

01

Project Motivation

from Real life

Sammy

From my living observation in London as an international student, I realize language barriers could be one of the significant challenge for international students/workers' acculturation, which could embody in every aspect of life. For example, most of the informed signage in London are written in English, some even cover English abbreviations, which would lead to confusion. Also, while taking public transit, due to unfamiliarity of the city, it could be frustrated to distinguish directions with those English-only guide-boards. What's more, in the case of food packaging, the usage instruction and allergic warning are all written in English, which is risky for those with food allergies if they cannot read English. Therefore, my curiosity of "is there any ways could help with cross-cultural communication without language barriers" guide me to focus on inclusiveness in languages.



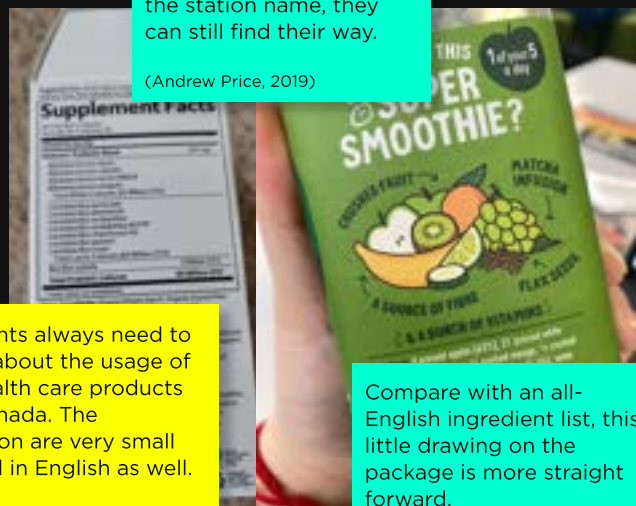
This bus timetable and direction instruction is color-coded which is easier to distinguish, but again, the station name are all in English only.

(serj nikolaev on pinterest)



Similar function instruction in Tokyo, they chose to number each station in the subway line so that people are not necessarily understand the station name, they can still find their way.

(Andrew Price, 2019)



Compare with an all-English ingredient list, this little drawing on the package is more straight forward.

(Photo taken by Sammy)

people may only recognize this is a sign about bike, but cannot get its information. It contains abbreviations which will lead to confusion as well.

(Photo taken by Sammy on her way home)

My parents always need to ask me about the usage of their health care products from Canada. The instruction are very small and is all in English as well.

(Photo taken by Sammy's mom in China)

Zihan

In my life, Chinese and English have always been fighting against each other.

As a Beijinger, I have observed the 'de-Englishization' of the names of Beijing underground stations. In the run-up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the names of Beijing underground stations were supplemented with English translations in order to welcome visitors from around the world. However, from the end of 2021, English station names were gradually replaced with pinyin. For example, "Tian'anmen East" became "Tian'anmendong", "Beijing Railway Station" became "Beijing Zhan"-- though the English translations is still displayed in brackets underneath. It caused a stir online, with many questioning the rationale behind such replacements, since foreign visitors who don't speak any Chinese are unlikely to understand pinyin, and for Chinese people, the vast majority do not need the help of pinyin to read Chinese. Therefore, this kind of translation may fall into an awkward situation: Chinese people don't need it, foreigners don't understand it. (guancha.gmw.cn, 2021)

I think the replacement is a sign of decolonization, but at the same time it causes inconvenience in cross-cultural communication, which is inevitable in an era of globalisation. How to provide amenities and signage, and how to standardise standards, are things to think about when promoting our own cultures.



