Lit Language Learner

Mary Pierce

Google

Project overview

The product:

Lit Language Learner (LLL) is a US-based organization focused on helping people learn to read in a new language. The organization needs a tool that offers resources and activities to help people learn how to read and track their learning progress. LLL's primary target users include young children and adults who are looking to learn how to read in a new language due to school, work, relocation, or hobby.

Project duration:

July 2023 to August 2023
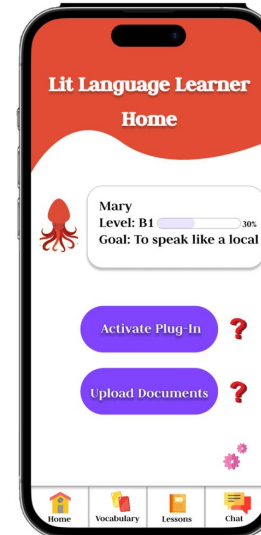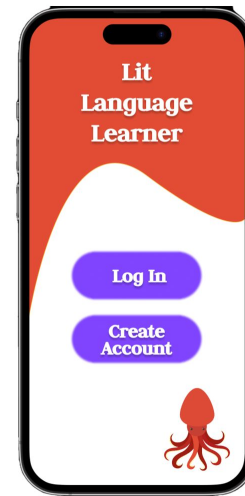
Project overview

The problem:

With the world becoming more globalized, many people find themselves changing locations, working with people from different countries, and being more interested in cultures outside of their own. Understanding how to read in a new language can improve social relationships, work relationships and opportunities, and broaden one's horizons in knowledge and learning.

The goal:

Design a website and mobile app that will help users learn to read in a new language and track their progress.

Project overview

My role:

UX designer leading the app and responsive website design from conception to delivery

Responsibilities:

Conducting interviews, paper and digital wireframing, low and high-fidelity prototyping, conducting usability studies, accounting for accessibility, iterating on designs, determining information architecture, and responsive design.

Google

Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- Competitive audit
- Ideation

Google

User research: summary

I found surveys online of top reasons for learning a new language and conducted user interviews with people I personally knew who are trying to learn a new language. Top reasons for wanting to learn a new language involved: interest in the culture, communicating better when traveling or moving, and for work. When specifically asked about importance of learning to read versus only speaking, the top motivations involved: relocation and work. The feedback received through research made it very clear that users would be interested in a highly adaptable tool that suits their specific language learning needs.

Google

Persona 1: **Lily**

Problem statement:

Lily is a elementary student whose parents moved from the US to Japan, she has learned to speak and write Japanese using the Latin alphabet, but she needs to learn how to read the ideographic Japanese alphabet because she wants to fit in more with her peers and face less hurdles in her school work and social relationships.

"I want to be able to read easily like everyone else and not just in Romaji"

Goals
- Learn to read so schoolwork is easier
- Wants to communicate better with friends through texting
- Wants to fit in more with the people around her

Frustrations
- Difficult to learn a new language with a different alphabet
- Difficult to find good learning materials that take into consideration the age of the learner.

Lily

Age: 8
Education: Elementary School
Hometown: New York, NY
Family: Child
Occupation: Student

Lily's parents have moved from New York, NY to Tokyo, Japan 2 years ago. Lily has been able to pick up speaking the Japanese language quickly by being immersed in the language at a young age. However, Lily has only learned how to read in Romaji, the writing of Japanese in the Latin alphabet. It is hard for Lily to find reading materials that are at her appropriate age level that still challenge her to improve her learning since she already can speak the language. Lily needs a tool that is adaptable to her specific needs.

Google

Persona 2: **Brett**

Problem statement:

Brett is a project manager with a new Latin American branch who needs to learn to read conversational, business Spanish because translating everything leads to delays in the project and a lack of connection to the employees.

"I want my new employees to know that they can talk to me"

Goals

- To communicate better with new workers and build repertoire
- To be able to skim minor paperwork faster
- To answer pressing questions is a timely manner

Frustrations

- The local spanish spoken is different than textbook spanish so Brett wants a tool that accounts for that.
- Needs to learn quickly because the project is underway and needs to focus on commonly spoken business spanish.

