

brdgit

[bridge it]

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Interface Design | GRDS-387-A01

Holly Quarzo | Spring 2016

Story

Melissa Park is an international transfer student from Korea who came to the US to pursue her Bachelor's degree at Georgia State University. Melissa has been having a hard time adjusting to a new environment. She has been suffering depression and anxiety disorders since she was in Korea. She is new to the culture, and she also missed the opportunity to make as many friends as a freshman during a freshman orientation would do because she is a transfer student. Melissa claims that she is "stuck in between" the group of Korean and a group of non-Korean, Anglophone students. She feels she is a close friend with neither of the groups. From time to time she is afraid she would end up having no close friend in this country she is not familiar with. She would like to reach out to Anglophone students so that she could strengthen her English skill but she is afraid their Anglophone peer would make fun of her accent. Her reading, writing, and listening skill is decent but her speaking skill is

not. Whenever she has to explain herself, she would much rather write it down than to verbalize it. All these things on top of her academic, and financial struggles make her feel so stressed and worsen her depression and anxiety. She thought of going to the counseling service available within the school but she did not end up going because she would feel pressured to say everything on spot and forget most of the things she would like to say. Despite her hardships, she couldn't tell much about them to her parents because most of the time they do not understand much about the cultural differences from Korea to the US. Since her parents live on the other side of the globe, there is only so much their parents can do. She also would prefer not to share it with her parents because she doesn't want her parents to think they have wasted so much of their money to make her go to the country she is not familiar with and suffer so much.

Pain Points

1. Hard time adjusting to a new environment and a new culture.
2. Not feeling comfortable verbalizing her thoughts in English on the spot, feeling more comfortable writing her thoughts down rather than speaking.
3. Feeling isolated.

Brag Points

1. Providing a stepping stone for an international student to express their thoughts in written language rather than having that pressure to do so verbally on the spot in the language they are not familiar verbalizing with.
2. Providing a bridge between an international student who wants to reach out to Anglophone students to the Anglophone students.
3. Providing a bridge between an international student who struggles to reach out to the counselor within their school due to the language barrier and the counselor.
4. Providing a bridge between a domestic student who is willing to help an international student out to an international student.

Targeted

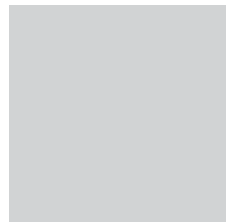
Users

- Struggling International students (Primary)
- Struggling ESL International students (Primary)
- Domestic students who want to reach out to International students
- Faculties (teachers and/or counselors working within school)

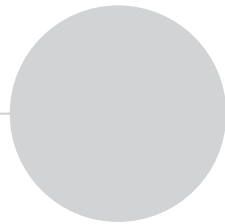
Devices

- iOS and Android devices

Flow Diagram



Welcome screen



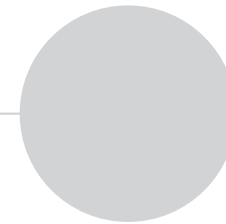
Input name and .edu email, tap next



System stocks input



General Status (International or Domestic; Student or Faculty)



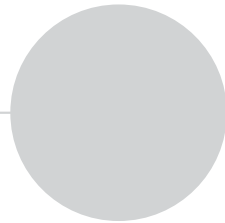
User can tap the categories they belong



The system stocks input, pulls out topics the user could follow



Concerns that the user have (topics the user can follow)



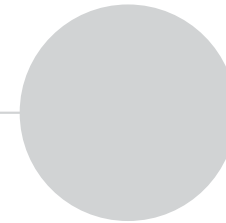
The user can tap some of their concerns



The system stocks input, pulls out people the user can follow based on the user's inputs



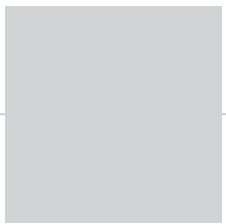
People the user can follow based on the concerns they have (paginated cards)



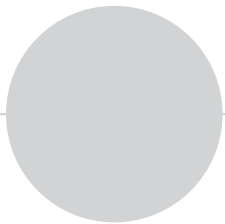
User can swipe through and tab follow button if they wish to follow some people



The system stocks input, pulls out the page asking permissions to have access to native phone features