Beijing Subway Plan for 2015

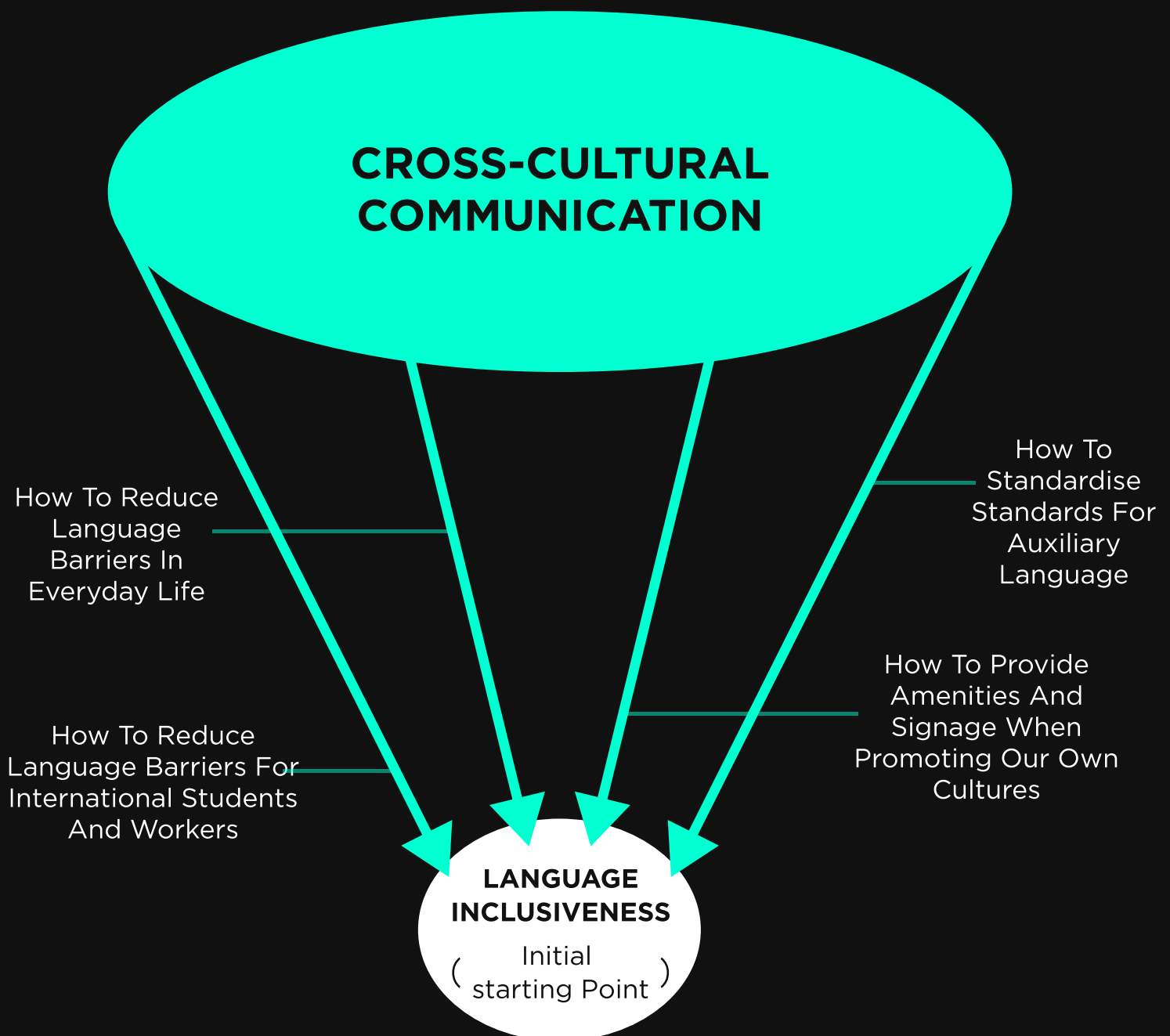


Beijing Subway Map 2021

Parachute Model

(Self-Created)