Brett

Age: 33
Education: Bachelor's in business
Hometown: Durham, NC
Family: Spouse, no kids
Occupation: Project Manager

Brett is a project manager whose company opened a new branch in Latin America. He wants to learn to speak, read, and write Spanish so he can better communicate with the new employees. Most of their teams communication is through slack so he wants to be able to review minor paperwork and questions easily and quickly, while also being friendly and conversational.

Google

Competitive audit

An audit of a few competitor's products provided direction on gaps and opportunities to address with Lit Language Learning.

Competitive audit

Competitive audit goal: understand the different feautres and offerings of other language learning apps
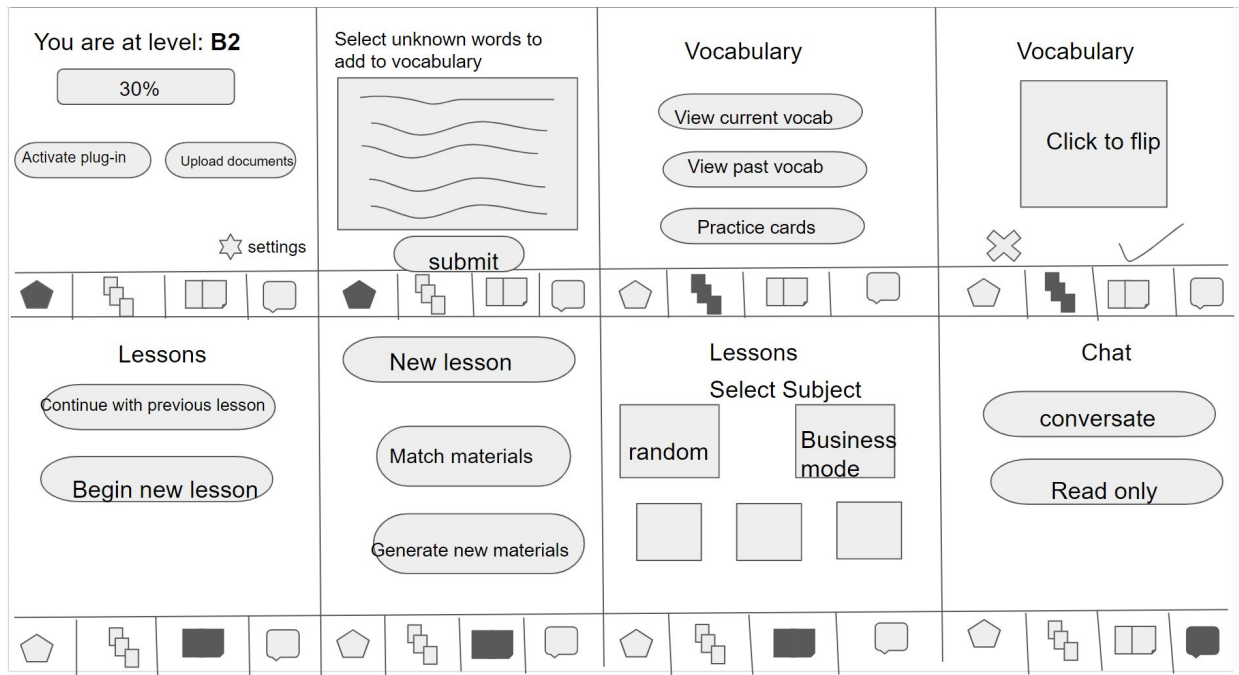
		General information							
	Competitor type (direct or indirect)	**Location(s)**	**Product offering**	**Languages**	**Price** ($ - $$$$)	**Website** (URL)	**Business size** (small, medium, large)	**Target audience**	U
Babbel	direct	desktop, apple store	**Babble**: 1 language: 1-month, 3-month, 6-month, 12-month. **Babble complete**: all languages. **Babble lifetime**: all languages, forever. **Babble Live**: teacher-led	Spanish, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Danish, Dutch, Indonesian, Norwegian, Polish, Swedish, Turkish	$7-14 a month, $350 lifetime	https://www.babbel.com/?_gl=1*1s x1yct*_gcl_au*Mjg0NzUwMTc5LjE 2ODk3ODAyMTI.	medium	ages 12+, student discount, educator discount, military discount, healthcare worker discount, for business	
Rosetta Stone	direct	desktop, apple store	for individuals, for schools, for businesses. For individuals: 3 month, 12-month, and lifetime	Spanish (Latin America), Spanish (Spain), French, Italian, German, English (American), English (British), Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), Dutch, Farsi (Persian), Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Irish, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Polish, Portuguese (Brazil), Russian, Swedish, Tagalog (Filipino), Turkish, Vietnamese	$10-12 a month, $300 lifetime	https://www.rosettastone.com/	small	ages 5+, schools, enterprise, individuals	
Duolingo	direct	desktop, apple store	individuals, school, premium.	Spanish, French, Japanese, German, Korean, Hindi, Italian, Chinese, Russian, Arabic, Portuguese, Turkish, Dutch, Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Greek, Polish, Swedish, Latin, Irish Norwegian, Hebrew, High Valyrian, Indonesian, Danish, Finnish, Romanian, Hawaiian, Czech, Welsh, Haitian Creole, Swahili, Scottish Gaelic, Hungarian, Esperanto, Klingon (beta), Zulu, Navajo (beta),Yiddish	free, premium is $7 a month	https://www.duolingo.com/	small	ages 4+, schools, business, individual	
Busuu	direct	desktop, apple store	Free, Premium, and for business	Spanish, Japanese, French, English, German ,Dutch,Italian,Portuguese, Chinese, Polish, Turkish, Russian, Arabic, Korean,	$5-14 a month	https://www.busuu.com/	small	ages 13+, for Business, student discount,	

