dhonacht é Séamas ba mheasa bheith ina éagmas	However bad Séamas is, it would be worse without him	Better the devil you know than the devil you don't	Even if you don't get along with someone, life wouldn't be the same without them
Ciall agus míchiali - dís ná gabhann le chéile	Sense and nonsense - two things which don't go together	You can't make sense of nonsense	You can't apply logic to some situations - be it a fight or decision making
Chonaic mé cheana thú, arsa an cat leis an mbainne te	I've seen you before, said the cat to the warm milk	Once burned, twice shy	Once you've been hurt you proceed with caution when approaching certain situations or people
An té nach mbeireann ar an ngnó beireann an gnó air	He who does not get a grip on the job, the job gets a grip on him	Deal with your problems before they deal with you	Get on top of your work or it will become a bigger burden
An t-uan ag múineadh méilí dá mháthair	The lamb teaching its mother how to bleat	When the student becomes the master	When someone young has to teach an authority figure about something

Beidh lá eile ag an bPáorach	Power will have another day	There's always another day	Not everything will go according to plan in life, but there will always be another chance to try
Bíonn caora dhuh ar an tréad is gile	Every flock has a black sheep	The odd one out	When someone is slightly different than the rest of a group - not necessarily a bad thing
Bíonn cead cainte ag fear caillte na himeartha	The man who lost the match has permission to talk	Everyone deserves their say	Failure is a learning experience, and can often teach us more than winning
Níl sprid ná puca nach bhfuil fios a chúise aige	There's no spirit or ghost that doesn't know its reason	Everything happens for a reason	There is cause to everything, even if we don't understand it
Bíonn rath ar an amadán	The fool is lucky	Fortune favors the foolish	The fool doesn't have to worry about morality or the impact of their decisions, therefore they can prosper just as likely as someone clever
Bliain le duine agus bliain ina choinne	One year with you one year against you	Every dog has its day	No one gets along all the time - harmony and conflict are a cycle
Breathnaigh an abhainn sula dtéann tú ina cuilithe	Observe the river before you wade into it	Look before you leap	Don't take risks without observing potential damage
Faigheann cú ar a a chois rud nach bhfaigheann cú ina lúb	The hound on foot gets what the hound in bed doesn't	Early bird catches the word	You won't benefit from doing nothing
Faothar a bhaineas féar	It's the scythe that cuts the grass	Work smarter not harder	A scythe is a hand tool used to cut grass so this seanfhocail states that instead of cutting the grass with your hands use the tool - don't make the job any harder for yourself
Fear na bó faoina heireaball	The cow's owner must go under her tail	Where there's muck there's money	Hard work pays off - even if you have to get your hands dirty
Fiche bliain ag fás, fiche bliain faoi bhláth agus fiche ag trá	20 years growing, 20 years in bloom and 20 years in decline	Life is a journey	Seanfhocail about the cyclical nature of life
Fill ormsa arsa'n drochghnó	Come back to me', said the	A stitch in time saves nine	Do things right the first time

	bad business man		
Is maith an grá é nach dteastaíonn focal uaidh	Love is good when it needs no words	Actions speak louder than words	When you do things purely out of love and don't require gratification
Gach dalta mar oiltear	Every student is how he's taught	The apple doesn't fall far from the tree	Sides with nurture in nature vs nurture debate - you become what you are taught
Déanann codladh fada tóin lom	Long sleep makes for a bare backside	You snooze, you loose	You need a good work/life balance or you will miss opportunities
I dtús an mhála is ceart an tíos a dhéanamh	It's right to be thrifty at the beginning of the bag	A penny saved is a penny earned	Use your resources carefully and be practical in your planning
Is báidhiúil iad lucht aoncheirde	Those of the same trade sympathise with each other	Birds of a feather flock together	Having the same problems and benefits in common with someone makes it easier to empathise with them
Cnoc ag tórmach ar feadh seacht mblian agus nár tháinig uaidh ach luch	The hill raged for seven years and only a mouse came from it	Nothing could come from it	Anger has no benefits, and feeding into it is unfulfilling
Geallúintí nó bagartháí móra agus cóimhlíonadh suarach	Big promises and threats and no compliance	Don't promise more than you can deliver	Sometimes people promise the world and don't follow through
Is minic a thuit fear maith i mbualtaigh	Often a good man has fallen into trouble	Even the best fall down	No one is exempted from punishment, even if it is unjust
Ní raibh "cuibheasach" 'na thigheasach mhaith riagh	Average was never a good leader	Average is the enemy of excellence	Doing things the same as it has always been done won't inspire anyone
Cuireann an fear diomhaoin cathú ar an diabhal	The devil makes work for idle hands	An idle mind is the devil's playground	Doing nothing can lead to bad habits or dark places
Ní fear é ar aonach ná ar	He's not a man of the fair or the	He's out of place	Someone who doesn't fit in