Visualization Of The Process Of How We
Focus On Language Inclusiveness

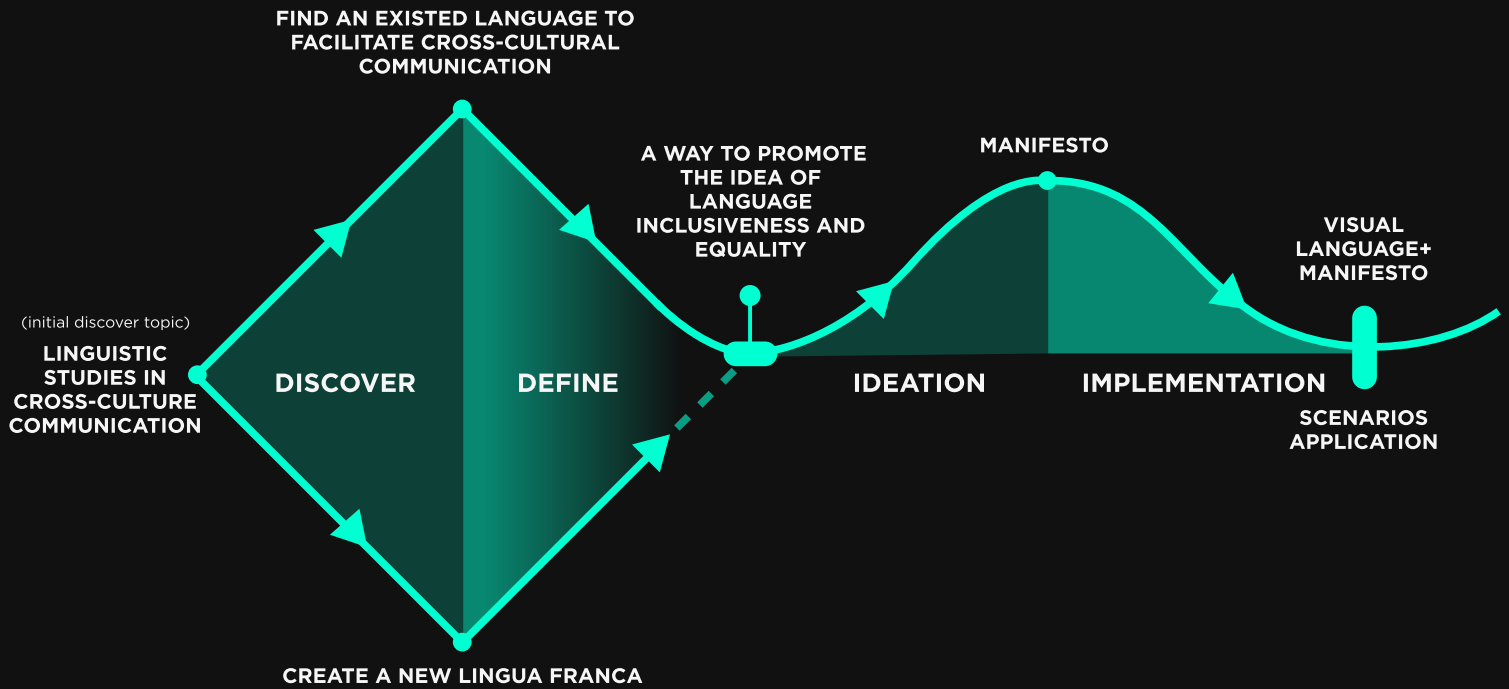


02

Framework & Problems

HMW, Objectivity, Aim

THE "Kite" Design Framework



PESTEL Analysis

POLITICAL

Countries that use the dominant language will oppose the creation and spread of a new common language in order to preserve the dominance of their language.

E.g. French delegate opposed the promotion of Esperanto in the League of Nations in 1920.

(Lins, 2016 quoted in Evildea, 2019, 06:29)

The French started a campaign against Esperanto. In June 1922 the Minister of Public Instruction instructed all French schools to no longer provide any information on Esperanto.

(Lins, 2016 quoted in Evildea, 2019, 10:49)

The biggest fear for some politicians is providing an international language that the poor can use to communicate across international boundaries. (e.g. the Brazilian delegate Raul stating that Esperanto is a language of the poor and of the Communists with no traditions, no literature literature and without intellectual value)

(Lins, 2016 quoted in Evildea, 2019, 12:36)

A peace-building proposal presented in a lingua franca is perceived as less favorable to one's own side than a proposal presented in one's native tongue. The use of a lingua franca possibly elicits higher levels of hatred and lower levels of sympathy, thereby reducing the perceived favorability of the proposal.

(Grant et al, 2022)

LEGAL

ECONOMIC

Global world with its common information network and global economic relations inevitably requires common lingua franca. Though the latter cannot replace existing national languages it should complement them, fulfilling just the function of being the language of international communication. (Khomenko, n.d.)

A lingua franca would increase economic opportunities, whether in collaboration possibilities, education opportunities, etc., but it might precipitously expose a country to competition in certain (intellectual) fields and thereby create resentment within certain industries which in turn led to protectionism.

(Zamir, 2015)

SOCIAL

The economic and cultural dominance of America over the last century, accompanied by the lingering influences of the colonial British Empire, have leveraged the position of English as the common language of international communication. However, as English continues to grow in importance among non-native speakers, a number of questions arise. (e.g. Can English exist as a global lingua franca without marginalizing the local languages of the countries into which it is introduced?)

(Michaud & Colpitts, 2015)

One of the clearest phenomena associated with globalization is the globalization of languages... the need for a lingua franca is growing.

(Gobbo&Marác, 2021)

language profoundly affects your experience of the internet. It guides who you speak to on social media and often how you behave in these communities.

(Young, 2017)

TECHNOLOGICAL

Striking imbalance between linguistic groups in internet searching. (e.g. "The famous engine [Google] that recognises 30 European languages recognises only one African language and no indigenous American or Pacific languages.")

Translators need to know the rules of a language as well as the habits of the people who speak it. The current translating technology cannot accurately and completely translate what people say. The challenges includes:

- Translating Language Structure
- Translating Idioms and Expressions
- Translating Compound Words
- etc.

(Smartling, 2023)

ENVIRONMENTAL




The definitions of terms such as "biodegradable" and "compostable" are not the same as standards, and in the absence of internationally agreed norms, let alone laws, greenwashers remain free to confuse the discourse. (To end plastic pollution, we first need to eliminate language pollution.)

