



Define & Ideate

Culture through Cuisine

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Our PotLuck



Defne

Potluck
item: 



Kyla

Potluck
item: 



Janet

Potluck
item: 



Amrita

Potluck
item: 

Recap

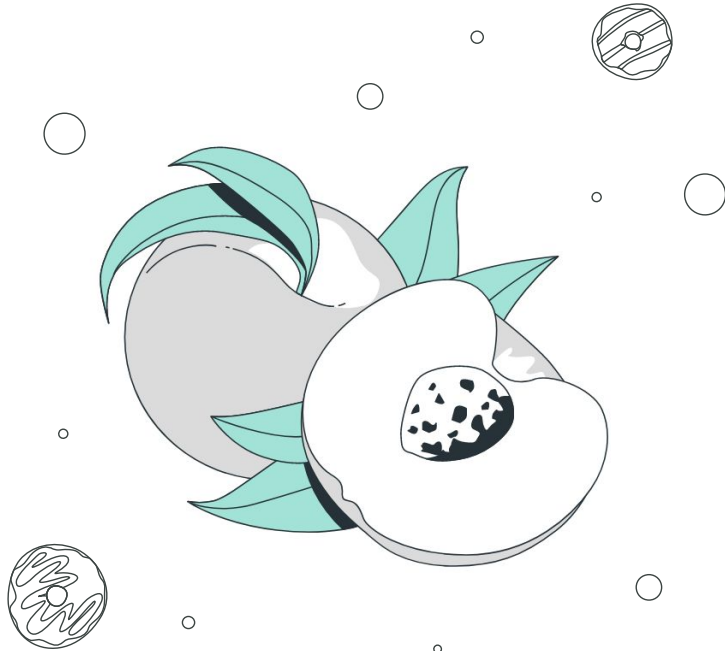
Last time, we saw **where** our interviewees struggled, hesitated, smiled, stuttered, were uninterested, or showed excitement. Will we be able to brainstorm solutions to **address** their problems, or to **enhance** the good parts of their cooking experiences?



Problem Domain

Sharing and learning about other cultures through food and cooking

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New Interviews

Dig deeper into our problem domain of cooking & food authenticity.



Revisiting Old Interviews

What problems did our needfinding point to?

