Common Conversations Usability Report

Kristina Robbins

November 24, 2018

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Introduction

Common Conversations is a mobile translation app specifically designed to support college students studying abroad. The app helps students communicate common phrases, like asking for directions, while gaining an understanding of the language. The app offers go-to questions and suggests common phrases to respond, and will record what the other person is saying to translate a response. This makes the conversation possible, all while helping the student talk to the locals. For instant communication, the student can simply record their question and the app will match it to the best phrases to use. The app can respond with an audio translation if the user prompts it to, and it offers a large library of complex phrases for students to socialize. With this app students can search specific words like, "bathroom", and the app will formulate suggestions. By breaking down common questions, students can learn the basics for communicating in a foreign country just by repeated use of this interactive tool. The new mobile app makes it easy to ask a question, view and identify proper phrases to use, and translate a message instantly.

Common Conversations is a tool that helps students become more independent while they immerse into a different culture. This app gives students control of these conversations, providing a better overall experience, and an opportunity for students to learn basic language while they study abroad. Common Conversations mobile translator app empowers students to take control of their own learning. This app promotes social engagement and interaction.

Executive Summary

The designer for Common Conversations conducted a total of 7 user-tests from November 22^{nd} through November 25^{th} , 2018. The tests were sent directly to a specific range of people from students in college, to middle aged adults, to evaluate the overall function of the app and the end-user experience. The test took a maximum of 20 minutes to complete 9 tasks which included step-by-step instructions. The interactive portion was recorded, both screen capture, to document user movements, and audio to capture additional verbal notations and responses.

Some tests were performed in person and the other were tasked via email request, and completed the test on their own using the Try My UI online system. The designer's intent for conducting the test was to collect feedback on function, flow and design. The test was performed to gather any additional comments for improving the overall system and user-experience. Not all features were functioning, therefore specific instructions were provided to bypass initial setup for the user profile screens.

Overall, the testers for *Common Conversations* were pleased with the concept and flow of the app. There was strong and positive response to simplicity and buttons, but some features were found to be unnecessary. There was positive and constructive feedback to help with layout and function to make improvements.

Much of the difficulty throughout the testing process came from lack of experience using the testing software. This interrupted the pacing and thought process for some users. The participants who were familiar with the testing software were able to move through the test more efficiently and provided better feedback.

After conducting the test, we were able to identify a few problems:

- The color scheme for the buttons didn't bare any consistency or purpose for the overall look and style. The user was confused about the significance for specific button or category colors.
- Some buttons, like the search and filter buttons, were not necessary for many of the pages. There wasn't use for them, no content to search or filter.
- The tested prototype was embedded into an iPhone design and not Android. (This has been updated since).
- The categories page needs better function and icons for audio.
- There was redundancy when it came to specific buttons, too many ways to access or navigate to the same place. The home button was unnecessary on the main page since it was also available in the drop-down menu.
- The overall aesthetic was lacking culture and diversity. The user wanted to see more personalization and cultural connection through imagery and/or use of flags. The current aesthetic feels too connected to the classroom.

Methodology

Sessions

Common Conversations is a product geared for college students. 4 of the testers were current undergraduate students in the Digital Design program at the University of Colorado Denver. Two participants were middle-aged working adults between ages 35-50, and one tester was age 63, who's primary and only language is English. The purpose for the oldest tester was to identify user ease and ability to navigate to complete a process with less experience using mobile apps, and knowledge of only one, language. Each

session varied in time based on former user experience with technology, which had varied more outside of the college. The time allotted was 20 minutes and most of the time spent was understanding the testing system, then reading and executing the tasked instructions. Some users provided better feedback than others, which varied based on difficulty understanding the testing system.

The tester was required to read the instructions out loud and then navigate or execute a command of action. After the task was completed (or not), the user was expected to rate the level of difficulty and whether or not the task was completed. The user was initially encouraged prior to testing, to speak out loud and talk through the experience to describe things they see and encountered. After completing the tasks, the tester was provided 4 questions to reflect on their experience and share their personal feedback. This portion of the test was crucial to collect information which would help us identify problems, as well as opportunity to witness patterns in the user's workflow.

After each task, the administrator asked the participant to rate the interface on a 5-point Likert Scale with measures ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Post-task scenario subjective measures included:

- How difficult or easy did you find this task?
- Could you complete this task?