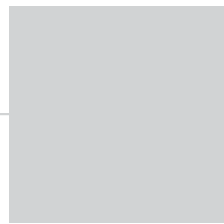
Permission to access to the native phone features



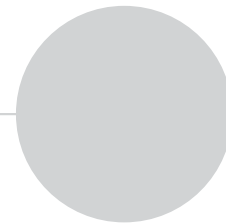
User can allow/not allow access to the native features



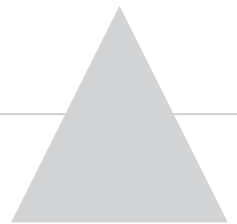
The system stocks input



Home page



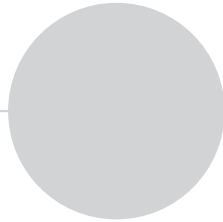
User can tap the write button



The system pulls out the writing page with keyboard



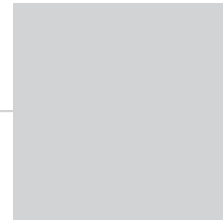
Writing page with the drop down menu, post their writing anonymously and share it to the counselor(s) working within their school



User writes things down, and tap the drop down menu to see more functionality



The system pulls out the drop down menu with write and translation options



Page with drop down menu that has options to write or translate



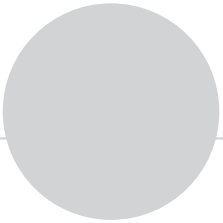
User can type a sentence and click "Translate" button



The system pulls out the translation



Page with translation functionality and the button to forward the translation to the writing page



User can type a sentence and click "Translate" button



The system pulls out the translation



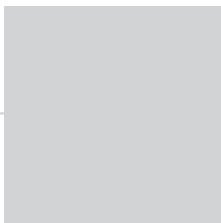
The page with the translation



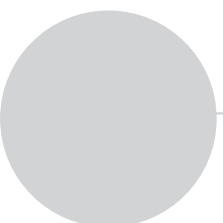
User can click the forward button to copy and paste the translation to the writing page



The system copies and pastes the translation to the writing page



The writing page with the user's writing



User taps the "Post" button



The system pulls out grammar correction functionality



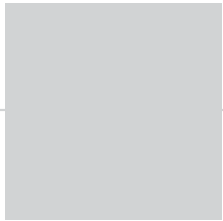
Proof reading page with grammar errors underlined in red



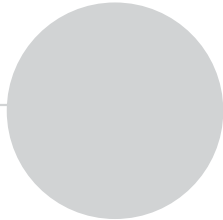
User can long press the errors to see the correction



The system generates corrections



Proof reading page
with suggested
grammar correc-
tion



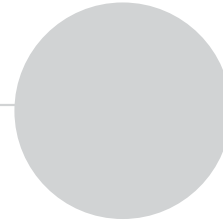
User can tap the
correction



The system cor-
rects the error



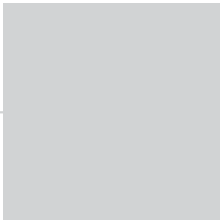
Proof reading page
without grammar
errors



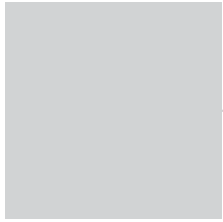
User can tap "Post"
button



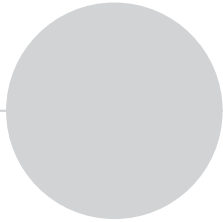
The system posts the
writing anonymously
and sends the concern
to the counselor's Inbox



Success alert



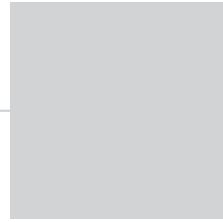
Home page with new notifications



User can tap the notification tab on the tray navigation



The system pulls out the list of notification



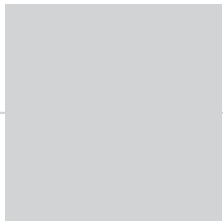
Notification page – new comments on the user's post



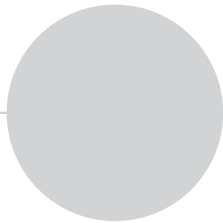
The user tabs the new comments notification