					UX (rated: needs work, okay, good, or outstanding)		
	First impressions			Interaction			
	Desktop website experience	**App or mobile website experience**	**Features**	**Accessibility**	**User flow**		
Babbel	**Outstanding** + very orgnized and clean look, liked that they s	**Good** + Simple design - unable to view layout of courses	**Outstanding** + Offers variety of feautres :game-like activities, audio, cultural, magazine - Could explain activitiy/ games better	**ok** + offers audio options -barely uses color as a way to distinguish sections	**needs work** + - can't see layout of activities- squished onto screen		
Rosetta Stone	**Outstanding** + exciting and engaging color scheme - can't view food offering immediately.	**Oustanding** + Beautiful design and functionality -Home page could use more structure	**Outstanding** + Offers a variety of features: extended learning, audio, live,culture based, conversational tips,	**good** + uses labels, easily distinguishable colors, and offers audio	**outstanding** + great navbar, great layout screens		
Duolingo	**Outstanding** + great design and flow - vague information on front page only	**Good** + Eye catching colors and design, strong brandi - can be overwhelming and difficult to understa	**Good** + Offers unique game-like activities - Could explain activitiy/ games better	**needs work** + has captions for video - no labels for any of the icons, most likely incompatible with screen readers	**needs work** + very fun layout - no labels, only iconography		
Busuu	**Outstanding** + clean and organized design - lacking brand identity	**good** + has unique community feature - display of exercises makes it seem intimidating and long, -app crashed when using	**Good** + Offers unique community activities that lets you interact with others - Could offer more variety	**ok** + uses labels and has easy to follow layout. -no audio options	**outstanding** + very easy to understand, no confusion		

Click to view the full competitive audit

Ideation

I did a quick ideation exercise to come up with ideas for how to address gaps identified in the competitive audit. My focus was specifically on **offering a variety of customizable experiences.**