After the last task was completed, the test administrator asked the participant to rate the website overall by using a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) for ten subjective measures including:

- I think that I would like to use this system frequently
- I found this system unnecessarily complex
- I thought this system was easy to use
- I think that I would need the support of a technical person to use this system
- I found the various functions in this system were very well integrated
- I thought there was too much inconsistency in the system'
- I would imagine that most people would learn to use this system very quickly
- I found this system awkward to use
- I felt very confident using this system'
- I need to learn a lot of things before I get going with this system

In addition, following the test, the participants were asked the following overall website questions:

- What was the worst thing about your experience?
- What other aspects of the experience could be improved?
- What is something that could improve the overall time it takes to translate something?
- What other comments do you have?

See Attachment C (Task List) for the Appendix.

Participants

The tester participants were brought in for a specific reason. The *Common Conversations* application is designed for students studying abroad, however, it was imperative to get some insight from a two of testers who were working, and traveling adults, as well. We also included testing from a grown man in his early senior years who had some experience, but wasn't quite as knowledgeable using mobile apps to see if the flow was user friendly. 4 undergraduate college students were elected from the Design program at the University of Colorado Denver, 2 middle-aged working adults, and our senior with minimal experience.

The students who participated completed the testing on their own following the Try My UI interface and instructions. Two students tested from November 25^{th} , and two November 26^{th} . The students did not require assistance with the testing process as they had some prior knowledge of the process. The two young adults tested in person with some personal instruction to get started, November 25^{th} in the comfort of their own homes. The first tester was our senior candidate who was also tested with some personal instruction, in his own home, November 25^{th} as well.

Role

Student	Adult Age 35-50	Adult Age 60+
4	2	1

Male	Female
3	4

Evaluation Tasks/Scenarios

In order to use the Common Conversations to complete a translation from English into Spanish, the user needed a tasked list to first set up an initial scenario to help illustrate the purpose. Second, there were some very specific features within the Common Conversations application that included an audio interaction or playback, that was not permitted to include into the prototype design within Marvel. The tester needed these guided comments to understand when something was supposed to be an audio playback or output. The task list helped the user to better understand some areas that needed a little more guidance, as it also prompted the user to continue with the navigation process to complete the larger task at hand, which was to complete a translation.

Test participants attempted completion of the following tasks (see Appendix for complete test scenarios/tasks and each participant completed a self-directed task (i.e., a task of their choice):

- Click to get started
- For this test we will not be setting up a profile, click the "Edit Profile" icon to bypass initial setup.
- Let's start translating
- Select: a category: Greetings
- Take a second to click on each sample to reveal the translation, when finished revealing click to translate, "Hello, how are you".
- This screen is where you would be able to use the audio playback to translate your choice. (For this prototype, the audio does not actually work). From here you would like to try a new translation using the audio recording tool, (mic).
- Record the following to translate, "I'm traveling from Denver".
- Select the correct option from your list of results. (Audio does not actually play)
- Please use the menu to experiment with navigation to other pages.

Results – 4 Biggest Takeaways

- 1. There was a great deal of confusion in relationship to the color scheme and intention for color applied to buttons and categories. There was a patter of color, however it bared no significance for the overall design, and served no real purpose. It was suggested to have a purpose, or to keep the categories more consistent by using a single color across the different buttons and category boxes. There were multiple areas in the app that had users caught up, looking to identify more meaning behind the random use of color applied to each designated category options, as well as the language buttons. It would be better to keep language boxes in the same hierarchy, with the same color.
- 2. The search icon as well as the filter button was absolutely unnecessary for most of the pages it was visible on. The design was modeled after the Material Design specs for the Android system, however, there was no direct need to search or filter content throughout the app. The menu button provided the proper navigation; therefore, it was not needed to include the additional features. We ran into some redundancy with finding multiple ways of doing the same thing. The home button after completing a translation was a perfect example of the redundancy throughout the application. There was also a way to navigate back home through the menu.
- 3. The application layout and design itself was user-friendly and rather easy to navigate. The large icons and buttons captured the attention of the testers, and were felt to have helped the navigation along more smoothly. The overall simplicity in the design made it easy to read and understand., larger scaled buttons, and a clean layout made it easy for the user to follow the assigned task list with ease. The font sizes were legible, placement was visually correct and appealing, and the information was clear and helpful throughout the translation process. Instructions within the application were clear and easy to follow.
- 4. The design needs to be advanced. The basic layout and function are good, but the app is missing the cultural aspect which would really connect the user to the desire for this handy tool. There was much conflict about the color scheme and the buttons or categories. Instead of basic color, the design should be advanced using regional flags. This would bring a consistent pattern and structure in architecture to each button, which would improve the user understanding and experience a great deal. Imagery could also be included to advance and modernize the aesthetic, driving the design away from such a technical tool, to a fun and interactive "conversational" piece.

