

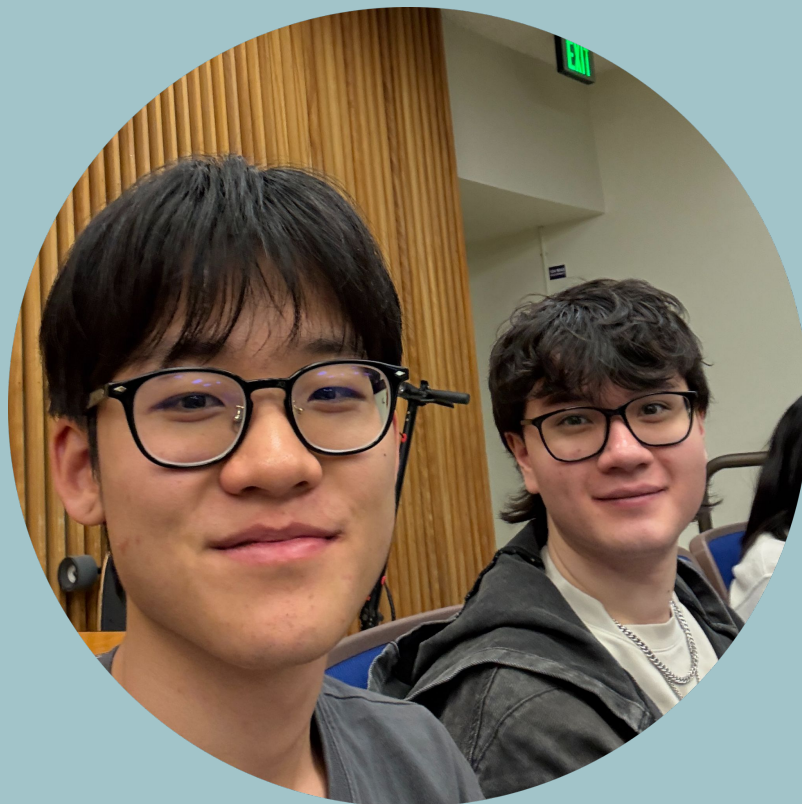
Language Learning (Model)

GR1



Meet the Team!