The system directs the user to the comment section of their original post



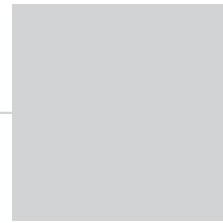
The comments on the user's post



The user can read each comment and tap the reply button next to the comments to reply



The system pulls out the keyboard



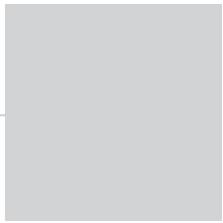
Comment section with keyboard



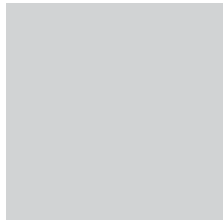
The user can type their reply and tap "Post" to post it



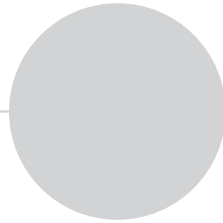
The system posts their reply



Page with the user's comment posted



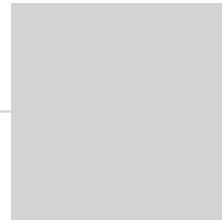
Home page with
new message
notification



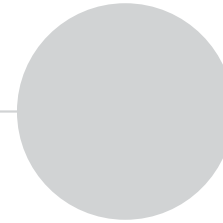
User can tap the
message tab



The system pulls
out the message
inbox



Message inbox
page



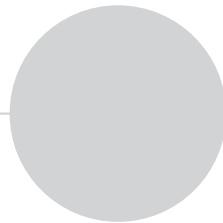
The user tabs the
new message



The system directs
the user to the
message page



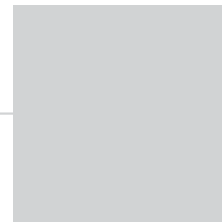
Message from the coun-
selor with the sugges-
tive date to the future
appointment (calendar
functionality)



The user can accept
the appointment by
tapping the date



The system adds
the date to the
user's calendar and
set up a reminder
for the date



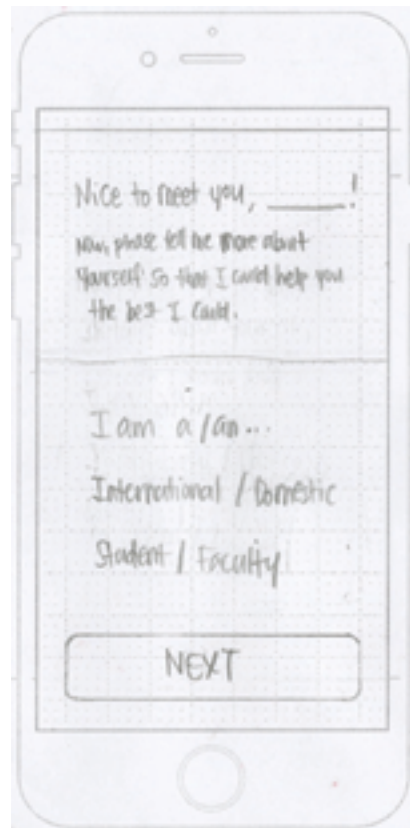
Date added alert

Storyboard



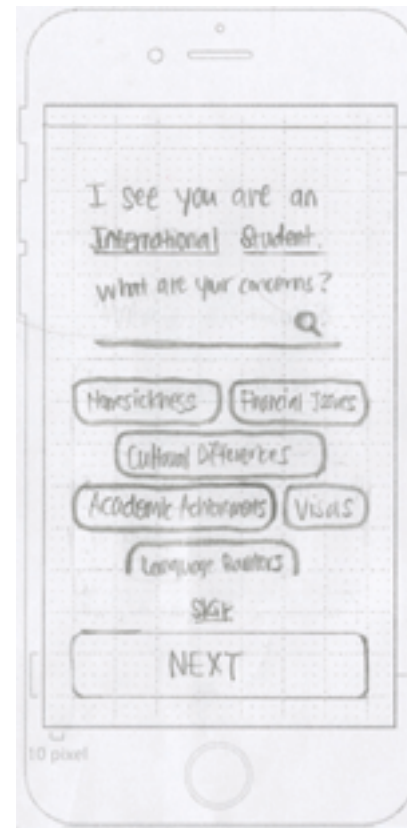
Setting a friendly tone from the beginning.

