CSC318 Assignment 3: User Research & Results

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Executive Summary:

The goal of this study is to find out what the most common issue people encounter when they travel to another country, and whether or not if language barrier plays a role in such issues. We went around the school and asked people to participate in this study. Most of the people had no issue answering all questions, although for some of the more open-ended questions (such as general traveling experiences) they did have hard time recalling past events.

Methodology:

One phone interview and six in-person interviews were conducted. Participants were all students between the ages of 18 to 24.

Participants were asked to be interviewed and to give appropriate responses when asked with certain questions.

We collected data about countries where people have traveled to, issues (specifically regarding languages) that one might encounter while they are in another country, as well as some internet usage (while in another country) questions.

Major Findings:

- A lot of people did not have language issues at all, due to the fact that the country that they have traveled to has at least one of that person's native languages as a dominant language (most of the case it's English).
- Most of the people did not participate in activities that involved a lot of communication, or the language barrier issue affiliated with the activity can be resolved easily.
- Since most of the findings above suggest that no further innovation is needed. We should perhaps conduct more research except this time we should focus more on people who either cannot speak English (or any other wide spoken languages) at all or is very bad at that particular language.

Detailed Findings:

- Most of the participants traveled to countries that could speak one of their current languages (in most cases it's English).
- For those participants that went to a country that did not speak any language that they spoke. They did have someone who acted either as a tour guide or a translator.
- Almost everyone brings some of their electronic devices with them; the most common items were phones, tablets, and iPods.
- No one had language barrier problems that were significant enough to impact their trip in a negative manner.
- One person was lost in Japan once, where more than 90% of the people didn't speak English. However, that person got out of the situation by saying one single Japanese phrase that he knew (that translated to "I don't speak Japanese, do you speak English?") and someone eventually found someone who spoke English to act as a translator.
- Most of the activities that the participants partake while in another country required little to no communication.
- A few activities that did require communication were shopping, hailing a taxi, ordering food, and bargaining (getting ripped off or scammed).
- Most of the activities that did require communication can be resolved with simple body gestures. (Pointing at specific items on the menu, markings on a map, etc.)
- No one felt that they were deprived of internet while they were traveling. And no one uses the internet unless they absolutely have to.

User needs list:

- Most of the white-collars that travels to another country will most likely not need a translation application since there probably will be arrangement for them at that country.
- Our target audience probably should be non-English speakers since from the research it has shown that a lot of countries have English speakers, and that English tends to be a language that tour companies covers.

Stakeholder descriptions:

- Backpackers: people who travels internationally.
- Students: including people who are starting to study abroad.
- Workers whose job involves frequent traveling: conference, or just different headquarters.
- Traveling Agencies: will affect the languages that we will have for the application.
- Tourist Guides / Tour Companies: competition for customers.

One detailed primary persona:

Daichi, the hard-working traveler.

Daichi is a 26 years old Japanese male that works as an accountant at a famous local Japanese company. He got this job straight out of University of Tokyo and has been working full time 50 hours a week ever since.

Daichi has always wondered what the world is like outside of Japan since he was little, he is fascinated by everything that he has heard and seen about the Western and European world. He wanted to travel, but he was also constantly worried about settling down so he doesn't really have a diverse range of friends, nor did he have time to study and grasp the Western and European culture.

Daichi finally decides to use his two week vacation as a way to travel to Europe and explore the rest of the world. Then suddenly one thing hit him, he realized that he could only speak Japanese and there weren't that many tour companies that supported Japanese travelers, and all the ones that did seemed to be full. He suddenly got really scared because he has also heard that the traditions and customs in the Western world are vastly different from Japanese traditions and customs, combined with that and the language issue he would be clueless! He doesn't really want to cancel because his company had a strict rule about vacation time and that would mean he would have to forfeit his two week vacation for this year.

Scenario:

Daichi is a Japanese male who went traveling but doesn't know a single word in any language other than Japanese. While he was eating at a restaurant in Paris he completely forgot he had to meet up with the Tour guide as well as the rest of the group at 1pm. When he rushed to the meeting location he doesn't see anyone he knows around. He tries to gesture and speak Japanese but no one even seemed to understand what language he was speaking. He was completely lost.

Task Analysis:

0. Asking for directions when you're lost.
1. Find a person nearby
2. Talk to the person
    2.1 Greet them
    2.2 Say the name of the location
    2.3 Translate everything they say with a traditional translator or dictionary
    2.4 Take out a map and use it as a reference
3. Learn about the direction
4. Travel there

Appendices:

Interview

How many counties have you traveled in total?

Do you usually bring electronic devices when you travel?

If so please list out the top 3 electronic devices you frequently bring.

What activities do you do when you are traveling, which ones require a great deal of communication?

Does language barrier affect any of the activities that you just mentioned?

If so did you use any electronic aid? What are they?

How helpful were the electronic aids? What would you suggest for improvement?

Do you find yourself using the internet a lot while you're traveling?