Summary of Data

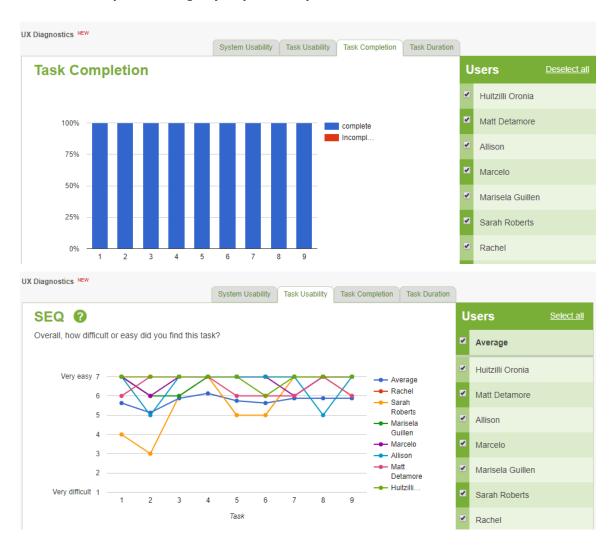
The table below displays a summary of the test data. Low completion rates and satisfaction ratings and high errors and time on tasks are highlighted in red.

Summary of Completion per participant, percentage, Time on Task

Task	Task Completeion %	Task Difficulty	Average Time on Task
1	100	5.63	27.63
2	100	5.13	42.88
3	100	5.88	33.5
4	100	6.13	22.25
5	100	5.75	48.75
6	100	5.63	52.25
7	100	5.88	38.88
8	100	5.88	21.88
9	100	5.88	117.13

of finding the information, ability to keep track of location in site, and site information prediction accuracy.

Difficulty = 7 meaning very easy and 1 very difficult.



Time taken per task(in seconds). 400 Average Rachel Sarah Roberts Maris... Marcelo Allison Matt... Huitzi...



Overall Metrics

Task Duration

Overall Ratings

After task session completion, participants rated the site for ten overall measures (See Attachment 1 in Appendix). These measures include:

- Frequency of use
- Complexity of system
- Ease of use
- Technical support needed
- Well integrated functions
- Inconsistency
- Easy to learn and adapt to
- Awkward to use
- Confident using system
- Prior knowledge needed

What was found from the data, *Common Conversations* scored a 23 out of 30 points for frequency of use. We learned this tool is one that has a very specific time and place for use. In addition to this score, we found the highest numbers were scored for 26 out of 30 points for the overall ease of use. Most testers scored close when evaluating the overall experience being easy to navigate and use. The next score of 24 out of 30 reflects on the user's ability to learn the system quickly. There were 10 questions asked in total and the majority of the testers scored fairly close to each other.

QUESTIONS Scored:

- Q1: 23/30
- Q2: 12/30
- Q3: 26/30
- Q4: 13/30
- Q1: 13/30
 Q5: 23/30
- Q6: 12/30
- Q7: 24/30
- Q8: 12/30
- Q9: 23/30
- Q10: 9/30

4.6.2 Likes, Dislikes, Participant Recommendations

Upon completion of the tasks, participants provided feedback for what they liked most and least about the website, and recommendations for improving the website.

Liked Most

The following comments capture what the participants liked most:

Tester: Matt: I thought it was pretty simple and easy to understand. The icons were visible and a good format size.

Tester: Marisela: I like how there were multiple ways to navigate to certain things like the audio recorder and translator options

Tester: Marcelo: Easy to use, multiple ways to navigate. Clever idea.

Liked Least

The following comments capture what the participants liked the least:

Tester: Rachel: I think the most confusing thing for me was the color of the buttons (for example, on the list of languages) not being the same as each other. Making the buttons different colors made me think that they were somehow different, like one was more important than the other, and I don't think that was necessarily the case.

Tester: Marcelo: I would say the most confusing thing from my entire experience was the edit profile. I was a little disoriented when the task asked me to select "Edit profile" The task assumed the tester knew the "Pencil" icon meant edit profile.

Tester: Alison: I found that the different-colored buttons were a little offputting and made the layout seem sort of messy.

Tester: Huitzilli: I would have liked more instruction on how the mic function works as it was a bit confusing to follow.

Recommendations for Improvement: Part 1

Tester: John: hints on the app itself would help

Tester: Marcelo: I think an option for audio and writing would be nice so if you select audio you can ask to translate something short, and writing could be to translate longer sentences.