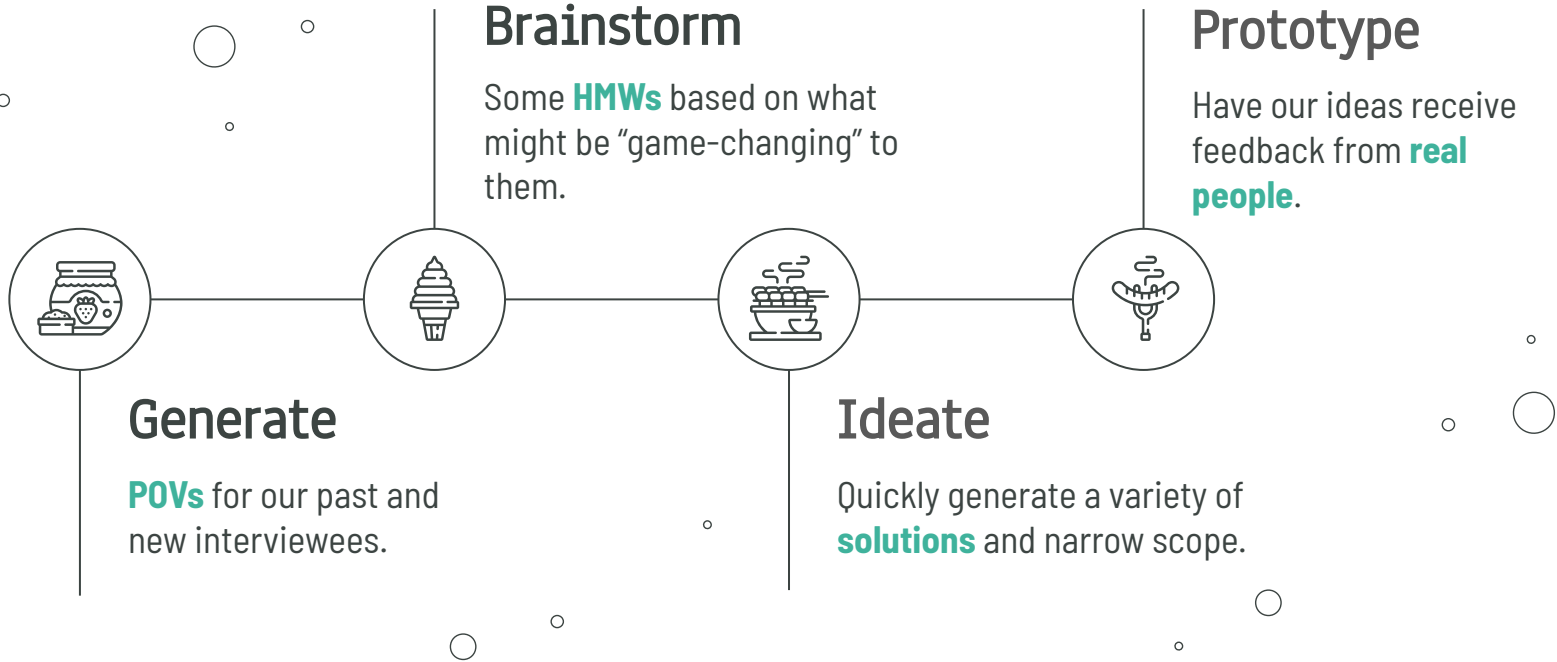


Solutions & Prototypes

How do new people react to prototypes built around our assumptions?



Ideation Methodology



What stuck from our interviews

Sofia

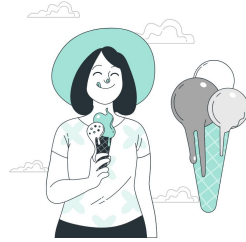


Learned cooking by doing,
learned to be a chef on the
job as a hasher.



Did a lot of her learning being
non-verbal and practical allow
her to get used to cooking in a
more natural way?

Grace



She noticed a lot of people didn't
bring in authentic recipes when
looking for ingredients.



Concerned that authenticity behind
food is lost through **language
barriers or inauthentic recipes?**

Martin



Despite having an appreciation for good food,
doesn't think that cooking is a **personal**
experience worth the time investment.



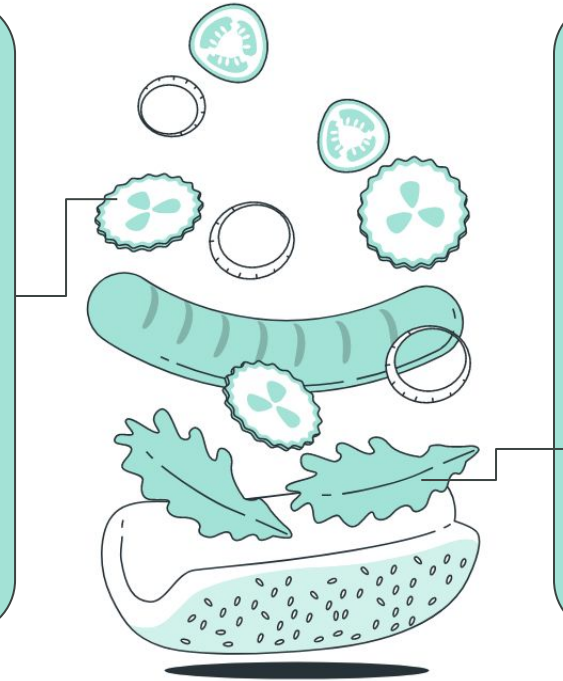
Can't feel connected to the **cultural context,
history, and stories** behind food?

Testing Assumptions

Does going through the motions of cooking teach you how to be a better cook?

Is the appearance of a new food what's intimidating for people unwilling to try it?

Do people use inauthentic recipes because they're mostly available in English?



Do challenges faced when cooking from a recipe come from a lack of experience?

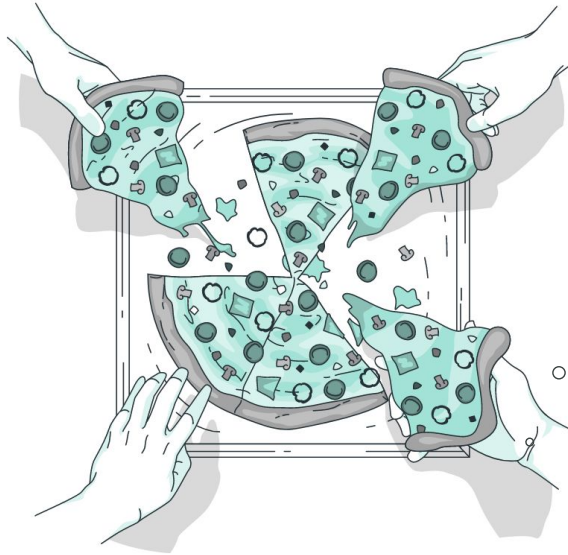
Do they come from intimidation? A lack of cultural context?

When you don't understand the context of a recipe, does that make you less interested in cooking it?

Our PotLuck-ers

Interviewees

- Workers (around food), industry knowledge (startup founder)
- Non-Stanford students!