(Marcus Fairs, 2019)

Pain Points & Barriers

1. Language is the result of human social and cultural activities, therefore the communication barriers caused by cultural differences has led to confusion, misunderstanding and conflicts.
2. The economic and cultural dominance and colonization caused the imbalance of the linguistic groups, which leads to the inequality of discourse power.
3. In the globalization context, the need of a universal lingua franca is growing, but no agreement has been reached because the language use in intercultural communication is limited and influenced by national positions and interests.
4. In cross-cultural negotiation, lingua franca leads to more hatred than sympathy.

Competitive Analysis of Lingua Franca

| | ESPERANTO | PIDGIN ENGLISH | ENGLISH | FRENCH | VISUAL LANGUAGE |
|---------------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|
| POPULATION | 2 million | West African Pidgin English is the most widely used Pidgin(75 million) | Native speakers around 350 million; Approximately 850 million speak English as an additional language | About 76 million native speakers; Another 77-110 million secondary speakers | 60-65% of the general population (Wikipedia) |
| AREA | Esperantujo  | There is no specific area, it can be adapt to different regions and countries. |  |  | There is no specific area. |
| LANGUAGE FAMILY | Indo-European languages | English + local language | Indo-European languages | Indo-European languages | Visual thinking |
| DIFFICULTY LEVEL OF ACQUISITION | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quicker than learning other language in a third up to a fifth of the time.• highly productive and elastic system of derivational word formation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simplified grammar and a smaller vocabulary than the languages from which it is derived.• Adjusted base on local culture, which might be difficult to understand by "cultural others". | Relatively easy to learn as "it has no instances, no gender, no phrase agreement, and probable have an easy grammar system." (Native News Online,2023) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gramma is complicated compared to English. It has gender and irregular verb conjugation.• It has abundant resources to convey subtle nuances. (Kelly,2014) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be Learned from daily life by cultivating a visual thinking mindset.• Nearly everyone born to have this ability. |
| INTERNATIONAL POSITION | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The world's most widely spoken constructed international auxiliary language• The only such language with a sizeable population of native speakers (Wikipedia, n.d.) | A language developed out of sporadic and limited contacts between Europeans and non-Europeans in locations other in association with trade, plantation agriculture, and mining. | The most common language in the world. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The second most widely learned language after English• The 18th most natively spoken language in the world• The fifth most spoken language by total number of• the second or third most studied language worldwide | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We can see the international efforts at regularizing symbols used to regulate traffic, to indicate resources for tourists, and in maps.• Some symbols have become nearly universal through their consistent use in computers and on the Internet. |
| ATTRIBUTES | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Constucted language• Neutral• Auxiliary language | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dozens of Variations• Means for intergroup communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wide spreading• Relatively easy to learn | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wide spreading• Relatively more precise | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Memorable (Long-term)• High effectiveness• Trigger Emotions• Motivate to take action |

SWOT Analysis of Visual Language

| | POSITIVE/ HELPFUL | HARMFUL/ NEGATIVE |
|----------|--|--|
| INTERNAL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces 22% higher results in 13% less time (Bonsignore, 2019) Improves problem-solving effectiveness by 19%. • Easy to be acquired in everyday life (colour, texture, shape, ect.) • Reduce language barriers & culture barriers • Trigger emotions and engages, motivate people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not accessible for visually-impaired people. • It can not accurately express complex message • Higher spreading cost than that of text. E.g. Higher printing fee; more time and internet data to load. • Might lose data while spreading (Steuerl, 2009) • Interpretation relies highly on personal experience and culture background, which may cause misunderstanding. |
| EXTERNAL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the context of decolonizing, English is losing its status as the most influential lingua franca. • People have growing awareness of using visual language as auxiliary language • 5G technology is booming, making image transmission easier (Moscaritolo, 2018) | |

From the competitive analysis, we can see that comparing to other lingua francas, visual language is easier for people to acquire and use and therefore be relatively wide spreaded. Some symbols have become nearly universal through their consistent use in computers and on the Internet, which reduce language and culture barriers and increase communication efficiency. Besides, visual language is also more likely to trigger emotion and engagement and motivate people. These are also the “Strengths” of visual language.

We found four weaknesses in visual language, two of which can be addressed in the current opportunities: First, visual language can not accurately express complex message, so it is more like an auxiliary tool for communication. The good opportunity is that people have growing awareness of using visual language as auxiliary language. Second, visual language has higher cost of spreading than that of text, for example, the higher printing fee, more time and internet data needed for loading. It also might lose data while online spreading. However, since 5G technology is booming, these problems of spreading can be easily solved. The other two weaknesses that we were unable to address were: First, visual language is not inclusive enough because it is not accessible for visually-impaired people. Second, the interpretation of visual language still relies highly on personal experience and culture background, which may cause misunderstanding.