Tester: Marisela: Maybe sections similar to Greetings etc. but spelled in Spanish. So that when the user hears certain words or phrases in Spanish

they could recognize that category as a resource they can use to respond/learn from in both their native language as well as the language they are attempting to become fluent/immersed in.

Tester: Rachel: I think that the main page when you open the app should be the translation or language section rather than your own profile page. It doesn't seem necessary for a person to see their own profile every time they open up the app.

Tester: Matt: Main screen should have a search bar to type in whatever you're trying to translate. Then select language.

Tester: Huitzilli: I didn't feel like it necessarily took a while to translate anything I would just suggest you offer a way for users to search alternative terms and phrases that aren't under the pre-set categories. You wouldn't have to actually make it a function in the prototype but simply elude to the idea (for example you could include an instruction blurb that states that the search icon can be used to

Tester: Alison: Rather than recording each piece of audio you need to translate, maybe a simple list of commonly used phrases could be useful. The user flow was a little clunky and I wasn't always sure what I was doing as part of the translating process.

Recommendations Part 2

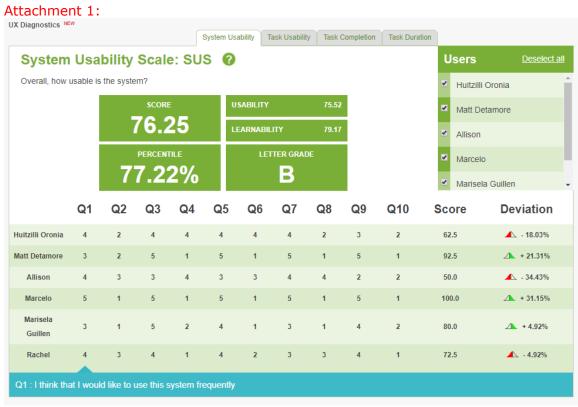
Change	Justification	Severity
Add search engine and microphone on landing page.	Participants would like to see a faster and more direct way to start translating as soon as you open the app. The search capabilities should be offered as a text field option, and a microphone for audio recording.	High
Update buttons and category color scheme	The color scheme used for buttons and categories bares zero significance and causes confusion for the users. Color scheme should be consistent and use of color needs to be thoughtful.	High
Imagery should be added	The use of imagery and flags should be included to offer diversity	High

Conclusion

From this user testing experience, we found the product, *Common Conversations*, is in fact a tool many people appreciate and would be highly interested in using. Each tester had their own comments about the app design, and for the most part, the students were ranting about the potential this product could bring to the language learning environment. The bigger picture presents opportunity for cultures to intermingle which promotes interaction and engagement. This should be in any traveler's luggage.

The testers were able to complete the requested process for translating a common phrase and contributed to a multitude of beneficial feedback for design improvements. It was extremely helpful to test the range of users. The product has a great deal of potential and the architecture just needs minimal adjustments, and the design aesthetic as well.

Appendix

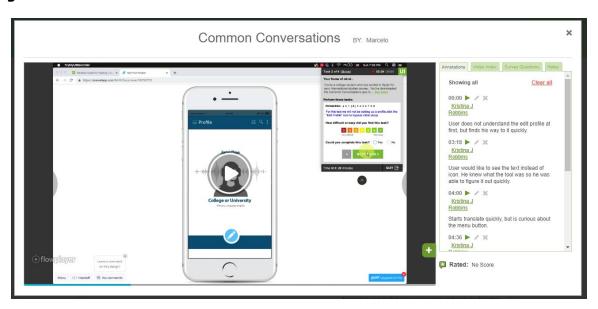


Attachment C: Task list:

- 1. Click to get started
- 2. For this test we will not be setting up a profile, click the "Edit Profile" icon to bypass initial setup.
- 3. Let's start translating
- 4. Select: a category: Greetings
- 5. Take a second to click on each sample to reveal the translation, when finished revealing click to translate, "Hello, how are you".

- 6. This screen is where you would be able to use the audio playback to translate your choice. (For this prototype, the audio does not actually work). From here you would like to try a new translation using the audio recording tool, (mic).
- 7. Record the following to translate, "I'm traveling from Denver".
- 8. Select the correct option from your list of results. (Audio does not actually play)
- 9. Please use the menu to experiment with navigation to other pages.

Highlight reel



https://www.trymyui.com/pra/YsG7eOH5sQm98swB

Kristina Robbins

Press Release: CHANGE TRAVEL with COMMON CONVERSATIONS

November 4, 2018

Undergraduates Engage in Multi-Cultural Conversations Without Prior Knowledge of a Foreign Language!

Students "chat and learn" while studying abroad; immersing into cultural experiences using the new *Common Conversation* mobile translation app.