Prototypers

- Diverse ages: students, parents
- Interviewed in a variety of locations.
- Variety of motivations behind cooking
- Variety of expertise around food consumption.

Amy - Server @ Decadence



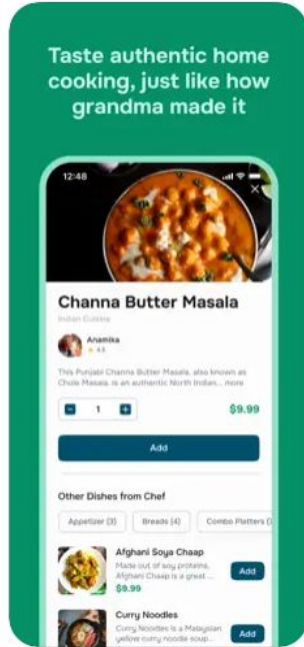
Context

- Amy is from **Oakland, CA** and her parents are from Alabama and Oklahoma
- Amy took this role at **Decadence** as a way to make ends meet
- Her favorite part of her job is making people happy through acai bowls and gelato.

Key Findings

- Amy finds that homestyle Southern food is hard to obtain in the Bay Area and on campus
 - Amy loves her mom's **Southern Hot Water Cornbread** says that her mom would not let anyone in the kitchen while creating it
 - Amy has not made her mom's signature dish since her mom's passing
 - She says she might consider making it if she were to find a recipe that was similar **and** she was making it with her sisters
-

Jeson - Founder of OpenChefs.



Context

- Jeson is 24, an **immigrant** from Malaysia, making an early stage startup that is a home-made food delivery app
- He founded it because he was **homesick** in the Bay Area and missed authentic Malaysian food

Key Findings

- The main people buying food are **immigrants** in their 20's to 30's and the main people selling food are **middle-aged immigrants**.
- The sellers mainly did it for **passion** or **economic** purposes (the former is preferred for **food quality**, but the latter has more **social impact** benefits)
- They use a **TikTok-like interface**, but there is a difference between **food entertainment** and what makes food sell
- The majority of users buy foods that remind them of home - there is **less criss-crossing of cuisines**
- This app would perform quite differently in **different areas**, New York (authentic food already exists), Texas (perhaps less open to new cuisines)

Key Learnings

Amy: Authenticity is hard to come by, and most people are troubled because they don't know how to recreate it.

Jeson: Although a sentimental connection to food through culture remains pervasive in some communities, people still struggle to feel ownership towards other cultures' cuisines.



01

Martin

Real estate developer from Oakland

Interview conducted at Verve cafe while taking physical notes

Point of View - Martin

We met...

- Martin, a real estate developer and avid biker from Oakland in his 30s, who makes only **very simple meals** for himself a few times a week

We were surprised to realize that...

- Despite taking pride in his ability to appreciate well-made home-cooked meals and making an effort to focus on the **cultural authenticity of food**, he doesn't describe himself as food motivated and feels like cooking complex dishes for himself isn't worth the **time and effort investment**

We wonder if this means...

- He needs to understand the **personal stories** and **cultural context** of food in order to be more emotionally connected to it and be excited to cook it as a worthwhile experience

It would be game-changing to...

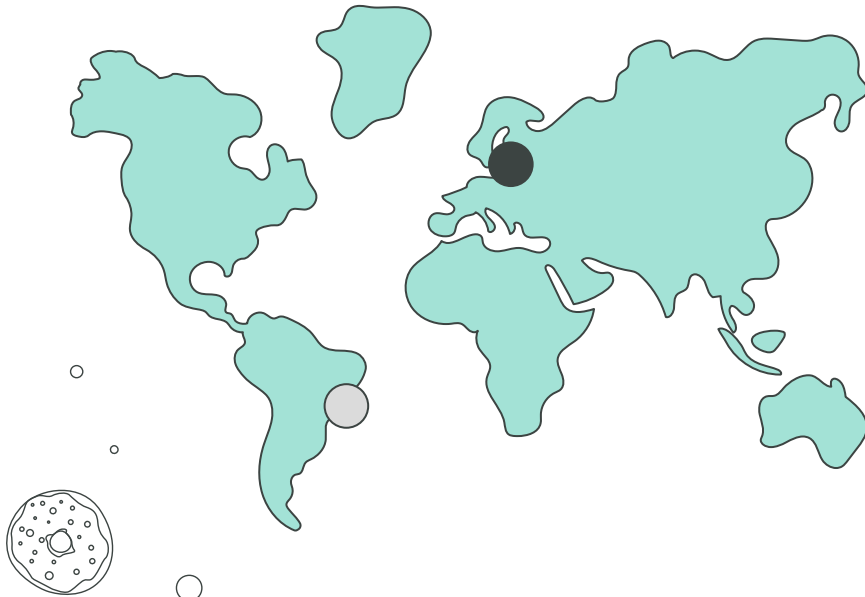
- Help people feel connected to the cultural context and stories behind dishes in a way that **makes cooking other cuisines feel personal.**
-

The slide features a light teal rounded rectangular box in the center containing text. The background is white with a decorative border of small circles and larger food icons. The icons include a pizza, a burger, a donut, a sandwich, and a bowl of food. The text is centered within the teal box.