There is no obvious threat for visual language be found since in the context of decolonizing, English is losing its status as the most influential lingua franca.

HMW, Objectivity & Aim

How might we...?

How might we create a manifesto for people all around the world to encourage the use of visual language as a lingua franca in cross-cultural communication to reduce barriers and oppresses, increase inclusiveness and reach human language equality.

Aim

Launch a manifesto facilitated by visual language to promote language inclusiveness and equality.

Objectivity

- Clarify the context and starting point of the manifesto through PESTEL analysis of the current situation and pain points of language use worldwide.
- Acquire a systematic knowledge of manifesto creation by attending DIY workshop and learning from the lecturer's previous experiences.
- Identify an applicable form to present the manifesto by gaining a deep understanding of language meaning making system through linguistic studies on text and images.
- Generate the content of the manifesto, convert it into visual language and evaluate its inclusiveness and acceptance through a pilot survey.
- Launch the manifesto and reach larger audience by exploring the media of presentation.

03

Manifesto

Writing & Visualizing

Manifesto Writing Guideline

1 PREPARING

02 Think about the audience

Use words that elicit imagination and create a sense of action. Find words that encourage people to dig deeper, connect with their aspirations and play with their passion. [\(Morgan, 2022\)](#)

04 Follow a framework

Research and follow how our favourite leaders craft their manifestos. For example:

- I have a dream that...
- We need...
- We are committed to...
[\(Morgan, 2022\)](#)

01 Start with meaningful questions

- What do we want our legacy to be?
- What actions are aligned with our values?
- How do we want to show up in the world?
- What do we want to accomplish?
- How to achieve those accomplishments?
[\(Kent, 2015\)](#)

03 Brainstorm ideas

Brainstorm on beliefs and goals. Be sure to get team members' input. Write down ideas on: "I believe..." "I want to..."
[\(Grammarly, 2014\)](#)

05 Outline

Write an outline to arrange ideas and put them in logical order.
[\(Morgan, 2022\)](#)

2 WRITING

02 Explain precepts in the introduction

Use words that elicit imagination and create a sense of action. Find words that encourage people to dig deeper, connect with their aspirations and play with their passion. Select words that cause one to pause and think for a moment about the legacy they want to create.
[\(Morgan, 2022\)](#)

04 Elaborate on ideas & Be concise

Make points more concrete for readers. When writing a purpose statement, use words that are strong, bold and fierce. Get straight to the point. Be provocative with your grammar and with the positive vision of the future you create.
[\(Morgan, 2022\)](#)

01 Identify ourselves & Aims

Include personal beliefs, worldview, and experiences that directly inform the manifesto. [\(Morgan, 2022\)](#)

03 Give a plan for action

Give a plan for action. Not just provide ideas, but offer a direction for change. Manifestos are revolutionary by nature.
[\(Morgan, 2022\)](#)

3 REFINING

01 Revise

- Include personal beliefs, worldview, and experiences that directly inform the manifesto. [\(Morgan, 2022\)](#)
- Rethink structure, such as paragraph order and focal points.
 - Elaborate where needed.
 - Cut out anything unnecessary.

03 Edit the Manifesto

Go through the work with a sharp eye, crafting style and coherence. [\(Morgan, 2022\)](#)

01 Launch it!

Share your purpose statement with people as a way to create a connection to it. Build a community around it and give people permission to support one another in living up to it.
[\(Morgan, 2022\)](#)

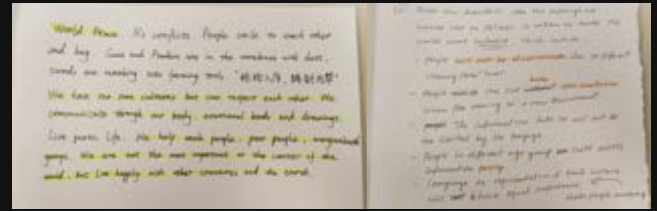
02 Gain Feedback

Talking about the manifesto with someone else can also help with developing stronger ideas and more specific articulations of the aims.
[\(Morgan, 2022\)](#)