You are at level: **B2**

30%

Activate plug-in   Upload documents

☆ settings

Select unknown words to add to vocabulary

submit

Vocabulary

View current vocab

View past vocab

Practice cards

Vocabulary

Click to flip

✕   ✓

Lessons

Continue with previous lesson

Begin new lesson

New lesson

Match materials

Generate new materials

Lessons
Select Subject

random   Business mode
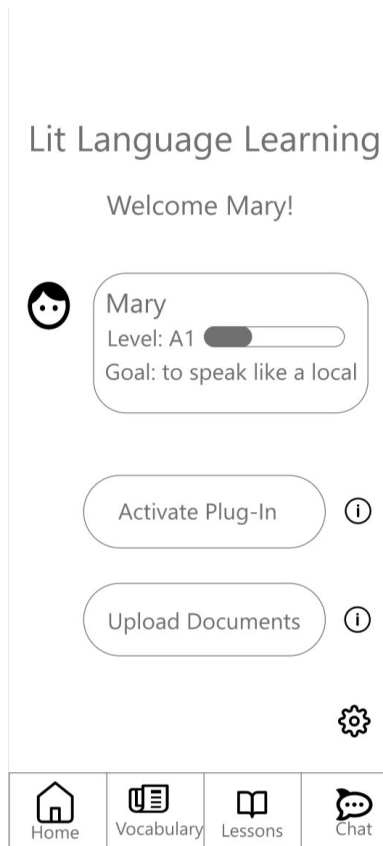
Chat

conversate

Read only

Starting the design

- Digital wireframes
- Low-fidelity prototype
- Usability studies

Google

Digital wireframes

After ideating and drafting some paper wireframes, I created the initial designs for the Lit Language Learner app. These designs focused on customizing the learning experience as much as possible so learners can see real-time results.

Home page tracks progress to motivate user

Lit Language Learning

Welcome Mary!

Mary
Level: A1
Goal: to speak like a local

Activate Plug-In   (i)

Upload Documents   (i)

Home   Vocabulary   Lessons   Chat

Easy access to app features from global navigation

Google

Low-fidelity prototype

To prepare for usability testing, I created a low-fidelity prototype that connected the full user flow from creating an account to making customizations for learning.

View LLL's low-fidelity prototype

Google
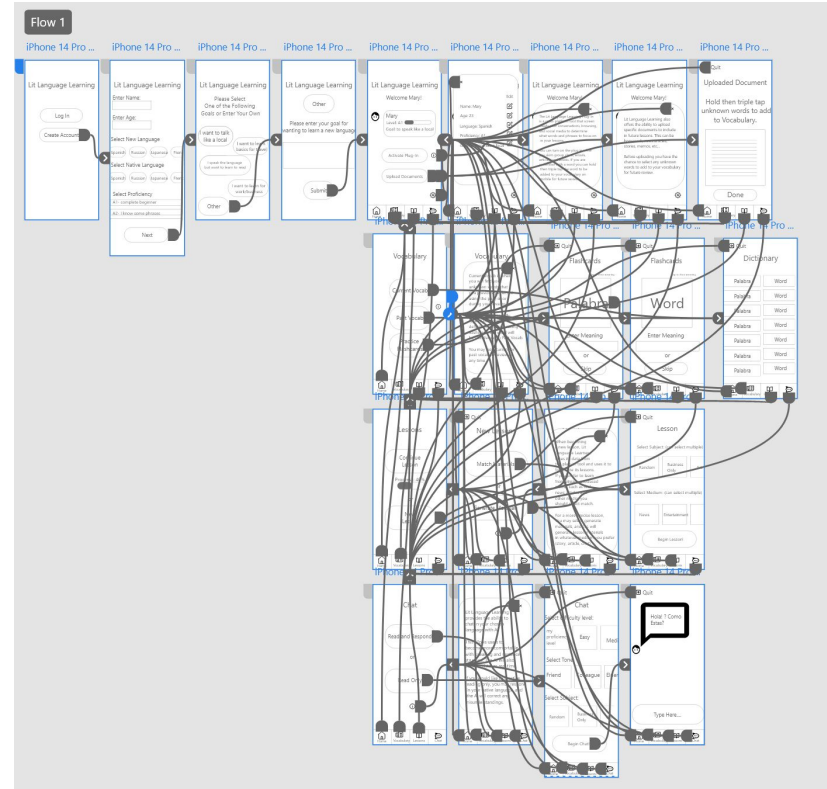
Usability study: parameters

Study type:

Moderated usability study

Location:

United States, remote

Participants:

4 participants

Length:

30 minutes

Google

Usability study: findings

These were the main findings uncovered by the usability study:

1

Symbols

People had difficulty identifying the information symbol

2

Information

People found the walkthrough overwhelming

3

Chat

People were very excited about the chat function

Google

Refining the design

- Mockups

- High-fidelity prototype

- Accessibility

Google

Mockups

Based on the insights from the usability studies, I applied design changes like adding a visual guide to the walkthrough explaining how to use app
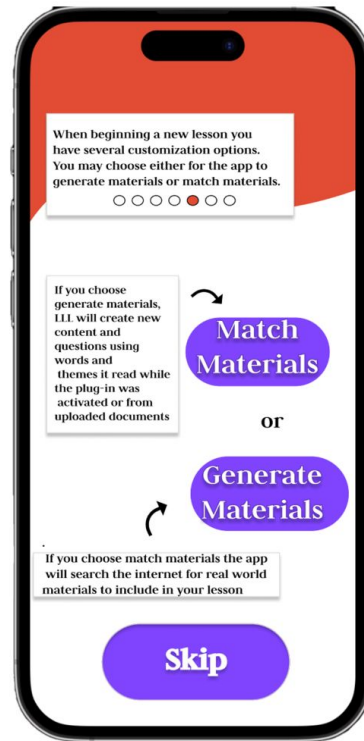
Welcome to
Lit Language Learning,
Mary!

When beginning a new lesson you have several customization options. You may choose either for the app to generate materials or match materials. If you choose generate materials the app will create new content and questions for you using words and themes it read while the plug-in was activated or from uploaded documents. If you choose match materials the app will search the internet for pre-existing materials. You also can customize the medium and topic. For example, you may select for your next lesson: show me real-world news articles and blog posts having to do with business.

○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○

Skip →

When beginning a new lesson you have several customization options. You may choose either for the app to generate materials or match materials.

○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○

If you choose generate materials, LLL will create new content and questions using words and themes it read while the plug-in was activated or from uploaded documents

Match Materials

or

Generate Materials

If you choose match materials the app will search the internet for real world materials to include in your lesson

Skip

Google
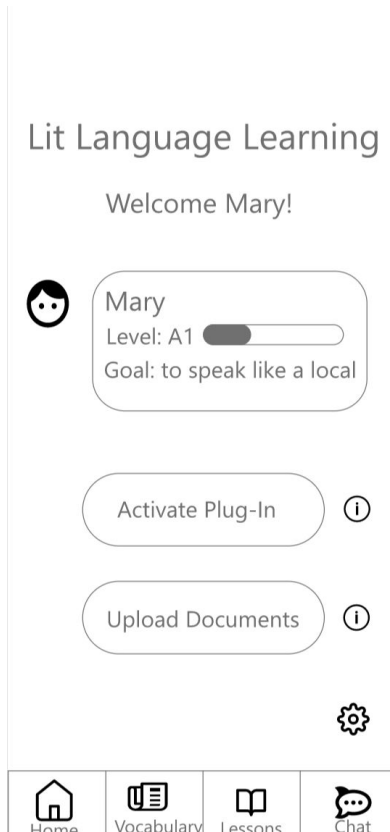
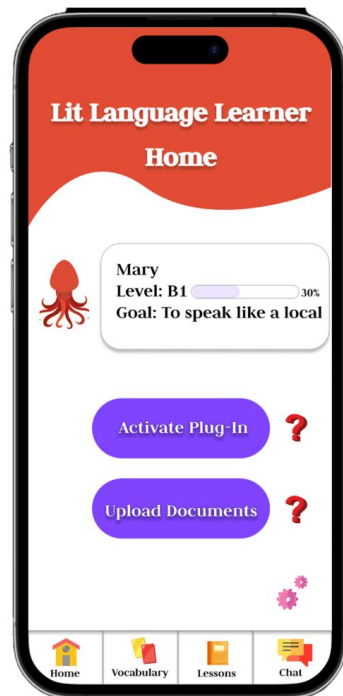# Mockups

Additional design changes included changing the information buttons to question marks for clarity.

Lit Language Learning

Welcome Mary!

Mary
Level: A1
Goal: to speak like a local

Activate Plug-In

Upload Documents

Home   Vocabulary   Lessons   Chat

Lit Language Learner
Home

Mary
Level: B1   30%
Goal: To speak like a local

Activate Plug-In   ?