Ryan
UCSB '26



Victor
UCSB '26

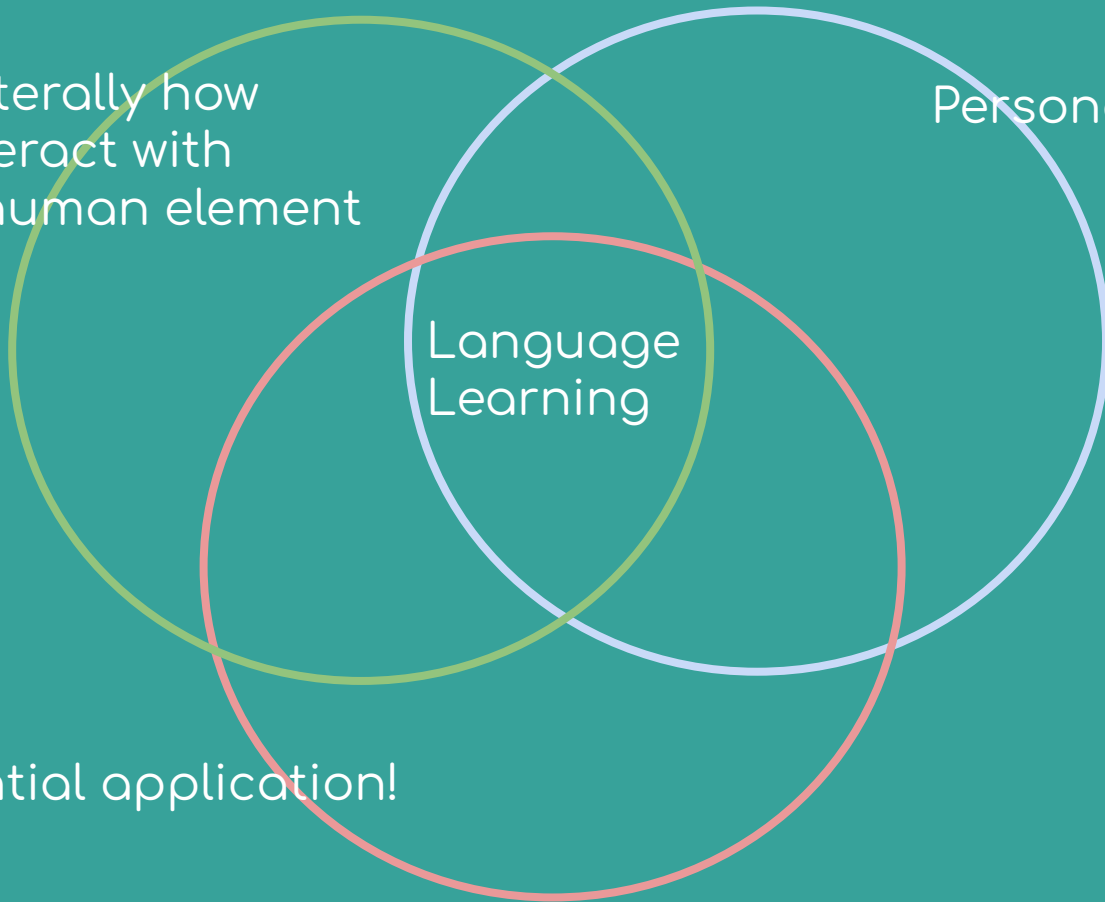
Domain Selection

AI relevance, literally how
computers interact with
fundamental human element
(language)

Personal Interest!

Language
Learning

Potential application!



Finding Participants

Non-UCSB Students

Getting ourselves out there

Foreigners

Those who have to assimilate with our native language

Different Languages

Those who have different interests and language learning experiences

We spoke to...



Beth

19-year-old Chinese
International SBCC
Student (extreme user)

Asked to interview as a
foreigner assimilating
with America



Richard

21-year-old Korea
Connoisseur from the
Bay Area

Asked to interview
someone passionate
about Korean culture,
doesn't use AI to learn
languages



Chaewon

20-year-old College
Student

Local LA resident who
attends Language
Exchange events, uses
AI frequently while
studying Japanese

...at these locations...



...and asked them questions like

What language are you learning, and why?

Do you use AI while learning?

Was this your choice or something
you felt you had to do?

What pushed you to use AI instead of
a person?

Are you more focused on being
understood or being correct?

What did you not use AI for?

Do you hesitate before speaking?

Were there moments you felt more
comfortable with AI?

How do you feel when others make
mistakes in your language?

How does practicing with AI feel different
from practicing with a real person?

Why did you decide not to use AI



Our extreme user was..



Beth was studying English 1-4 hours
each day out of necessity, and she
used AI constantly!

Our roles in the interviews were..

Transcriber
(recorded the
important bits)



Interviewer
(asked the questions)

..and we used



Google Docs

for notetaking



for long-distance calling



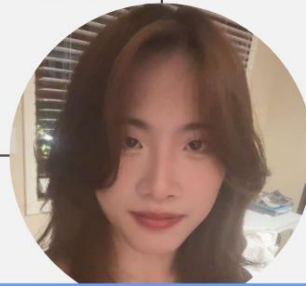
for recording



Beth
Foreigner
Apartment in IV - 30 min

“I can ask AI all the time and
any kinds of questions even
though some of them are
stupid.”

SAYS THINKS



Beth

DOES FEELS

"English. I'm studying abroad in USA."

"I felt I had to learn."

"English is essential for me to communicate and study."

"Before the conversation I'm thinking about my accent."

"I think language is just a way to communicate."

"I'm worried that if I can make a good impression."

"I use AI to help me speak in native way"

"As long as they can understand."

"I hope they think I'm polite and smart."

"Did I make grammar mistakes?"

"If I speak wrong, people might judge me."

"Does anyone actually use this word in real life?"

"Real conversation feels very hard."

"AI is convenient because I can ask anytime."

"I'm too embarrassed to ask people sometimes."

"Is AI really useful for real-life speaking?"

"try to speak in a simple way and use less complicated vocabulary."

"I can ask AI all the time and any kinds of questions even though some of them are stupid."

"AI gives me some unpopular words sometimes"

Studied English 1-4 hours a day out of necessity

Uses AI constantly during study

Uses AI to "understand some sentences that I don't know."

Uses AI to help her "speak in a more native way."