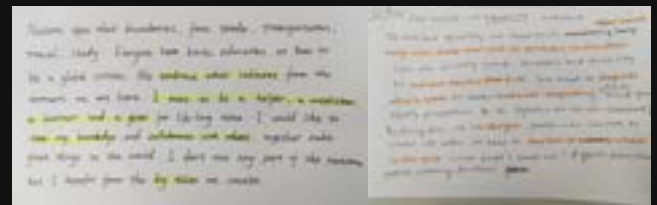
4 CREATE A COMMUNITY

Manifesto Writing Process

01

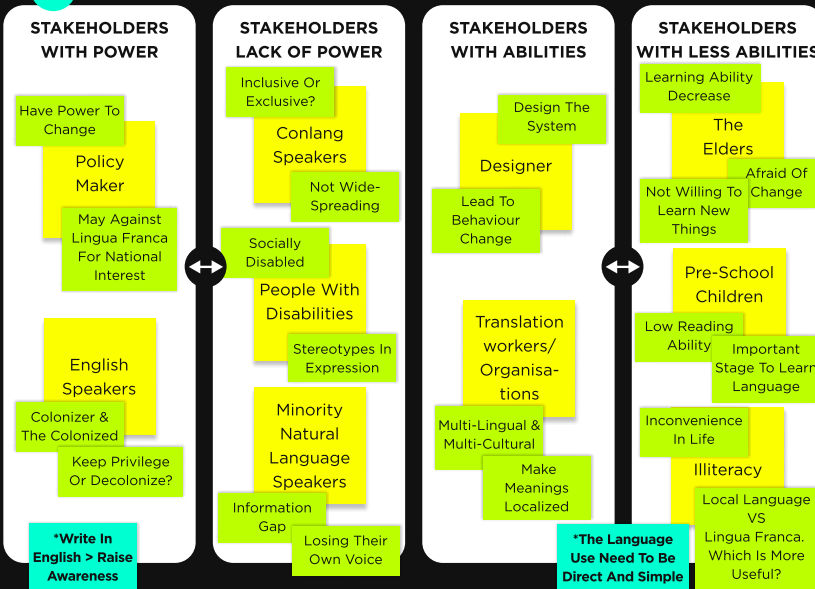


#World Peace #Respect Others' Culture #Help People With Less Power #Fair
#We Are Not The Center Of The World #No Discrimination #Less Confusion



#Embrace Others' Culture #Helper, Mediation, Learner & Giver #Big Vision
#Collaborate with others #Designer #Step in Others' shoes (empathy)

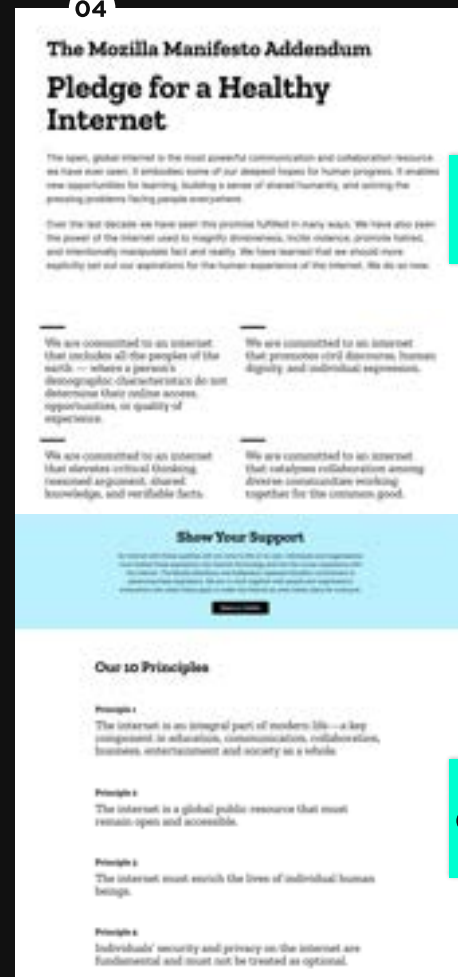
02



03



04



Introduction
To The Topic

'We Are
Committed
To...'

Principles
(Fundamental
Values)