mhargadh ná ar phobal an Aifrinn	market or the community mass		
Níl laoch d'á thréine ná faghtar fear a chlóidh	There is no hero, however strong, that can't be defeated	Everyone has their limits	Everyone has a weakness, and nobody is perfect
Cailín Domhnaigh nó gamhain Samhraidh. Bíonn cuma breágh ortha ach b'fhéidir gur bláth bréige é	A Sunday girl or a Summer calf. Both seem fine but they might be a false bloom	All that glitters is not gold	Not everything is as it seems, and good things can morph into something negative over time
Ní dheaghaidh aoinne riamh amach ar inntin mhná	No one will ever fully understand a woman's mind	The heart has its reasons which reason knows not	The human mind is complex and you will never fully understand what someone is going through
Ní luaithe ar an ngaoith ná ar inntin mhná	Not even the wind is faster than a woman's mind	She's as sharp as a whip	The mind draws quick conclusions to complex situations
Bróga sa chliabhán ladhar sa lathaigh	Shoes in the cradle, feet in the mud	The road to success is not always smooth	Life is full of ups and downs and you cannot always predict the course things will take
Tabhair rud do leanbh is tiocfaidh sé arís	Give something to a child and they'll come back for it again	It only takes a taste	If you try something once you'll want it again
Is maith atá 'fhios ag gach máthair conus smacht a chur ar leanbh iasachta	Every mother knows how to discipline another's child	Parenting is easy until you have to do it	This seanfhocail is said sarcastically when people try to butt in on other parenting styles
Is maig nár thóg a laogh féin nó a leanbh	Pity the person who didn't raise their own calf or child	N/A	Take responsibility for your actions, and shame to those who don't
Scoláirí na scoile, gobadáin na gorta, d'íos-	Schoolchildren, like famine birds, would	Desperate times call for	Said sarcastically - the youth will try anything and often overindulge as they don't yet understand the consequences to their actions

aidís na clocha dá bhféadaidís iad a chogaínt	chew the stones if they could	desperate measures	
An rud is beag ag fear is mó ag leanbh é	What's small to a man is big to a child	What seems small to you is big to someone else	Don't trivialise a child's concerns, have patience and explain things to them
Is mó an chainnt ná an chneadach	The talk is bigger than the carnage	Talk is cheap, but words have power	Your words can have a powerful impact
Is gránna an dúthchas maoile	Baldness is a bad inheritance	N/A	If all you inherit is bad hair that's very unfortunate
Is fearr maol ná bheith gan cheann — ach níl ann ach san	Baldness is better than no head - but that's all	N/A	Irish people really hated being bald back in the day I guess
Is measa an ath-iompáil ná an chéad fhiabhras	The relapse is worse than the first fever	Learn from your mistakes	Getting hurt the second time hits harder if you're still recovering from the first time
Is minic a báthadh duine i dtobar uisce	A person has often drowned in a well	The road to hell is paved with good intentions	Sometimes there is unexpected consequences to your actions and unassuming things lead to dire results
Chífeadh sé ceann rua an fhraig	He could see the head of the louse	The devil is in the details	Said about someone who has good eyesight or notices things most people wouldn't
Radharc Caillighe Béara	The sight of the Hag of Beara	The sixth sense	Someone who is good at predicting things. The Hag of Beara was said to control the winter and bring about spring, and is closely related to the cyclical nature of life
Is fearr súil sa chúinne ná dhá shúil ar fuaid an tighe	One eye on the corner is better than two eyes roaming around the house	Don't bite off more than you can chew	Focus on one thing at a time and don't take on too much at once
D'aireochadh sé an féar ag fás	He could hear the grass growing	Could hear a pin drop	Said about someone with great hearing or who can pick up on things others don't pay attention to
Ní h-í an ailneacht a chuireann an corcán ar fiuchaidh	It's not beauty that boils the pot	Form follows function	Looking good won't get the work done