How might we...

present recipes in the
cultural/historical context and
the personal stories associated
with them?

Solution Selection - Meal Journeys



Solution

Connect recipes to **places** and **journeys**, pairing each dish with a map of where it originated from, associated cultural and personal stories, and how it has changed as it has spread to different places over time

Key Assumption

Foreign dishes will feel **more exciting** and **less intimidating** to cook when you learn about the history, culture, and stories associated with them

Experience Prototype



Show **participants** a picture of a dish they've likely not seen before = one not popularly consumed in the West but instead regional in some other part of the world.

- Ask them **how they feel about eating it.** (answer may be positive or negative)
 - Ask them why or why not they would consider **cooking** it
 - Ask them what they **think** the food is made of, where it's from, and what the culturally appropriate way of eating it is
 - Show them the region of origin and the spread of the dish over time on a world map, pictures of the dish within the region, and the people from there eating and cooking that food
 - Ask them if their opinions have been affected, how they feel about the food now.
 - How has their opinion on this dish changed? Are they more or less excited to eat it?
 - Would they themselves cook it? Why? If they need more information, what's missing?
-

01

Mother (age ~50) who frequently cooks for her family

Confident in her ability to tackle complex foreign dishes

02

Father (age ~50) who occasionally cooks

Somewhat skeptical of unfamiliar foods, but willing to try interesting new things

03

USC student (age 20)

Not at all experienced with cooking, interested in learning but nervous about complex foreign dishes



Key Insights

What worked?

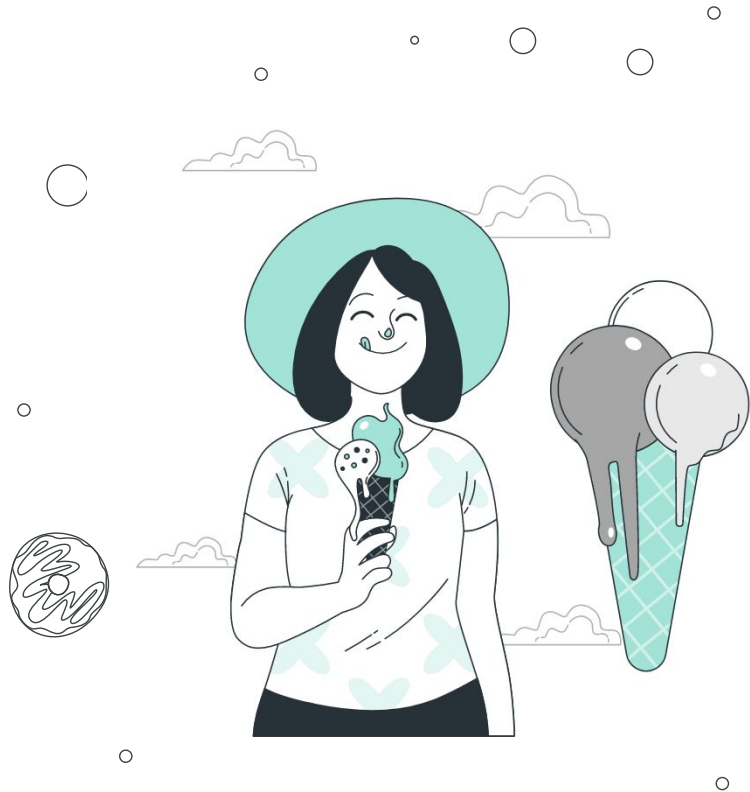
- Showing origin and spread on a colorful map drew substantial interest in the dish as participants realized its popularity
- Participants were generally excited and intrigued by the dish's history of creating commonalities between religious groups in India and asked several questions about the connection
- **Assumption was valid:** All participants were more inclined to eat and cook the dish after learning the journey

What didn't work?

- One participant was a bit confused by images of alternate versions of the dish, asking which one they would be cooking
- The food journey did not provide any references to get started with cooking the dish, which Participant 03 noted as something they would need to move forward

Key Quotes

- "Seeing that this dish has been around for so many centuries and is popular in so many countries makes it a little more exciting to try" - Participant 01
 - "Ooh, that's an interesting story! I'll be making this for my family on the weekend" - Participant 02
 - "I wonder if there's a way to make it easier to approach cooking this, but I'd like to give it a shot" - Participant 03
-



Interviewed by Janet & Observed by Defne

02

Grace

Manager of 99 Ranch (Asian Grocery)

Interview conducted at 99 Ranch while taking physical notes

Point of View - Grace

We met...