UT: I originally named my app "brdgt" an abbreviation for "bridge it". However during the usability test one brought up a concern whether an ESL international student would understand what that means.



Choose whether the user is a/an, domestic/international, student/faculty.

UT: One suggested to add another screen before this screen to show the input, and another screen after this screen to show how the app would react when the categories (domestic/international, etc.) are selected. Another suggested I could add the back button on the top left corner. That way, the user could always go back to the previous screen when they accidentally chose a wrong option



Concerns the user has (Topics to follow).

UT: One suggested I could change the tone of the writing because the word "concern" might sound negative. And the whole wording sounds like international students are on the bottom of the overall hierarchy. However, since my purpose of the app is to help international students who are in trouble, I would keep the tone as it is so that it would sound understanding and willing to listen to their concerns.



People to follow based on the concerns the user has.

UT: One wished there would be more option for a user to personalize (setting up their country of origin, their native language), and more opportunity for the user to connect with other people in the beginning (joining groups, getting social activities suggestions based on people the user follows, etc.)



Permission to access to native phone functionalities.



Home page with posts based on the topics the user follows.

UT: One said I could change how the message/inbox icon looks like so that it would take less time for a user to figure out that that is a message icon (maybe I could change that to an envelope icon).



Write page with options to post anonymously, share it with your counselor, and post pictures.



Translating functionality within the Write page.

UT: One suggested I could make the translate functionality more visible so that it would take less time for a user to figure out where that functionality is.



Type in language the user wants to translate to English.



Proof Reading page with some grammar issues the user can fix.

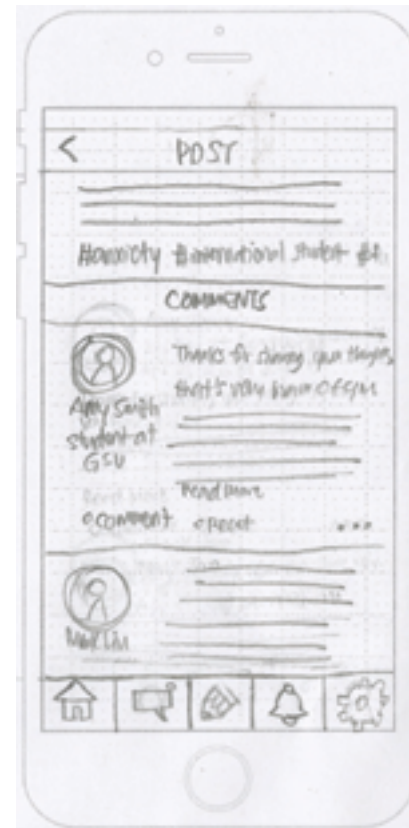
UT: One suggested, instead of creating another page for this proof reading section, I could just add this as a part of the Write page as an additional functionality within the page.



The user can long-click the errors to see the suggested corrections and correct them



Success alert.



New notifications.

Comment on other people's comment(s).

UT: One suggested I could move the small circle (notification) on the left side because people usually read from left to right. It would be easier for the user to distinguish read/unread messages.



Comment posted.



New message from the counselor.

The message from the counselor with the suggested date the user can have an appointment with them. The user has an option to either accept or decline the request.

Date added alert.

Next Steps

During the usability test, people were very positive about the idea of the app, and its overall functionality. People found the overall flow of the app logical.

However, some suggested to make the the app feeling more and "personal" so that the supposed user(s) of the app, struggling international student(s), would feel more welcoming and comfortable using it. They also suggested to create more opportunity for the user to personalize in the beginning, as in, providing the option to choose their country of origin, their mother tongue, etc. Some also mentioned that the app could suggest the user to different groups and events based on the concerns (topics) and people they follow. That way, through the app, the user would feel more comfortable connecting with other people.

Overall, the test was successful. Moving forward, there are some functional and visual (mostly visual) adjustments I need to make to communicate with the user better. From small things like changing the message/inbox icon from a script bubble to an envelope, making the translate functionality more visible, adding Back button on the left corner of the first few introductory pages; to making the app feel more "welcoming" and "comfortable".