Bíonn an óige ar buile	The youth are wild	Young and reckless	Youth are guided by impulsivity and passion
Is maig ná baineann ceol as an óige an fhaid a bhíonn sí aige	Pity those who don't enjoy their youth while they have it	Don't let life pass you by	Enjoy your youth while you're young or you'll be plagued by regrets
Comhfhaidh a théigheann fuacht agus teas, comhfhaidh a théigheann fuath agus grádh	Hot and cold co-operate, like love and hate co-operate	Through thick and thin	There is ups and downs to every relationship, job, hobby and life stage - you need to learn to accept the hardships in order to reap the benefits
Uireasbha mhéaduigheas cumha	Absence increases longing	Absence makes the heart grow fonder	Being away from someone or something makes you want it more
Is fuer cumann caillighe	The company of a hag is cold	A cold fish	Said about someone who is emotionally distant or cold towards you
Cleamhna an chairn aoiligh nó cárdeas Críost i bhfad amach	A relationship like a manure heap or a distant friendship with Christ	A house of cards	Used to describe a bad relationship - this seanfhocail reflects the strong Christian values present in the Irish language
Comhairle tar éis phósta nó aithrighe tar éis bháis	Advice after marriage or repentance after death	You can't change the past	Two useless acts - this seanfhocail warns against acting too late
Lá ar meisce is lá ag ól uisce	One day drunk, one day drinking water	Everything in moderation	After a day of drinking you'll need to be drinking water the next day
D'ólfadh sé an tSiúir	He would drink the (river) Suir	He'd drink the river dry	Someone who drinks relentlessly
Dhá dtrian cainnte ag lucht póite	Two thirds of the talk is done by hungover people	N/A	People tend to ramble incoherently when they're hungover - about regrets or about funny moments
Cé ná bíonn aon chnámh sa teangain is minic a bhris sí ceann duine	Though a tongue has no bones it has often broken someones head	Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can hurt forever	Words can cause someone serious mental anguish

Dhéanfadh sé cat is dá eirball	He'd make a cat with two tails	He could make a silk purse from a sow's ear	Said about someone who is a schmoozer
Leigheas gach bróin comhrádh	The cure for all sorrow is conversation	Misery loves company	Communicating solves conflicts, talking solves loneliness and having a community makes you feel connected
Mheallfadhbh sé a tharr ó'n siongán	He'd coax the fat from an ant	He could sell ice to an Eskimo	Said about someone who is persuasive
Scéal ó Shamhain go Bealtaine	A story from November to May	A never ending story	A story that goes on and on
Bíonn lán an tí leis an bhfocal amháin	The house can be full with just one word	A word is enough for the wise	A single word can carry great importance
Is fuirist duine a mhealladh le teanga bhog	It's easy to decieve someone with a soft tongue	Kill 'em with kindness	Flattery can get you far - you can talk yourself out of anything with the right words
Déan do shuaimhneas agus lig don tsonas teacht	Find your peace and let happiness arrive	Every storm will pass	If you learn to make peace with your past or situations you cannot change your life will become easier
Ní thagann an grá gan an foighne	Love doesn't come without patience	Patience is a virtue	You need to be understanding of peoples faults and failures in order to love them truly
Níl aon sonas gan saoirse	There is no happiness without freedom	N/A	You need to be free of your burdens in order to attain true happiness
Is deas an rud an beart a dhéanamh agus ní focal a rá	It's better to act than to speak	Actions speak louder than words	Talking about things can only get you so far, you need to act in order to make change
Déanann an duine a chumann an baile	It's the people who make the home	Home is where the heart is	Home isn't always a place its where your friends and family are
Déanann dearcadh an difríocht	Perspective makes a difference	Attitude is everything	It's not what happens to you, but how you react that makes the difference

An té nach ndéanann a ghnó féin, is é a chaillfidh é	He who does not mind his own business will lose it	Mind your own business	Focus on your own responsibilities instead of busying yourself with other peoples' - if you neglect your own problems you'll fall apart
Is fearr rabhadh maith ná drochbhuiile	A good warning is better than a bad blow	A stitch in time saves nine	Dealing with the aftermath of a hit is much more difficult than being prepared beforehand
Bí go maith leis na daoine agus beidh siad go maith leat	Be good to people and they'll be good to you	Treat others the way you want to be treated	Kindness is contagious
An té a mbíonn sé de nós aige dul go mall, tiocfaidh sé mall i gcónaí	He who in the habit of going slowly will always come slowly	Old habits die hard	You can't change your ways if you're stuck in them
Tóg do thón agus críochnóidh tú an obair	Lift your backside and you'll get the job done	The first step is the hardest	Things can only get done if you do them
Ní thugann an saol an cheacht duit, mura mbíonn tú sásta eisteacht	Life won't teach you the lesson unless you're willing to listen	You can't learn if you're not willing to listen	It is important to be open to advice and take it on board, but sometimes you're not ready to listen
Fág rud níos fearr ná do chonair ag an áit a mbíonn tú	Leave something better than your path wherever you go	Leave a place better than you found it	Leave a positive trail even if you never reap the benefits
Ná caith cloch i ndiaidh an bhó tar éis a crúite	Don't throw a stone after milking a cow	Let bygones be bygones	Don't ruin a good thing after benefitting from it
Bhí mé i m'Oisin i ndiaidh na Féinne	I was like Oisin after the Fianne	I feel like I missed the boat	Said when you're left completely alone literally or figuratively
Beidh deoch an dorais againn	We'll have a drink for the door	One for the road	Last round of drinks

Full database containing 365 seanfhocail, translations, english equivalents and contextualisation.

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