- Grace, the **manager of 99 Ranch** in Mountain View, who cooks at home and **observes customers** who are looking for ingredients for **Asian cooking**

We were surprised to realize that...


- She noticed a lot of people **didn't bring in authentic recipes** when **looking for ingredients**, instead defaulting to westernized versions of traditional Asian foods.

We wonder if this means...

- She was concerned that a lot of **authenticity** behind food was **lost** through **language barriers or inauthentic recipes**

It would be game-changing to...

- **Connect** people exploring new cuisines **to authentic recipes** or **expert sources** of information
-



How might we...
make it so that unfamiliar
ingredients speak for
themselves?

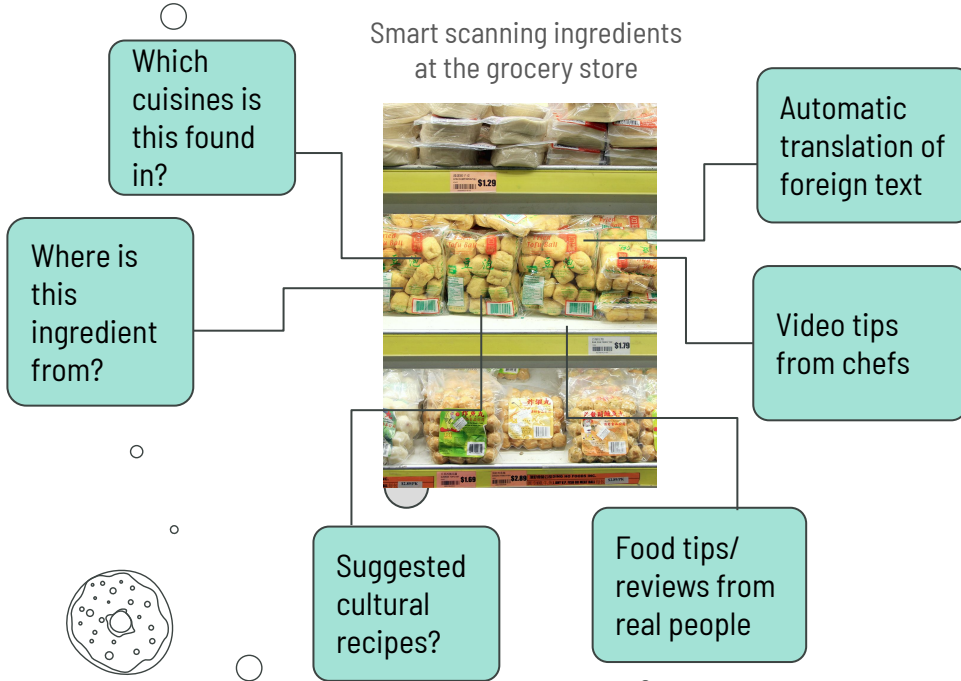
Key Assumptions - Making Ingredients Less Intimidating



- Understanding **where** an ingredient comes from will make a foreign ingredient less intimidating
- Seeing **example recipes** using a foreign ingredient less intimidating
- Automatic **translation** of foreign text will make a foreign ingredient less intimidating
- **Personal food tips** of how something is will make a foreign ingredient less intimidating
- **Watching a video** of an ingredient being prepared will make a foreign ingredient less intimidating
- **People have time** when grocery shopping to scan things and read/ watch more about it (are most people in a rush?)
- **Authentic opinions** from people who cook the cuisine, will sway people to try more authentic dishes



Solution - Grocery shopping cultural assistant



Solution

Use image recognition to automatically present relevant cultural and recipe-related information upon scanning an ingredient with your camera, including:

- The taste and function of the ingredients
- Voice notes from chefs
- Recipe suggestions/ Food tips of how to cook the ingredients
- Where the ingredients are from

Experience Prototype

Show participants three unlabelled foreign ingredients (lemongrass, khmeli suneli, jackfruit). Ask them to **rank** each **1 (I would not buy) to 5 (I would buy)**





Experience Prototype

Tell participants the **translation** of any foreign text, the **taste/ function** of the ingredient, **where it's from**, suggested **recipes** with images, **food tips** from Reddit, **video tips** from Youtube (~ all this takes 4 mins)

