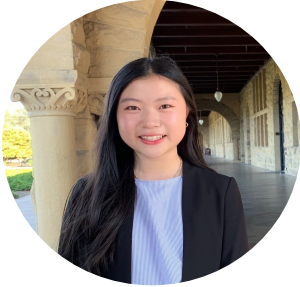


**Team 2:**

**Language as a Tool** 



# Team Members



**ANNA  
CHANG**



**SELAINE  
RODRIGUEZ**



**WILMER  
ZUNA LARGO**



**AMANDA  
HUYNH**



**Problem Domain**

# Language Learning

Education and AR/VR Technology

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1

# Needfinding Methodology

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## Our Interviewees



**Claudia**

Stanford Chef  
Early 50s  
Culinary Student



**Ana**

Stanford Hasher  
Mid 40s  
Duolingo User



**Tang**

Professor  
Early 40s  
Experienced  
Educator



**Robin\***

College Student  
Early 20s  
Speaks 6 Languages



## Guiding Questions

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Tell me a little about yourself.

How did you learn these languages?

Do you use these languages in your daily life?



What languages do you speak / have you studied?

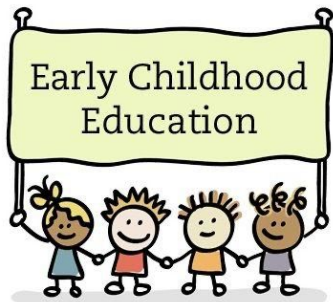
What factors motivated you to learn these languages?

How have you retained / use these languages?

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2

# Interview Results



**Claudia**

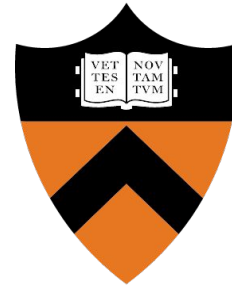




**Ana**

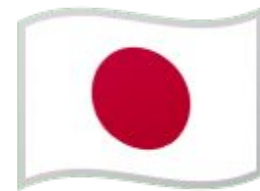


**Tang**



**CET** ACADEMIC PROGRAMS





**Robin\***



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3

# Analysis

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## SAY

"My semester's been super busy, so I have not been able to make very good progress on either of those (languages), but it's a process and I'm being patient with it."

"If you think about the history of the world, people spoke before they wrote."

"You're basically trying to like talk like a native speaker and write like a native speaker, and so having that example is very important."

"I'm somebody who really gets into one topic, and I tend to dive deep into it and definitely obsessed with it."

"You always have to learn (languages) in the context, unless you want, bear the risk of being misunderstood."

"It's important that [teachers] reciprocate and tell us in [the] language what we did wrong like what we're supposed to say and like respond as a native speaker would."

"It's best to constantly hone my interest in that language, instead of thinking that I need to get... to a certain level. I think that's more organic if I keep doing it in a way that blends work with leisure."

"In a way, I'm better at copying than creating."

"I don't want to be the type of person who just knows how to say a couple sentences in each language and says [they] know, like 20 something languages."

"Dramas are very good because they're just kind of like long sequences of dialogue that are totally thrown at you."

Currently focusing more on the written script side of Russian because it uses a whole other alphabet.

Learns vernacular and natural language through YouTube often of travel vlogs and street interviews.

Read books, watches movies, and listens to music in the language he wants to keep up with.

First stages of Japanese learning was by listening, and I watched a lot of Japanese shows and movies.

Uses workbooks for learning alphabets or new writing systems.

Spends leisure time watching films in target languages.

## DO

Studying history with a certificate in translation and East Asian studies

Began learning Turkish with the Beginner's Guide to Turkish and Duolingo

Learns vocab through stories and books that are basically dictionaries, but with more context than definitions

Uses trial and error to discover different ways to learn different languages.

## THINK

Learned Chinese in a classroom setting where learning the language was more of a chore and kind of an academic task, rather than something that he really wanted to do

You need to completely reconfigure your mouth and the positions of your tongue when learning languages that don't use the Latin alphabet.

Finds that it's phonetically harder to learn languages with a different alphabet.

When learning a language, always thinks that the listening and speaking aspect is far more important than the writing and reading aspect

Turkish is especially difficult because it has a lot of sounds that don't exist in English.

Machine translation has its limits, because it can't catch all context.

When he sees something or when I hears something, it's much easier for him to reproduce than instead of just giving him a blank paper and telling him to do something.

Feels a need to communicate with people in their native tongues to make sure they're comfortable

A big part of language pedagogy is copying native speakers.

Voice actors speak in a well articulated way that that makes your brain accustomed to what the language is supposed to sound like.

Brain wires mouth to sound more like a native speaker if you do a lot of listening practice.

## FEEL

Very grateful for immersive language learning environments

Felt constantly tasked with learning Chinese

Enjoys being challenged, wanting to learn as many languages as possible

Doesn't want to be that type of person who goes to another part of the world and starts speaking English expecting the native speaker to speak English back to them.