Upload Documents   ?

Home   Vocabulary   Lessons   Chat

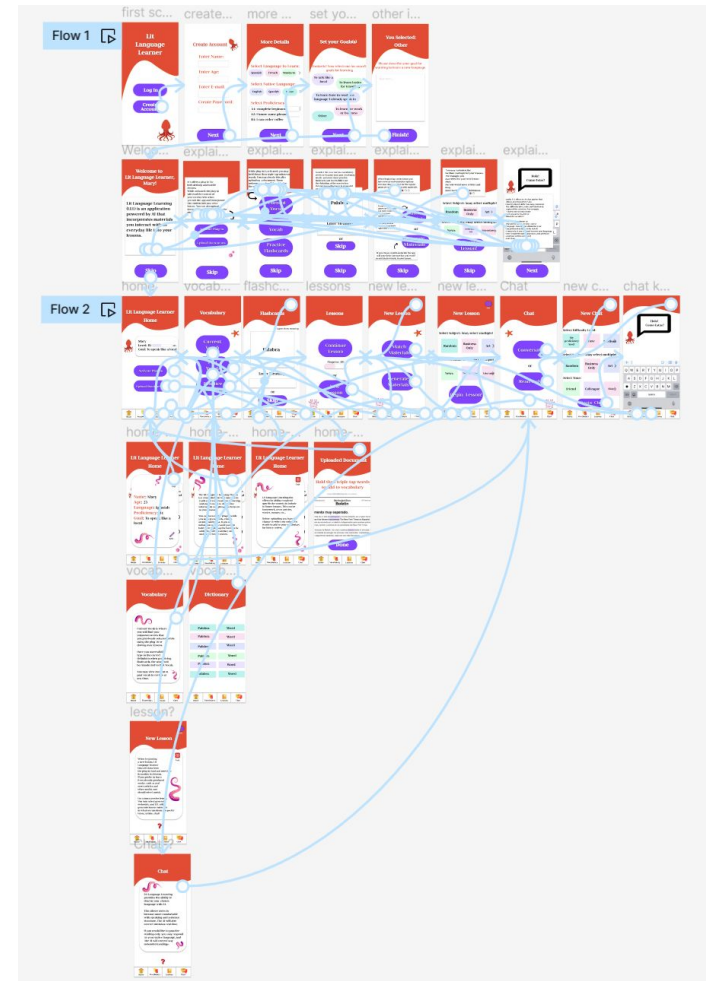Google

Mockups
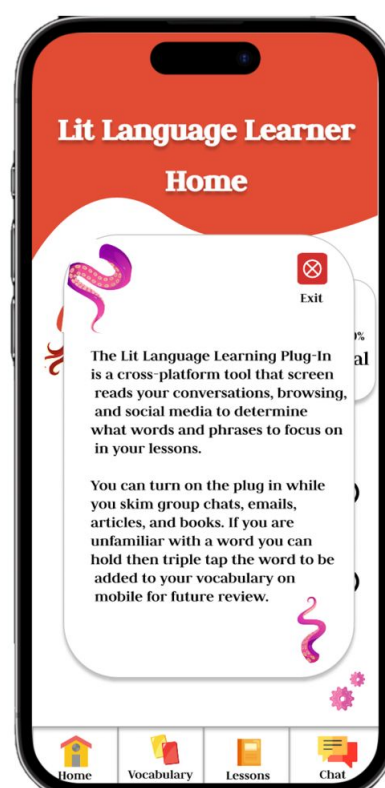
High-fidelity prototype

The high-fidelity prototype
followed the same user flow as
the low-fidelity prototype,
including design changes made
after the usability study and
added transitions.
View the Lit Language Learner
high-fidelity prototype

Google

Accessibility considerations

1

Clear labels for interactive elements that can be read by screen readers.