Translations, origin, taste/ function, contents of the food item

Imported Russian Seasoning Khmeli-suneli




- **Origin/ Places Used:** Russia, Georgia, Eastern Europe
- **Taste/ function:** Khmeli Suneli is a wonderful and warming Georgian spice mix. It is great for flavour stews, soups, meats, chicken, and even rice or vegetables.
- **Contains:** ground coriander seed, celery seed, dried basil, dill, parsley, blue fenugreek, summer savory, bay leaf, mint and marigold.
- **Suggested Recipes:**
 - khmeli suneli roasted chicken leg quarters and potatoes = walnut yogurt sauce [link](#)
 - Georgian tomato and cucumber salad [link](#)



Suggested cultural recipes

Imported Russian Seasoning Khmeli-suneli



- **Food tips:**
 - Reddit comment: Authentic Khmeli Suneli Recipe - The Legendary Georgian Spice Blend
 - Reddit comment: It's one of my favorite seasonings - a fascinating spice blend - khmeli suneli. Sounds very exotic. Right? Khmeli suneli is a legendary Georgian seasoning blend of spices and herbs. It's a very aromatic golden greenish spice mix with a unique taste with a hint of walnuts.
 - Reddit comment: Khmeli suneli seasoning goes well with almost any dish, marinated, or pickles. You can use it to make soups, sauces, salads, vegetable dishes, rice, legumes, and savory pastries. Of course, it's a must-have ingredient when preparing traditional Caucasian dishes, such as khachapuri, chakhokhli, satsivi, khinkali, pkhali, and many more.

Comments from Reddit simulates real user comments

Imported Russian Seasoning Khmeli-suneli



- **Video:** Legendary spice blend: Khmeli-suneli



Video tips from YouTube

Experience Prototype

Show participants three labelled foreign ingredients (lemongrass, khmeli suneli, jackfruit). Ask them to **again rank** each **1 (I would not buy) to 5 (I would buy)**

Lemongrass



Khmeli Suneli



Jackfruit

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- If their **rating changed**, ask them why?
- Which of the **factors influenced them more?**
 - The translation
 - Knowing where it's from
 - The taste/ function
 - Suggested recipes
 - Food tips from users
 - Video of someone preparing it
- Ask them **how often they try new** things when grocery shopping?

01

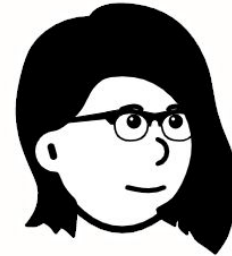
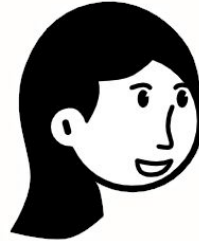
Simon - middle aged man (age ~50)

02

Mitchell and Kirstie - young couple (age ~late 20s)

03

Janelle - young female student (age ~20)



Results



Simon

Initial Rating -> Final Rating

- Lemongrass 3 → 2
- Jackfruit 1 → 1
- Khmeli Suneli 2 → 4

- Biggest factor was the **taste** of the ingredient (lemongrass lowered) and **what dish it was used** in (the suggested recipes)
- Hearing **where** it was from had **no effect**
- **Food tips** are interesting but does not sway his opinion (but **cultural comments would be more effective** - eg he likes Indian food)
- **Video tips help** if he has never seen it before
- **How often does he try new things? Once a month**, mainly shops for convenience



Mitchell and Kirstie

Initial Rating -> Final Rating

- Lemongrass 5 → 5, 4 → 5
- Jackfruit 3 → 4, 3 → 5
- Khmeli Suneli 2 → 4, 1 → 4

- **Low score** initially is almost entirely because they just **don't know** what it is
- **Just knowing what the product is** changed their opinions the most (eg containing familiar spices)
- **Seeing the recipes** had a big effect on Mitchell - it looked **appetizing**
- **Food tips** are **helpful, videos not as much**
- **Where it was from** didn't have a big impact
- **How often do they try new things?** Not often, maybe **once every few months**



Janelle

Initial Rating -> Final Rating

- Lemongrass 3 → 3
- Jackfruit 1 → 3
- Khmeli Suneli 1 → 5

- Also said **just knowing what it is and what it tastes like** was most **impactful**
 - **Translations** are **useful**
 - **Suggested recipes** are **useful, where** it was from **not so much**
 - **Food tips/ user comments** had a **big impact**, because she **loves reviews**
 - **How often does she try new things?** Only if trying a **new recipe**, otherwise she shops mainly for **convenience**
-

Key Insights

On average... which impacted people the most?