Wants to talk to people from different cultures and learn about different cultures

My personal philosophy is: if you're going to do something, do it well.

Is more interested in the technical aspect of languages. Thinks it's nice to be fluent and be able to speak to other people in that language, but also nice to see the characteristics of each language.

Wants to constantly hone interest in a language organically, instead of thinking of it as like a chore that needs to be done.



## SAY

**"I don't want to be the type of person who just knows how to say a couple sentences in each language and says [they] know, like 20 something languages."**

## THINK

**Learned Chinese in a classroom setting where learning the language was more of a chore and kind of an academic task, rather than something that he really wanted to do**

## DO

**Learns vernacular and natural language through YouTube often of travel vlogs and street interviews.**

## FEEL

**Feels a need to communicate with people in their native tongues to make sure they're comfortable**

## SAY

Her boss is the best resource for practicing because although he predominately speaks English, he is fluent in Spanish

Could not distinguish between when to circle or draw

She cannot read and write as often because she is busy with work

Parent-teacher conferences are difficult

"We have a rule at home. Only speak Spanish."

Wants to communicate with students

"I did not want to depend on my children and place extra responsibility on them"

Hard to communicate with doctors



Parents should lead children. Not the other way around

Thinks that learning and teaching is a beautiful thing

Best way to retain language is to use it at work

Thinks that living in the U.S. is worth the sacrifice

Needs to help her children with schoolwork

Thinks that continuing to learn is important

Felt she needed to help her students do well at school

## THINK

Parent-teacher conferences are important for her children's success

Her children should grow up bilingual

Think there is a discrepancy between English speaking professionals and immigrants

Her goal is to retain her English knowledge

Came to the U.S. so her children could grow up with better opportunities

## FEEL

Felt she was burdening her children by asking them to translate for her

Feels the need to bond with students

Feels the need to pass down language and culture to her children

Felt misunderstood at her children's school

Felt that she could maximize her time if she practices and works at the same time

Day to day lifestyle in U.S. was too difficult without English

## DO

Runs a monolingual household

Tries to attend classes in her free time

Works at Stanford and holds a certification in Early Childhood Education

Attended and graduated from community college

Continues to practice English and use it in her day-to-day life

Learned conversational English

Practices with other co-workers

Began to study the basics to help with homework

"Use it [the language] or lose it"

U.S. has more professional opportunities

Has been in the U.S. for 27 years

Practices Spanish at work with her boss, co-staffs, and college students

Attended and graduated from community college



SAY

**"Use it  
[the  
language]  
or lose it"**

THINK

**Think there is a  
discrepancy  
between English  
speaking  
professionals and  
immigrants**

DO

**Attended and  
graduated  
from  
community  
college**

FEEL

**Felt she was  
burdening her  
children by  
asking them  
to translate  
for her**



## Sample from Claudia

**Tensions:** Important aspects of life were restricted due to language barrier.  
Over-dependent on her kids for translation.

**Contradictions:** Only speak Spanish at home.

**Surprises:** Early Childhood Education certification.

*“Use it or lose it.”*

*[Context: asking her children to translate for her]*

*“This is not how the dynamic should be. Parents should lead children. Not the other way around.”*





## Sample from Ana

**Tensions:** Duolingo hasn't been effective for real conversations.

**Contradictions:** Her work does not require her to speak English.

**Surprises:** She's been in the U.S. for 10 years but until 5 years ago, she had no interest in learning the language.

*"I used Duolingo...daily...for 1 year... I'd say it was effective. I started to use daily words at work such as coffee, eggs, etc."*





## Sample from Tang

**Tensions:** She didn't enjoy learning foreign languages because of rote memorization practices.

**Contradictions:** She advocates for audio-lingual learning but she defaults to textbooks when self-studying.

**Surprises:** Her husband speaks a language she is learning but she doesn't practice with him.

*"I'm still trying to figure out [how to make class fun]. So far, I include something about pop culture, contemporary issues...games...and also share my own experience."*





## Sample from Robin

**Tensions:** If you're going to do something, do it well.

**Contradictions:** Learning in a classroom feels like a chore, an academic task.

**Surprises:** He doesn't want to be the type of person who goes to another part of the world and speaks English and expect the native speaker to speak English back.

“I don't want to be the type of person who just knows how to say a couple sentences in each language and say they know 20 something languages.”



## Insights

Current apps based learning solely on extrinsic motivation.

Most people learn languages only because they need to.

People prioritize human-to-human interactions when deciding what languages to speak/learn.





## Needs

Individuals need intrinsic motivation to continue learning.

People need an efficient and practical way to learn.

Language learning should be human-centered, with an emphasis on cultural context.

## Further Questions

-  Would the same results be replicated with an American sample?
-  How does the lack of resources about certain languages (such as indigenous languages) limit what people choose to study?
-  How are languages used in smaller towns and communities becoming extinct due to the dominance of their umbrella language?
-  How may the use of audio-lingual learning resources improve the retention of new languages?



## Summary

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# Thanks!

*Any* **questions** ?