DENVER, November 4, 2018, [5280—The Denver Magazine] — *Change Travel* announced launching the new Android app, *Common Conversations*; giving International Perspective Students a conversational tool which translates on the spot in the language of choice, bridging the gap of language barriers, ultimately immersing the student further into an educational cultural experience.

"It's one thing to be able to listen and observe, it's another when you can truly articulate the message and communicate a response. Even some of the most common conversations are impossible to have in multi-language environments. There's too much time spent trying-to-translate, and not enough conversation."

It's a big task for college students to travel internationally, let alone the added stress of not knowing the language you're about to encounter. So often we waste time trying to understand each other, we miss out on a natural conversation. What about the simple conversations that get us through a day when we're in a foreign country? The best educational experience is achieved by fully immersing into a culture to learn and understand more about it. If a student doesn't have the tools to ask questions or to comprehend what someone is saying, the message is lost and the overall experience can be frustrating.

"I wanted to make it easier for students to talk with people when they travel internationally. I asked students what their common communication problems were when they study abroad and some of their responses were; asking for directions, ordering food, and asking where the bathroom is. With Common Conversations mobile app these questions are being answered and the student is taking control of their own cultural

experience by interacting confidently and independently", said Kristina Robbins, Product Designer.

Common Conversations is a mobile translation app specifically designed to support students studying abroad. The app helps students communicate common phrases, like asking for directions, while gaining an understanding of the language. The app offers go-to questions and suggests common phrases to respond, and will record what the other person is saying to translate a response. This makes the conversation possible, all while helping the student talk to the locals. For instant communication, the student can simply record their question and the app will match it to the best phrases to use. The app can respond with an audio translation if the user prompts it to, and it offers a large library of complex phrases for students to socialize. With this app students can search specific words like, "bathroom", and the app will formulate suggestions. By breaking down common questions, students can learn the basics for communicating in a foreign country just by repeated use of this interactive tool. The new mobile app makes it easy to ask a question, view and identify proper phrases to use, and translate a message instantly.

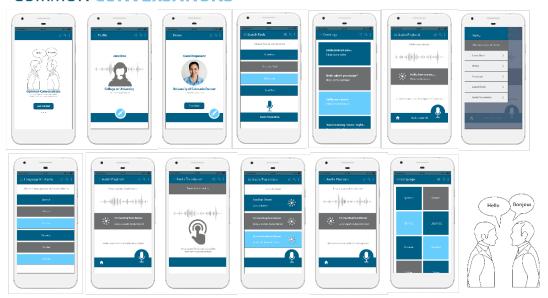
Sarah Vaughn stated, "I love being able to use **Common Conversations** for more than asking directions. I use it to interact, like giving a compliment. The responses I get from others is overwhelming with curiosity and joy."

Common Conversations mobile translator app empowers students to take control of their own learning. This app promotes social engagement and interaction, so get started by visiting *ChangeTravel.org*. Sign up for a free account, answer a few questions about your travel plans, download the app and get started today.

By: Kristina Robbins November 4, 2018

HIGH FIDELITY DESIGNS + MARVEL APP

COMMON CONVERSATIONS



COMMON CONVERSATIONS PROTOTYPE

Common Conversations

You are invited to participate in an interview conducted by **Kristina Robbins** (BFA candidates) at the University of Colorado, Denver, under the supervision of Amara V. Hulslander, Lecturer in the Digital Design program.

This interview seeks to study workflow and user experience for the newly designed prototype, Common Conversations app. This research may help us to understand if the user can easily manage and complete desired tasks to navigate through the app and easily understand the process.

Participation in the study will consist of a recorded experience via Try My UI. Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to participate or to withdraw from this study.

There are no known risks associated with this research. All participant information will remain anonymous and individual results of any kind will remain confidential. Your time and participation is greatly appreciated.

Please contact Kristina Robbins, (ko.illustrations@gmail.com) with any questions, concerns, or comments.

I acknowledge that I was informed of the following research project, the way it will be conducted and the conditions of my participation in it. I hereby agree to participate in this research project.

Signature Morisela Guillen

Date 11 / 26 / 18

Researcher's signature

Printed Name

Marisela Gwillen

Researcher's printed name

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26 NOV 2018

Researcher's signature

Whi Dlbs 11/29/18 Printed Name

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Rachel Dormido

UrBtina Robbins

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Allison Anderson

Researcher's printed name

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Researcher's printed name

Kristma Robbins

Marcelo Cazon
Printed Name

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Matt Detamore

Printed Name

Researcher's printed name

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