The Mozilla Manifesto Addendum

Manifesto Visualization

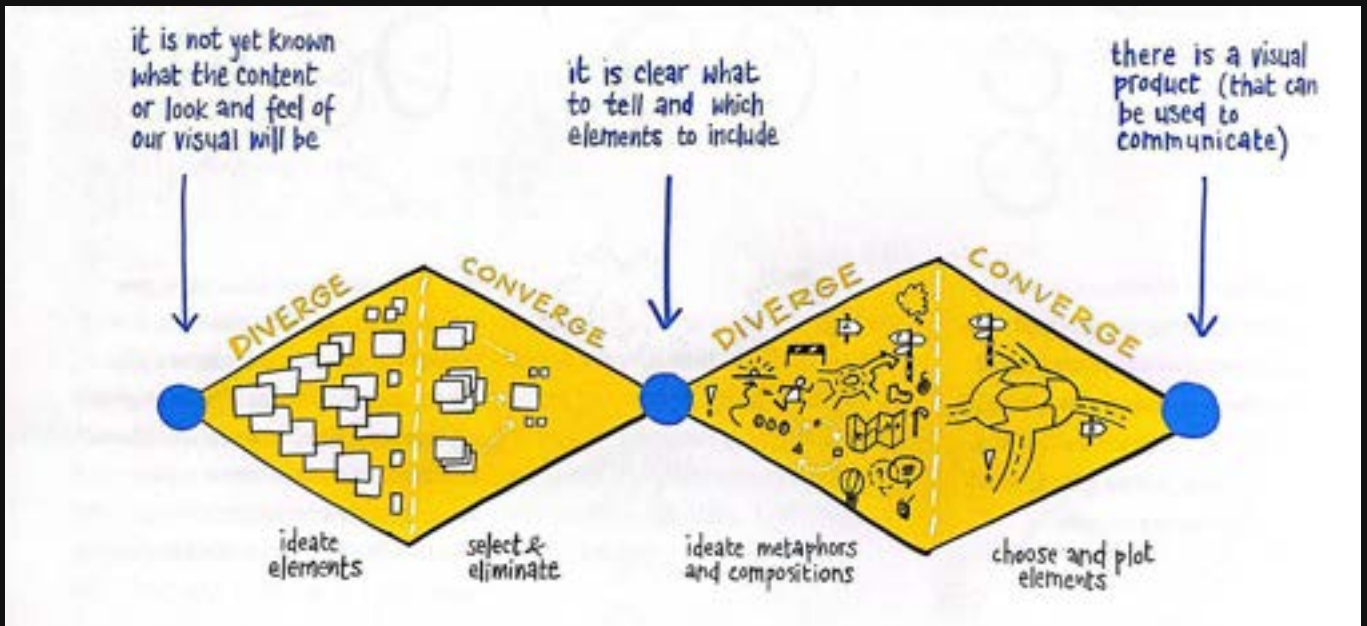
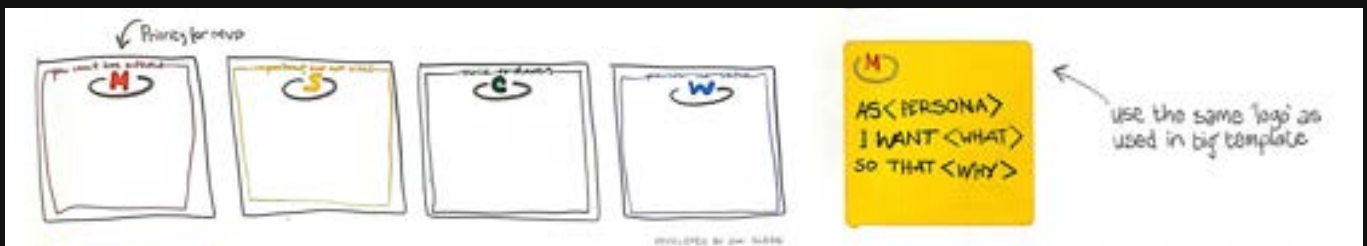
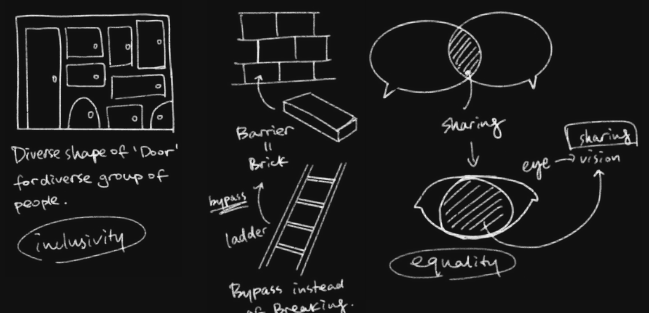
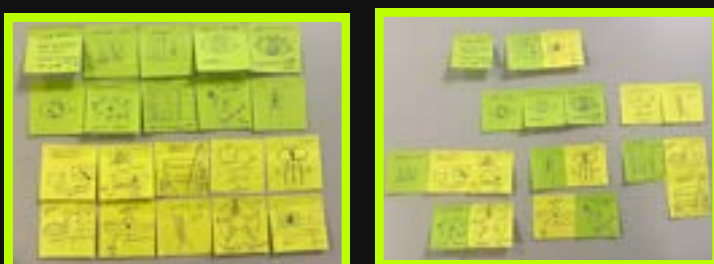