Asks AI "any kinds of questions" at any time, including "stupid" ones

Prioritizes getting the message across

Self-conscious about accent

Pressured

Nervous with new people

Doubtful when AI gives "wide range" answers

Relief when she is understood

Guarded at the start of conversations

insecure about sounding "not like young people"

Safe when using AI

Comfortable with familiar people

Empathetic toward other learners' mistakes

Double-checks if AI suggestions sound like what "young people" really say

Leans on familiar people for practice because it feels safer.

Hesitates more with strangers

Seeks positive feedback

Interesting Findings

Afraid of making mistakes when talking to real people

Conscious about sounding like the young adults around her

Prioritizes other people being able to understand her

Still occasionally has doubts about what AI tells her



Insight

Beth treats English as a survival tool for school + daily life, so mistakes feel socially risky

Beth uses AI because it's always available and non-judgmental, but she sometimes doubts if the output matches real-life usage



Need

A way to practice speaking that feels low-stakes and protects her confidence while still preparing her for real conversations

Trust + validation features (examples in real contexts, tone/slang checks, "would people actually say this?")



Chaewon
LA College Student
Starbucks Cafe - 35 min

“It [learning japanese]
reminded me of when i was
obsessed with anime and it
sounds really fun to speak”

Says

Thinks



Chaewon

Does

Feels

"helpful especially if you have social anxiety i think"

"google translate isn't that good"

"it's not a human so it doesn't even matter, i can completely mess up"

"I just want to get my meaning across"

"it's faster, more efficient way for my learning style"

"chatgpt, you can pepper it with tons of questions"

"AIs not gonna judge you or cost you more money"

"AIs explanations are better than a random conversational partner's"

"It's definitely fun to try and use what I learned"

"it reminded me of when i was obsessed with anime and it sounds really fun to speak"

AI is a safe space to experiment without embarrassment

"I just want to get my meaning across"

Understanding why something works matters more than memorizing rules

Language learning should feel fun, not like schoolwork

Making mistakes is a necessary and useful part of learning

AI and real human interaction each have their own place

Confidence grows faster when judgment is removed

AI is more flexible and responsive than traditional tools

Formal textbooks don't match my learning style

Getting the message across is more important than perfect grammar

Watches anime and YouTube videos to naturally learn

Doesn't study from formal textbooks

Stays away from Google translate

"it reminded me of when i was obsessed with anime and it sounds really fun to speak"

Uses online platform, iTalki, to talk to Japanese tutor every week or so

Uses ChatGPT extensively in understanding complex grammar points

Studies Japanese for fun

Focuses on meaning rather than correctness when speaking

Enjoys the process of learning Japanese

Constructs sentences even if unsure, verifies with AI

Empowered by having instant answers to questions

Comfortable progressing at their own pace

Curious and playful about how the language sounds and works

Less anxious when practicing with AI compared to real people

Excited when recognizing or using phrases they've learned

Motivated because learning feels personal and enjoyable

More confident experimenting with language freely

Relieved that mistakes don't have social consequences

Encouraged when meaning is understood even if phrasing isn't perfect

Optimistic about eventually speaking naturally and fluently

Interesting Findings

Empowered by having *instant* answers to questions



Confidence grows faster when judgement is removed

Doesn't study from formal textbooks

"It's not a human so it doesn't even matter, I can **completely mess up**"

Insight

Removing judgment lowers the emotional cost of making mistakes, accelerating confidence more than repetition alone.



Need!

People need environments where mistakes feel inconsequential so confidence can grow organically.

In essence..

It's convenient!

Confusion is minimized
when you ask questions as
soon as they arise, and
confidence can

GROW

Fear of failure

and judgement is
mitigated through using
AI to learn languages

Don't blindly
trust AI still.

Learning
should
match
your style

When you
speak, you
want to be
understood

What's Next?

Use GR1 learnings to focus scope:

Speaking feels high-stakes (accent/grammar + making a good impression), and AI is helpful but not always trusted for “real-life” language.

Do 2+ more interviews:

Confirm patterns and see what changes across different learners.

Turn insights into action in GR2:

POVs -> HMWs -> quick experience prototypes to test what actually helps.

Appendix

1. Intro - slides 1-3
2. Needfinding Methodology - slides 4-10
3. Interview Results - slides 11 and 15
4. Analysis - slides 12-14 and 16-18
5. Summary - slides 19-20
6. Appendix - slide 21