Utterly.

Learn a language. Find your voice.

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01. About The Project

Utterly is a mobile app on which language teachers can list and advertise their services and language students can find teachers and book their services.

Utterly's design is available as a native app for both iOS and Android.

UX/UI designer: Yesia Joseph-Nicholas
Timeline: January-June 2021
Key Tools:
Figma
Sketch
Key Skills:
Native app design • Competitive research • Wireframing • User testing • Prototyping

02. User Personas

After interviewing potential users, I developed the following composite user personas.

Grace

Age 19
Brooklyn, NY, USA
Project manager, non-profit sector

Goals
Practice Spanish conversation
Maintain Spanish skills
Find Spanish teachers in her area

Technology
Heavy mobile user
iOS
Instagram
Pinterest

"Learning Spanish with apps got me through lockdown. Now I'm ready to take my skills to the next level."

Marco

Age 19
Oaxaca City, Mexico
Spanish teacher

Goals
Connect with potential English students
Build up enough steady clients to make teaching his full-time job

Technology
Mobile user
Android
Not much social media

"I've been teaching Spanish as a side job for years. I'd like to make it my full-time job, but I need a full-time, off-Craigslist gig a solid client base."

03. Research

Research on competitor apps offering services and/or functionalities similar to Utterly's proposed design insights, summarized below.

MindBody

Key Insight

The role of filters in search can be confusing and requires deliberate design

Buusu

Key Insight

The quality of an app's functionalities don't make up for a confusing, unfocused, or cluttered design

Hello Talk

Key Insight

It is possible to include multiple significant functionalities in a single app, if the design and flow are clear, friendly, and appealing

04. User Flow

This iteration of the project focuses on the student's user flow.

05. Styling

Utterly's UI and UX follows iOS and Android devices in accordance with the native components, interactions, and standards described in the iOS Human Interface Guidelines and the Material Design documentation. Any distinctions are outlined below.

iOS Color Palette

The iOS color palette includes a selection of grayscale shades same as the components.

Android Color Palette

The Android color palette follows the Material Design approach to using chemical analogies and theory in its color palettes.

iOS Typography

The iOS design uses SF Sans Serif font, San Francisco.

SF Pro Display Bold 30
SF Pro Display Medium 25
SF Pro Text Regular 16
SF Pro Text Regular 13
SF Pro Text Medium 12
SF Pro Text Semibold 10

Android Typography

The Android design uses its native font, Roboto.

Roboto Regular 36
Roboto Medium 24
Roboto Regular 14
Roboto Medium 12
Roboto Lorem Ipsum Dolor Sit Amet

iOS Iconography

Native icons were used wherever available.

Android Iconography

Native icons were used wherever available.

Selected iOS Components

Native components, styling, and guidelines are applied throughout both versions of the app, both of the components pictured below and in the Search, Filter, and Messaging screens.

Selected Android Components

06. User Testing

I conducted two rounds of testing on a series of low-, mid-, and hi-fi wireframes and developed a prototype, which I submitted to users for testing. Their feedback illuminated some key concerns that led to revisions of the original design.

Problem #1

Theme of the light colors and small sizes in this design might create accessibility problems for visually impaired users.

Solution #1

Tested all color combinations with the a11y contrast checker, then adjusted them until every combination met WCAG AA standards.

Problem #2

The logo screens look unfeatured and bare.

Solution #2

Centered the fields on the screen.

Problem #3

The Android filter screen has both Apply Filters and See Results. Do you really need both?

Solution #3

Removed the "Apply filters" button, since the filtered results can always be viewed by pressing the "See results" button.

Praise For Utterly

Overall, however, our test users were very pleased with Utterly's design and functionality.

"I am really enjoying the minimal design with the little bits of color."

"Everything is clean, clear, and exactly where I expect things to be for each UX."

"The minimalist color palette and clear layout helps users focus on what to accomplish on each screen."

"I appreciate the many functionalities of this app. Finding a teacher, filtering, messaging—and all designed with attention to detail and aesthetics."

"This is a very well-thought-out app with a lot of built-in functionality and a coherent, consistent design."

05. Final Design: Hi-Fi Screens & Prototypes

iOS interactive prototype:
https://xd.adobe.com/view/
5b4ef5f5-5e5c-4552-9a0f-3f1e15734f00-b61d/

Android interactive prototype:
https://xd.adobe.com/view/
72a812b6-8f06-4861-8c23-09ec059462932-278b/

Log In/Create Account

The Log in and Create Account screens are simple and follow conventional patterns to make the process as easy as possible for the user.

Home

The Home Screen allows the user to browse through a functional menu of Spanish teachers, organized by items to save for their accounts or learn more about. Users can also navigate from the Home Screen and filter their results.

Class Detail & Booking

The Class Detail screens contain everything the user needs to know about a class, including a "Book" button. If there, it is, they can book directly from that screen as well.

Saved Lessons

Users can save lessons of interest by clicking the bookmark icon. Once a lesson is saved, it's easy to access them on the Home screen and, if they've decided, to remove them from the listing.

Messaging

Utterly's students and instructors can communicate via its secure messaging system, using native iOS and Android patterns and used to ensure familiarity and ease of use.

Search & Filter

Users are invited to search Utterly's offerings by language, instructor, lesson format, dates, and price range. Filters make use of native iOS and Android UI patterns keeps the process simple and intuitive.

User Profile & Schedule

The User Profile keeps track of not only the users' information, but the schedule of lessons they've booked with Utterly for quick reference.

06. Takeaways

What worked?

My test users found the app's aesthetics clean and appealing, its flow clear and usable, and its patterns consistent with their expectations for iOS and Android devices.

Lessons learned

Creating a design that translates well across both iOS and Android devices is challenging, especially when dealing with complex functionalities such as search and search filters. Understanding and adhering into the details of the iOS and Material Design documentation is time well spent.

The level of background/foreground contrast that is necessary to be truly accessible to all levels of visual impairment is not always visible to the naked eye. For example, to my eye, white text on orange was easy to read and clearly aesthetically pleasing, but it turned out that it was not. Thankfully, I had the time and resources to make full use of tools like the a11y contrast checker in all steps of the design process.