- Translations/ knowing what the foreign product is: **High**
- Where it was from: **Low**
- What it tastes like: **High**
- Suggested Recipes: **Medium - High**
- Food tips: **Medium**
- Video tips: **Low - Medium**

Analysis

- **Each factor affects people differently**, but the left is the general trend
 - Everyone's **scores changed fairly substantially**
 - Although people generally became more positive towards the ingredients, **most people don't look for new ingredients very often** and instead grocery shop for **convenience**. We wonder if the **audience** for the solution should be general public who are not super motivated to try new things, or to focus on the niche that enjoys exploring new cultures
 - One factor that **could be tested more**, is more in depth cultural stories like Amrita's prototype, rather than dot point facts
 - It **would be useful to test** how time pressured most people feel in grocery stores, or how much time they would spend learning about a product
-



Extreme user!

04

Sofia

Chef at Xanadu House at Stanford.

Point of View - Sofia

We met...

- Sofia, the **chef for Xanadu House** at Stanford, who hated to cook but came here as a hasher and learned her cooking skills on the job to become a chef.

We were surprised to realize that...

- Despite having hundreds of screenshots of recipes on her phone, she said she had a much easier time learning most of the dishes she knows how to cook from **someone else in real life** with kinesthetic learning and real-time interaction.

We wonder if this means...

- She doesn't directly benefit in terms of confidence from unfamiliar, potentially complex recipes online until she has someone knowledgeable show it to her as she cooks it.

It would be game-changing to...

- Provide the confidence of someone else's expertise and assurance with **real-time feedback** when Sofia wants to try cooking a new dish.
-

How might we...

use real-time feedback to infuse
comfort into the process of
preparing complex foods?

Solution - Learn by doing



Solution

A sensory app that guides you through recipes by showing you the **motion** of how to cook and prepare the dish properly and authentically, with haptic feedback built in.

Help recipes feel more **intuitive** to people by letting them learn by experiencing. Let users receive **auditory** or **sensory** feedback while trying to cook a novel dish.

Key Assumption

Without having to **divert attention** by constantly checking a set of instructions, people experiencing a new recipe can gain confidence in it with live, external feedback.

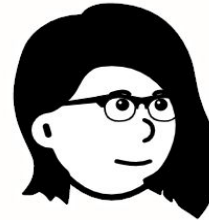
The Participants

01

Roy - Software engineer,
learned Asian cooking
from his mother (age:
27)

02

Emma - Works in HR, child
of two Asian immigrants,
loves to cook (age: 30)



The Prototype

The task:

- Emma has to teach Roy to cook a **complicated** dish by using the props provided.
- Emma has to first **demonstrate and verbalise** all steps while Roy watches her.
- Roy has to repeat the preparation for the dish under three circumstances:
 - **No feedback** from Emma whatsoever.
 - Emma is allowed to **verbally** correct him when he does something wrong or forgets.
 - Emma is allowed to **tap** Roy if he does something wrong (or in our case, right!)

The dish:

- Chinese beef noodle soup.



Results & Key Learnings

What worked:

- Auditory feedback for corrections
- Auditory feedback when he forgot the name of an ingredient
- Repetition & mimicking Emma's movements
- Introducing feedback removed Roy's hesitation

What didn't work:

- Roy didn't need the haptic feedback after the auditory feedback
- Taps weren't helpful when he was stuck.
- Watching Emma & mimicking her movements
- Roy already had the movements down, so did not benefit from the haptic feedback by the third try.

Key Learnings:

- When learning something from scratch, the pressure to remember everything with no aid was stressful if not slightly debilitating.
 - After having verbal feedback, haptic-style feedback is less valuable.
 - Having another person present takes the weight off of the pressure to make no mistakes.
 - If anything, Emma's presence ENCOURAGED mistakes and made the correct methods more memorable.
-

In summary...

Description

Emotions

Solution 1

Delving into unfamiliar ingredients around you

Apprehensive → Positive, Encourage to purchase

Solution 2

Real-time haptic and auditory feedback while cooking

Uncomfortable, Task-oriented → confident, comfortable

Solution 3

Journey and cultural context of traditional foods

Nervousness → Excitement, Curiosity

Final (Combination) Solution

Combination of Solution 1 (more context between ingredients) and Solution 2 (more context/personal stories behind cultural dishes)

Your personal cultural food assistant

Use image recognition to automatically provide cultural context upon scanning an ingredient with your camera or exploring dishes to cook with your ingredients.