2

Use of cross cultural symbols

Google

Responsive Design

- Information architecture
- Responsive design

Google

Sitemap

With the app designs completed, I started work on designing the responsive website. I used the Lit Language Learner sitemap to guide the organizational structure of each screen's design to ensure a cohesive and consistent experience across devices.
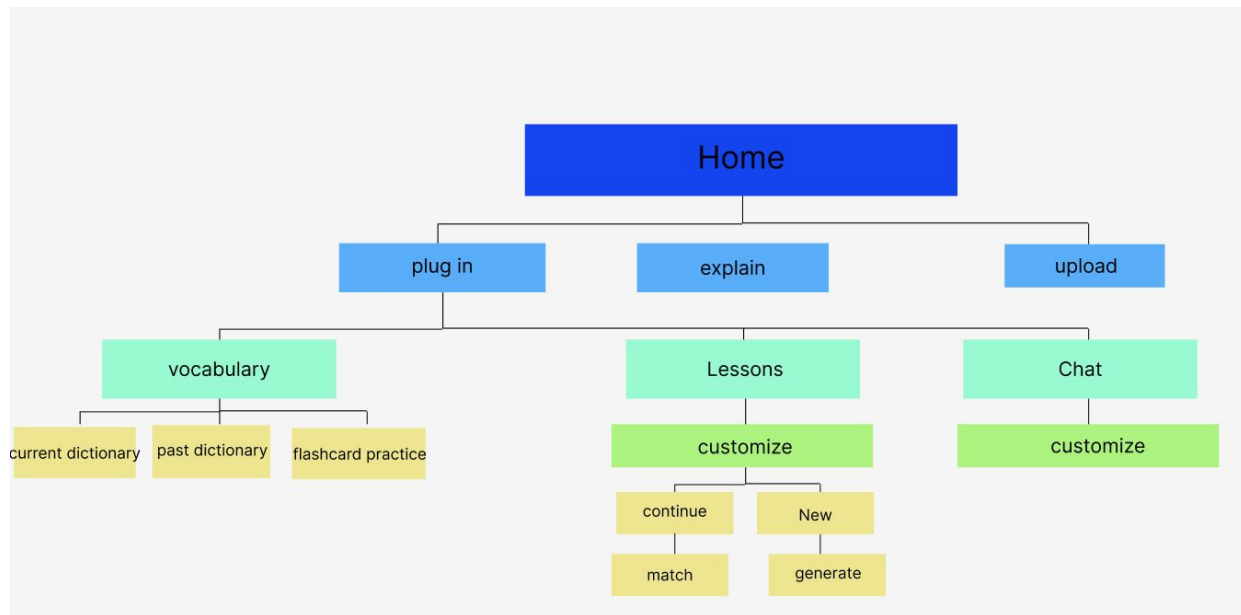
Responsive designs

The designs for screen size variation included mobile and desktop. I optimized the designs to fit specific user needs of each device and screen size.

Mobile website

Desktop

Lit Language Learner Home

Mary
Level: B1   30%
Goal: To speak like a local

Activate Plug-In   ?

Upload Documents   ?

Home   Vocabulary   Lessons   Chat

Sign Up   Log In

Lit Language Learner

Download our mobile app for on-the-go learning!

Available on Apple and Google Play Stores

Lit Language Learning (LLL) is an application powered by AI that incorporates materials you interact with in everyday life into your lessons.

Activate Plug-In

LLL offers a plug-in for both desktop and mobile devices.
While activated, the plug-in will read the content of your screen even when you exit the app and incorporate the content into your next lesson.

With Lit Language Learner You Can....

Practice Flashcards   Customize your Lessons   Conversate with an AI

Sign Up or
Create an Account to begin your language learning journey!

Google

Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

Google

Takeaways

Impact:

Users shared that the app was super interesting, especially the chat function, once they fully got the hang of it. One quote from peer feedback was that "I become more skilled as time progressed interacting with the app.

What I learned:

I learned that initial explanation and clarity of the app is super important when recruiting users. Simple details such as changing an information symbol to a more widely recognized question mark can mean the difference between recruiting or losing a user.

Google

Next steps

1

Conduct research on how successful the app is in a user learning a new language.

2

Add more educational resources dependant on themes in user learning research.

3

Provide incentives and rewards to users for successfully learning a new language.

Google

Let's connect!

Thank you for your time reviewing my work on the Lit Language Learner app! If you'd like to see more or would like to get in touch, my contact information is provided below.

Email: m.mck.pierce@gmail.com