Image of "How to make a visual" framework, (Visual Doing, Brand,2018), P50



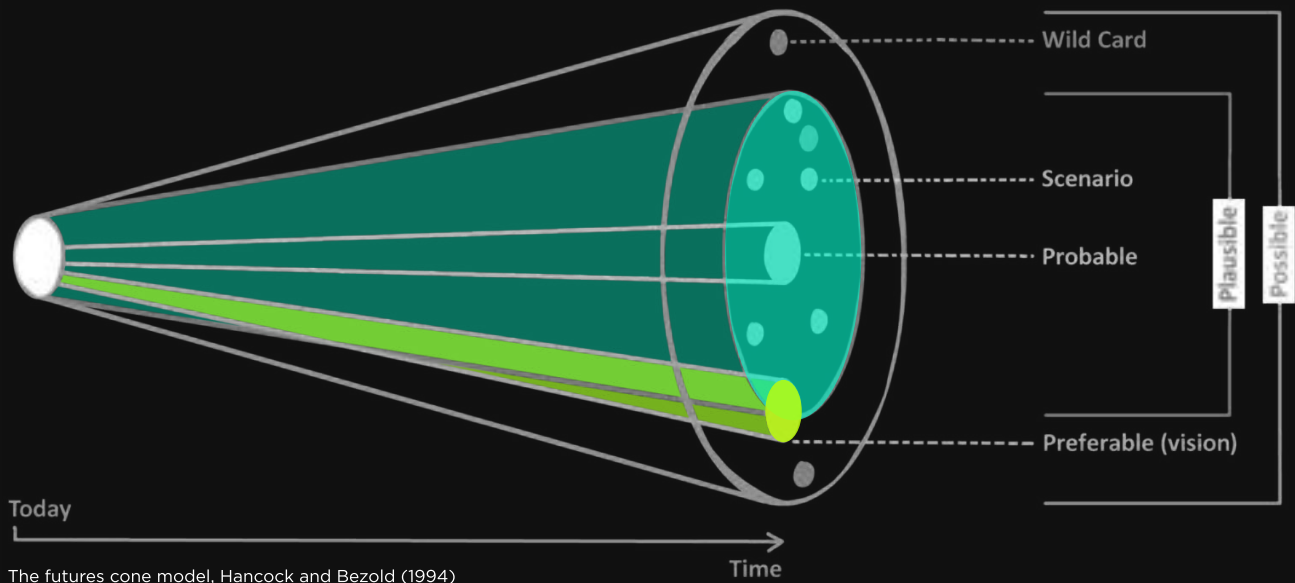
Priority Defining through "MOSCOW", (Visual Thinking, Brand,2018), P91



04

Future
Direction

Speculative Future



After launching our manifesto, what are the changes it will bring to the society?

According to the futures cone model of speculative design, our manifesto in the end points to a preferable version of plausible future, which is a world that has achieved language inclusiveness and equality. And this manifesto is only a starting point “to create spaces for discussion and debate about alternative ways of [communication].”(Dunne & Raby, 2013, quoted in Tran, 2019)

Therefore, we would like to constructed different scenarios to envision what impacts our manifesto would have, what actions it would lead to and how will they shape such a future.

Changes Expected in the Future

Visual language has undergone a 'global standardization' movement, with common signs looking the same around the world, reducing confusion in cross-cultural environments.

Now



Future



A visual language dictionary (Chinese version)

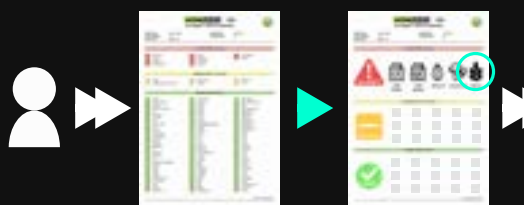
It is available in many languages versions, which allows people to read the visual language on public facilities around the world, such as road signs, maps, etc.

Visual language is widely used in everyday life to make jargons understandable for public.

Allergy Test

Now

Future



ELEVATED
FOODS



BORDERLINE
FOODS



NORMAL
FOODS



Food Package

Now

Future



Restaurant Menu

Now

Future



An international food allergy icon system

It can be used in hospitals for test report, food packaging, restaurant menus etc. e.g. A Chinese guy got his allergens abroad report in both text and the international food allergy icons. When he travels abroad, even though he does not know his allergens in a foreign language, He could identify which food he cannot eat in his grocery shopping or dine out simply by matching the icon on the packages/ menus with those on his report. With that, the risk of taking in wrong food will be decreased.

Allergy Test Report Sample Image, from Pinterest
Bread Packaging Image, from Pinterest
Menu Sample, from Pinterest

05

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