Maps of a food's journey, video food tips, authentic user comments, suggested recipes, taste and function of ingredient, personal cultural and historical stories of the ingredient/ dish

Final (Combination) Solution

- **What are the ethical implications of this solution?**

Have to be careful where information is sourced - it is easy to find inauthentic secondary sources instead of actual people from the culture if scraping internet sources

- **Who does it serve?**

Have to decide if want to focus on general public (who may not be food-motivated) or the more niche audience that really likes exploring new cuisines

- **Who might it leave out?**

It only serves the technologically savvy - older people (who perhaps we should be focussing on if preserving culture) may be left out or require help to use the solution

- People cooking traditional recipes in areas without internet access, particularly those in non-Western countries or with less economic means
-

Appendix

Images:

<https://food52.com/recipes/84225-mole-sencillo-recipe>

<https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-illustration-isolated-hand-gestures-illustration-kitchen-theme-image53804748>

<https://tryopenchefs.com/>

<https://nomnompaleo.com/chinese-beef-noodle-soup>

<https://www.airasia.com/play/assets/bltdc26f767b5a3f361/appam-a-south-asian-pancake-with-a-surprising-story>

Initial POV - Grace

We met... Grace, the manager of 99Ranch in Mountain View, who cooks at home and observes customers who are looking for ingredients for Asian cooking.

We were surprised to realise that... she was concerned that a lot of authenticity behind food was lost through language barriers or inauthentic recipes.

We wonder if this means... she worries that people don't have the most authentic sources of information when it comes to food.

It would be game-changing to... remove language as a barrier when learning about new cuisines.

Initial POV - Sofia

We met... Sofia, the chef for Xanadu House at Stanford, who hated to cook but came here as a hasher and learned her cooking skills on the job to become a chef.

We were surprised to realise that... she felt trepidation sharing her favourite food, which is one of her more authentic recipes, with students (Mole)

We wonder if this means... She feels worried that people would find unfamiliar food unpalatable

It would be game-changing to... use unfamiliarity as a tool to make trying new cuisines exciting rather than stressful.

Initial POV - Martin

We met... Martin, a real estate developer and avid biker from Oakland in his 30s, who makes only very simple meals for himself a few times a week.

We were surprised to realise that... despite taking pride in his ability to appreciate well-made meals and displaying a strong interest in the cultural authenticity of food, he doesn't describe himself as food-motivated and doesn't take time to cook complex dishes for himself.

We wonder if this means... people need to understand the story, cultural context, and experience behind food in order to be connected to it and appreciate it further

It would be game-changing to... make the process of understanding the context behind a food item more approachable.

How Might We? - Martin

...make Martin seek out the story behind what he is eating?

...make cooking feel more personal and less transactional?

...make food from another culture feel like one's own?

...present recipes in the cultural or historical context and personal stories tied to them?

...reduce the friction in reading about different recipes and cultures?



...help people share the personal and cultural meaning of their food so that others can understand and appreciate them?

...motivate people to research food from different cultures?

...make the process of cooking more complicated meals for oneself feel worthwhile?

...make "foreign" food feel like home?

...use practicality to create passion?

...connect food with specific memories and shared experiences?

How Might We? - Sofia

...convey to Sofia that students actually like trying new foods?

...make unfamiliar recipes exciting to new cooks?

...create an environment that encourages sharing unfamiliar foods?

...prepare people for trying new foods?

...use unfamiliarity itself to make cooking more exciting?



...make trying cooking new things a fun shared experience?

...help students understand the history and processes behind Sofia's favorite dish?

...connect the process of cooking unfamiliar cuisines seem more familiar?

...help unfamiliar flavours grow on people?

...combine the acts of tasting and cooking into a holistic experience?

...gamify trying unfamiliar foods?

...remove the stress of unfamiliarity?

...infuse comfort into the process of preparing complex traditional cultural food instead of stress and insecurity?

How Might We? - Grace

... teach new cuisines without words?

...connect people who are exploring new cuisines?

... create a really welcoming environment for people to explore new cultures?

...help Grace understand her customers better?

...make it easier to find authentic recipes?



...help customers tune into authentic ingredients to create a closer connection to the cultural food they'd like cook?

...create a measure of authenticity for recipes?

...make it so the ingredients speak for themselves?

...make it easier for customers to read the packaging on foreign ingredients?

...restructure a grocery store to be informative to people unfamiliar with the types of cuisines offered?

Solution Generation - Martin



Solution Generation - Sofia

Describe ingredient amounts that you "eyeball" via AR

Hire Michelin star chefs to take with you on the go

Find a way to storytell and share those stories for a given dish

An app that gamifies eating unfamiliar foods/ incentives exploring cuisines by making it a social game/ trend

Maybe we can intake videos uploaded by authentic chefs and detect what motions they are using from this?

An app for traditional chefs that stays with you throughout the cooking process and shares it with people

A sensory app that guides you through recipes by showing you the MOTION of how to cook and prepare the dish properly and authentically.

An app where the reviews are rated based on authenticity, so that authenticity is the metric for good food

An app that can inform/ explain unfamiliar food in an extremely digestible and approachable way

An app that connects people to authentic restaurants - so that the incentive for trying authentic food is economically supporting diverse communities

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Solution Generation - Grace

